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From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

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BWP.



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

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C D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street
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24 February 1986

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Dear Charles

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH CHURCH OF IRELAND BISHOPS

... I attach a brief for the Prime Minister's meeting with the Church of Ireland bishops on 26 February. It may require further refinement in the light of the development of briefing for the meeting with the Unionists on Tuesday 25 February. And it will probably require supplementing after Tuesday's meeting.

I am copying this letter to Len Appleyard.

Yours sincerely
Neil Wood

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Prime Minister's Meeting With Church of Ireland Bishops

The Prime Minister is to meet a delegation of Church of Ireland Bishops on 26 February (see Annex A for details).

Objectives

Our aims at the meeting should be

- a. to inform the Bishops of the outcome of the meeting with Unionist party leaders in the previous day;
- b. to show that the Government is resolved to continue with the Anglo-Irish Agreement and the Intergovernmental Conference (IC) in the interests of the people of Northern Ireland and in the wider interests of people throughout the British Isles;
- c. to correct any misunderstandings of the Agreement, and to answer the Bishops' concerns;
- d. to emphasize to the Bishops the futility of and likely damage from a confrontation between Unionists and the Government consisting of civil disobedience or unconstitutional action, and to ask the Northern bishops to use their influence with their flocks against this;
- e. to ask the Northern Bishops to use their influence to encourage Unionists to enter into a dialogue with HMG about their concerns and possible ways to meet them (this will be particularly important if the previous day's meetings did not go well).

Church of Ireland Concerns

In a statement issued on 20 November (Annex B), and read out in most Church of Ireland churches the following Sunday the House of Bishops acknowledged that the Anglo-Irish Agreement represented a genuine attempt to deal with the problems of Northern Ireland, but regretted the secrecy which

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had surrounded the negotiations leading up to the signing of the Agreement and the exclusion of representatives of the majority community both from those negotiations and from the Intergovernmental Conference. The statement urged restraint by everyone in their consideration and discussion of the Agreement.

It is clear that the restrained and conciliatory tone of this statement was the result of pressure from the Southern Bishops whose perceptions of the Agreement and the reaction to it are very different from their Northern colleagues. Dr Eames and Dr Mehaffey, at their meeting with the Secretary of State on 16 December, and Dr Eames and Dr McMullen at lunch with the Prime Minister on 5 February expressed genuine concern both about the Agreement and about the extent and strength of Unionist reaction to it and the manner in which it was likely to be manifested.

Archbishop Eames, Dr Mehaffey and Dr McMullen are particularly close to the community and sensitive listeners to the members of their Church. They will continue to reflect their anxiety, but will also do their best to act as a moderating influence over more extreme Unionist plans.

The Church of Ireland Bishops attach importance to the meeting and plan to issue a communique afterwards.

Arguments and Tactics

a. The Agreement

The Prime Minister will wish to make the following points:

- i. We appreciate Unionist concern, but their fears are based on misunderstandings and exaggerations;

- ii. the Agreement is not joint authority or "effective" or "embryonic" (the Assembly's word) joint authority; within the IC the Government listens to Irish views, weighs them against others but takes its decision in the interests of all the people of Northern Ireland;
- iii. the Government is willing to make arrangements for the Unionists to put forward their views as the Irish do in the IC - the Chief Constable might be prepared to attend when security matters are attended (NB it may be possible to be more specific if a specific offer is made to the Unionists the previous day); the Prime Minister would be prepared to meet the Unionists from time to time to review progress;
- iv. the role given to the Republic is not new - we have listened to their views for years - is it so objectionable to listen to the views of your neighbour when it is so closely allied with a substantial part of the population
- v. the Government is willing to consider suggestions for giving more information about the ground covered in IC meetings;
- vi. the Government is nevertheless resolved to implement the Agreement because of the advantages it offers:
 - a. it gives a guarantee on the part of the Republic that Northern Ireland will remain a part of the United Kingdom as long as a majority wish it
 - b. it offers the best hope of improved security co-ordination

