

CONFIDENTIAL

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

*CCPC
BU*



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

WHITEHALL

LONDON SW1A 2AZ

*CDP
26/2.*

Charles D Powell Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

26th February 1986

Dear Charles,

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR HUME

.... I attach a brief for the Prime Minister's meeting with Mr Hume on 27 February. We have kept the background material to a minimum to avoid unnecessary repetition of earlier material for the other meetings this week.

I am copying this letter to Len Appleyard and Michael Stark.

Yours Sincerely

Neil Ward

N D WARD

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E.R.

~~SUBJECT~~
~~CC MASTER~~

Prime Minister

CDP
26/2

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR HUME MP

Aim of Meeting

The Prime Minister is to meet Mr Hume on 27 February. The result of her meeting with Unionist leaders is taken into account.

The primary aim should be to bring home to Mr Hume that without the SDLP commitment to political dialogue and devolution, and more wholehearted endorsement of the RUC, the Agreement could founder; and that leaving it to HMG to 'teach the Unionists a lesson' is potentially ruinous.

Specific Objectives

- a) to show Mr Hume why the SDLP cannot be a neutral observer; and to encourage him to be more positive and forthcoming to make the Agreement successful and thus to be of long term benefit to nationalists.;
- b) to convince him that the SDLP should take measures to help turn the Unionists' current blanket hostility to the Agreement into acquiescence (albeit grudging); that it would be foolhardy to seek to humiliate them.
- c) to point out that SDLP support for the police is unconvincing; if they gave credit to the RUC's successes in preventing terrorist violence (eg arms finds) and in bringing to justice terrorists, it would pay dividends with the Unionist population. Conversely, the instant condemnations of security force actions frequently made by Mr Mallon, are highly counter-productive;
- d) to encourage Mr Hume to continue in the steps he has taken to make clear he is willing to enter into a dialogue about

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devolution without making power sharing objective a pre-condition; and to try to open up talks with Unionist leaders. The Round Table Conference - if the Unionists return to the idea - is one possibility.

e) to assure Mr Hume that the Government stands by the Agreement; but that we look to devolution (on a basis of widespread acceptance throughout the community) as a way of reducing the role of the Conference and thus making it more acceptable to Unionists.

Attitudes of SDLP

The SDLP has been strengthened electorally (in the recent by-elections) and in many other ways by the Anglo-Irish Agreement (which ought to give the SDLP the strength to be more accommodating). Mr Hume will no doubt be concerned that the Government might in some way retreat from the Agreement, and will be seeking reassurance. He will also wish to learn about the meeting on 25 February with the Unionist leaders, which he will see as presenting a threat to the Agreement. He may in particular pick up the suggestion that the discussion of Unionist ideas may have implications for the work of the Intergovernmental Conference.

More disturbingly there are indications that Mr Hume believes that the Unionists must be "seen off" by HMG before progress can be made. He will see the Unionist volte face on returning to Belfast as evidence that they cannot be made to accept the Agreement without confrontation. This view takes no account of the damage confrontation might do to the Province's economy or the security situation. Nor that confrontation with the Unionists will inevitably make progress on the Agreement more difficult. It is therefore important both to convince Mr Hume that this view is unlikely to have beneficial results; and to ensure that he does not continue to see inaction as an attractive

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option, and sees that the SDLP can help make the Agreement work.

The SDLP has not moved as much or as fast as the Government would like on support for security forces or devolution. Their failure to do so has been one of Unionist criticisms of the Agreement, and a more positive attitude towards both could help reconcile Unionists to the Agreement (although nothing the SDLP could do would be sufficient to gain their acceptance). The SDLP has not yet grasped that their own best interests lie in getting Unionist acquiescence to the Agreement; nor the effect they have on Unionist views.

The support Mr Hume has expressed for the police is on paper inadequate (he has expressed full support for the RUC when they are impartially carrying out their duties) but it still appears lukewarm (even many Labour Party critics of the RUC have been warmer). This feeling is increased by Mr Mallon's vigorous condemnation of the security forces when there are incidents involving members of the minority.

