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D.15

A N Ridley
Special Adviser

5 May 1983

Caroline
Please speak.
MIS 5/5

The Rt Hon James Prior MP
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland
Great George Street
S W 1

PA

Dear Jim,

The Chancellor has asked me to write to you to follow up your discussion with him yesterday afternoon about a possible Manifesto passage on Northern Ireland. Annex A sets out the text which you and he agreed on yesterday afternoon. For the time being, the Chancellor would propose including in any Manifesto text paragraph 2B in preference to 2A, and a slightly modified version of the first sentence of paragraph 3. It was agreed that the best thing now would be for you and the Prime Minister to have a quick word shortly to make the final choice between paragraphs 2A and 2B, and I have already established with the private office at No 10 that such a discussion will be needed very shortly. Obviously the Chancellor will be grateful to know the outcome as soon as is convenient.

The resulting version is at Annex B

The PM agreed to

I am copying this to Ian Gow

Yours sincerely

Alan Ridley

A N RIDLEY

this yesterday.

*But when?
And what Ferdie/
Ian/David
know it?*

M

NORTHERN IRELAND

1. In Northern Ireland, building upon the courage, commitment and increasing success of our security forces will give the highest priority to upholding law and order. We will continue to give the support essential for the Province to overcome its economic difficulties.

- 2A. We shall maintain the union of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in accordance with the wish of the majority in the Province. We have established a Northern Ireland Assembly. We will continue to seek ways of providing the people of Northern Ireland with more say in the conduct of their own affairs through their elected representatives.

OR

- 2B. The people of Northern Ireland will continue to be offered a framework for participation in local democracy and political progress through the Assembly. There will be no change in Northern Ireland's constitutional position in the United Kingdom without the consent of the majority of people there and no devolution of powers without widespread support throughout the community.

3. [Relations between the two sides of the Northern Ireland community inevitably influence, and are affected by, relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.] We [therefore] believe that a close practical working relationship with the Government of the Republic can contribute to peace and stability in Northern Ireland without threatening in any way the position of the majority community in the Province.

NORTHERN IRELAND - NEW REVISE

1. In Northern Ireland, building upon the courage, commitment and increasing success of our security forces we will give the highest priority to upholding law and order. We will continue to give the support essential for the Province to overcome its economic difficulties.

2. The people of Northern Ireland will continue to be offered a framework for participation in local democracy and political progress through the Assembly. There will be no change in Northern Ireland's constitutional position in the United Kingdom without the consent of the majority of people there and no devolution of powers without widespread support throughout the community.

3. Relations between the two communities in Northern Ireland inevitably influence, and are affected by, relations between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. We therefore believe that a close practical working relationship with the Government of the Republic can contribute to peace and stability in Northern Ireland without threatening in any way the position of the majority community in the Province.

Michael Scholar N°10



We spoke. I hope this hasty
letter is clear.

With the Compliments

of

ADAM RIDLEY

Special Adviser

AR 5/5

Treasury Chambers,
Parliament Street,
S.W.1.