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- c. it offers the best hope of persuading the nationalists to support the institutions of law, order and justice in Northern Ireland.

b. Political Development

The Prime Minister should make it clear that:-

- i. the Government will resist any attempt by Unionists to take them on through the withholding of rents, rates and taxes, industrial action, intimidation and civil disorder - the Government must continue to follow the path set by Parliament;
- ii. confrontation would be disastrous because:-
 - a. it could easily lead to increased violence
 - b. it could damage the Province's industrial prospects
 - c. it could make it more difficult to persuade Parliament to continue granting large subventions to Northern Ireland.
- iii. the Government wishes to make progress on devolution; devolution remains the best way of substantially reducing the scope of the IC's activities. We hope that the Bishops will persuade the Unionist politicians to put to the test the SDLP's offer to talk without the pre-condition of powersharing.
- iv. the Government have no wish to destroy the Assembly but at the moment it is not discharging its statutory scrutinising functions; we will eventually have to take action if it does not resume its duties.

E. R.

ARCHBISHOP ROBIN EAMES

Church of Ireland: Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland (1986).

Background:

Born in Belfast in 1937, the son of a Methodist Minister, he was educated at Methodist College Belfast, Belfast Royal Academy, and at Queen's University where he read law. He then decided to join the Ministry and took two years at Trinity College Dublin to obtain a doctorate in ecclesiastical law. He was appointed deacon in 1964 and served as a Curate assistant to the Bishop of Down in the parish of St Comgall in Bangor before becoming rector of St Dorothea's in Gilnahirk, East Belfast in 1966. In 1974 he was appointed rector of St Mark's, Dundela also in East Belfast before becoming in June 1975 at the age of 38 the youngest ever Church of Ireland Bishop when appointed to the diocese of Derry and Raphoe. Bishop Eames moved to the diocese at Down and Dromore (one of only two Church of Ireland diocese wholly in Northern Ireland) in June 1980. He was elected Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland by the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland on 7 February 1986 following the retirement of Archbishop John Armstrong. Married (Christine, who is also a QUB Law graduate), they have two sons.

Personality and Political Views

Bishop Eames' rise through the Church hierarchy has been swift and he is widely respected as an intelligent and reasonable prelate. He is a restrained but powerful and persuasive preacher. A man brought up in the Ulster Tradition, he nevertheless believes that the eventual long term solution lies in some form of accommodation with the Republic. In a speech in 1978 he attracted attention by saying that the Irish would have to spell out what they meant by unity if they were to persuade Protestants in the North that reunification would not entail the cultural domination of one tradition by the other. He is an ambitious man and though not overtly political has many contacts among politicians on both sides of the border. He has always valued his contacts with Government and has tried where possible to be of help (as in trying to get the UDA prisoners to abandon their hunger-strike in December 1980). He has expressed privately some reservation about the Anglo-Irish Agreement but it is unlikely that his election to the Primacy will make him more vociferous. His willingness to keep in touch with HMG is unlikely to change.

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BISHOP GORDON McMULLEN

Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher.

Background

Born in 1934 in Dee Street, off the Newtownards Road, in the heart of Loyalist working-class East Belfast. He left school when he was 14 (his father had died when he was very young) and worked at Short Bros and at Harland & Wolff on the administrative side. He then studied at Queen's University and gained a BSc in economics. He later got a PhD in trade unionism and the law from QUB. He decided to enter the Church in 1962 at the age of 28. His first curacy sent him back to East Belfast to St Patrick's of Ballymacarret, after which he became the Stewardship Adviser (a prominent post dealing with financial affairs) for the Church of Ireland. In 1970 he became Curate of St Columba in Knock, and then again returned to East Belfast as the Bishop's Curate in Sydenham. In 1979 he returned to Knock and was made Archdeacon and in June 1980 was elected Bishop of Clogher to succeed Bishop Heavener who had retired.

He is a member of the Church of Ireland's Role of the Church Committee, and of the Law Reform Commission.

Personality and Political Views

An intelligent, articulate and aspiring churchman. He is deeply interested in industrial relations and social affairs. He is a firm supporter of ecumenism. He has publicly said that the main reason for Protestant bigotry is the lack of contact between the two communities. His diocese includes Fermanagh and he has in the past expressed strong views about what he sees as a campaign in that area to try to drive out protestants and where possible to create dissension between the two communities.

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BISHOP MEHAFFEY

Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe

Background

Born in Portadown in 1931. He was educated at Portadown College and Trinity College, Dublin. He was ordained in 1954 for the curacy of Ballymacarett in East Belfast where he stayed for 2 years later moving to a curacy in East London. He returned to Ireland in 1958, and became curate of Down Cathedral and then returned to St Christophers in Ballymacarett. From 1962-1980 he was Rector of Kilkeel prior to his elevation to Bishop in June 1980.

He is married to Thelma, a Derry girl who is a schoolteacher. They have 3 grown children. Bishop Mehaffey is an avid rugby supporter who until recently played an active role. He is also a camping enthusiast.

Personality and Political Views

Bishop Mehaffey is an energetic and enthusiastic prelate. He is much concerned with maintaining good relations with the other churches and has a very close friendship with Bishop Daly. A moderate Unionist who sees value in a closer relationship between North and South. Like his predecessor he is committed to maintaining a Protestant presence on the West bank of the Foyle and to encouraging the re-generation of the City.

April 1985

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THE RT REV WILLIAM JOHN McCAPPIN

Church of Ireland Bishop of Connor

Born in 1919, Bishop McCappin was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was ordained in 1942, and served as a chaplain to the forces. After the Normandy landing he was with the Allied forces which crossed the Rhine into Germany. He was then posted to the Far East, where he was a staff chaplain with the 14th Army, serving in Burma and Malaya. After the war he became curate in charge of Ardoyne parish, and then rector of Jordanstown and St Bartholomews, Belfast. He was Archdeacon of Connor for ten years and was Canon of Belfast Cathedral until his elevation to the House of Bishops in 1981. The diocese of Connor (which stretches from Belfast to North Antrim) is the largest in the Church of Ireland.

His wife, Vivienne, who is also a graduate of Trinity College, has been widely involved with the church's Mothers' Union, and has served as a lay magistrate in the juvenile courts.

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The Most Rev Walton N F Empey BA BD

Church of Ireland Bishop of Meath and Kildare.

Bishop Empey is the most senior of the Church of Ireland Bishops. He only recently (Autumn 1985) took up the position of Bishop of Meath and Kildare, previously being Bishop of Limerick.

Mr J L B Deane

One of the two Lay Honorary Secretaries of the Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland. He, together with Bishop Empey, are representatives of the Church of Ireland in the Republic.

Mr Bristow Stevenson

Mr Deane's fellow Lay Honorary Secretary of the Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland.

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE CHURCH OF IRELAND HOUSE OF BISHOPS ON 20 NOVEMBER 1985

The House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland shares with all people of goodwill in this island, North and South, the desire to see peace and mutual understanding develop and strengthen.

We acknowledge that the purpose of those involved in the formulation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement is an attempt to deal with long-standing political and community divisions but we also recognize the anxieties and deep frustrations that many people feel concerning the eventual out-working of the Agreement and its potential repercussions.

We are acutely aware that many people feel that major decisions involving their vital interests have been made in secret without full and open consultation with those most directly affected. Such a process inevitably creates resentment and deepens division and mistrust. We would strongly urge the Political Leaders involved in the Agreement to take very seriously the sense of insecurity and lack of trust that arises for future relationships and structures.

In the coming weeks and months the Anglo-Irish Agreement will be the subject of searching scrutiny and earnest debate in many places and at many levels. This necessary debate should be carried out in a manner that refrains from inflammatory words or actions. Such words or actions can only have the effect of increasing bitterness, division and suffering in a land where during the past 16 years we have at a pastoral level ministered to so many people in their pain and grief.

As part of our pastoral responsibility as bishops of the Church of Ireland we intend to seek early meetings with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland, to express our views on the Agreement.

We pray, and ask others to join with us in praying, that all may have a sound judgement in this matter and contribute to a more peaceful, co-operative and stable relationship between all people of goodwill in this island.

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The Church of Ireland Delegation

The delegation is to consist of:-

The Rt Rev Dr Robin Eames - Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of all Ireland (partly in Northern Ireland)

The Rt Rev Dr Donald Caird - Archbishop of Dublin, Primate of Ireland (wholly in Republic)

The Very Rev Samuel Poyntz - Bishop of Cork (wholly in Republic)

The Very Rev Gordon McMullen - Bishop of Clogher (partly in Northern Ireland)

The Very Rev Jim Mehaffey - Bishop of Derry and Raphoc (partly in Northern Ireland)

The Very Rev William McCappin - Bishop of Connor (partly in Northern Ireland)

The Very Rev Walter Empey - Bishop of Meath (wholly in Republic)

Mr J L B Deane) Lay Honorary Secretaries of the Standing

Mr Bristow Stevenson) Commission of the General Synod of Church of Ireland

Personality notes are attached (except for Archbishop Caird and Bishop Poyntz about ^{whom} we can find out little). Dr Eames, Dr Empey, Dr Mehaffey, Mr Deane and Mr Stevenson accompanied Archbishop Armstrong when he led a delegation from the Church of Ireland House of Bishops to meet the Secretary of State on 16 December.

The Church of Ireland is the second biggest of the Protestant Churches in Ireland and although most of the Church's members live in the North, it has a substantial membership in the South. The House of Bishops is the Governing Body of the

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Church and is itself headed, of course, by the Archbishop of Armagh, Dr Robin Eames, who was elected to that position by his fellow Bishops on 7 February. Of the twelve dioceses two are wholly in the North, six in the South and four straddle the border.

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND: MEETING WITH CHURCH OF IRELAND BISHOPS

Ten representatives of the House of Bishops of the Church of Ireland - from both sides of the border - are to call on you tomorrow to discuss the Anglo-Irish Agreement. You have already met two of them who attended the recent lunch: Robin Eames (subsequently elected Archbishop) and Gordon McMullen (Bishop of Clogher). Biographies are attached.

We have only an hour for the meeting which is pretty tight. You will want to invite them to give their views on the way forward. Points which you will want to stress are:

- the outcome of your meeting with Unionist party leaders today
- the need for Church leaders to discourage the Unionists from using industrial action and violence to oppose the Agreement, which would undermine support in Great Britain for the Union
- the very real advantages which the Agreement offers the Government's determination to implement it and to see that the Irish Government fulfils its side of the bargain (remembering that Bishops from the South will be present).

C.D.P.

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CDP

25 February 1986

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 February 1986

I enclose a copy of a letter from the Bishop of Clogher which gives the names of those who will be accompanying him to the meeting next Wednesday. I have replied to the Bishop on the points he raises about the press arrangements and admittance to Downing Street.

MARK ADDISON

Neil Ward, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

19 February 1986

Thank you for your letter of 14 February. We have noted the names of those who will be accompanying you to No. 10 on Wednesday next week. There will be no difficulty if your Press Officer, Mrs. Elizabeth Harries, wished to confer with your group after the meeting, and I think it would be helpful if she were to have a word with Mike Horne in our Press Office here about the arrangements for this.

I can confirm that you and your colleagues will not require admittance cards to gain entry to Downing Street.

MARK ADDISON

The Right Reverend Gordon McMullan, Ph.D.

file 106
LO3
AUD
cc 110
front door
Dr Jozza
Taylor
The Press