On devolution, although in the Parliamentary debate on the Agreement Mr Hume offered to talk to the Unionists at any place and any time, he has been reluctant to go further. He believes that if he did, he would be rebuffed. His current views are set out in his letter of 5 February to the Prime Minister: if agreement were reached on a form of devolution, the SDLP would then put the scheme to the electorate in an election to a new Assembly. The "Irish Times" reported him as saying on 20 February that the SDLP's offer to sit down for talks with the Unionists remains on the table, and that there are no pre-conditions. The Taoiseach attaches importance to this statement.

Arguments

The Prime Minister may wish to make the following points to Mr Hume:

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- a) The present situation is dangerous, the Unionists still seem bent on confrontation; HMG is absolutely resolved to deal with any resistance to it, but it would be preferable if the Unionists could be persuaded out of it. If the paramilitaries became more involved it could lead to an extremely difficult situation in which both Unionists and nationalists would undoubtedly suffer;
- b) The Agreement will remain in force; but if it is to become really effective there must be a degree of acquiescence on the part of the Unionists; their opposition could make more difficult the eventual repeal of the Flags and Emblems Act, improvements in relations between the minority and the security forces; Unionists watch the SDLP carefully - the lack of movement on the part of the SDLP is another item of complaint against the Agreement. They do not believe that the SDLP are interested in devolution. They say that the Agreement offers you all the power you want. It is for you to convince them that you yourselves want to play a part in making Northern Ireland work. The important thing is, without pre-conditions, to start to work through discussion towards what might be acceptable.

If devolution were to take place there would be a reduction in the role of the Conference - that is clearly stated in the Agreement. It is one of the few features of the Agreement that has any attractions for Unionists.

- d) The Unionist leadership are not responding positively at present to gestures. But there is still Unionist public opinion; SDLP moderation could help reduce support for extremism;
- e) Seamus Mallon's attacks on the UDR and RUC - before they full facts can possibly be known - cause offence - since

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they show little or no recognition of the difficult and dangerous conditions under which the security forces operate (for example Seamus Mallon claimed several times in the media that extreme police brutality was involved in the case of Thomas McLoughlin. In fact McLoughlin's injuries were not severe and the injuries were sustained during the arrest of John McLoughlin, Thomas's brother, who is in PIRA. In such cases it is only right to await the outcome of the investigation, rather than take sides.)

- f) A warm, wholehearted form of support for the RUC - in particular, a recognition of their difficulties and the risks they face - would have favourable effects on the Unionists.
- g) We have offered to establish new ways of enabling the Unionists to make their views known on matters in Northern Ireland. They have not accepted them yet. But such arrangements may in due course help to allow the Unionists to live with the Agreement.

- [particularly since they will face a very difficult time with the new [unclear] season].



MR ADDISON

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

Thank you for your letter of 5 February.

As you may know, I have recently invited the leaders of the Unionist parties to meet me. I should very much like to have a meeting with you also and shall ask my office to contact you to arrange a date. This will be an opportunity to discuss the various points raised in your letter.

~~10 Downing~~ After 26/2. ref STB
16.15 on 27 Feb

John Hume, Esq., M.P.

FILE CS



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

18 February 1986

You will probably find a message awaiting you on the House of Commons notice board, but in case you do not receive it I am writing regarding your meeting with the Prime Minister.

Would it be convenient for you to come to 10 Downing Street at 1615 on Thursday 27 February? Would you be kind enough to confirm this with either myself or my colleague, Mark Addison. The Downing Street telephone number is 930-4433.

CAROLINE RYDER

John Hume Esq., M.P.

088

Charles,

The Irish Ambassador telephoned
R. T. A. to suggest that R. T. A.
should see Hume before Thursday's
meeting to find out what is in
Hume's mind. &

Could you follow this up please
tomorrow. (Maybe better for
Aing. Whyp. to see him.)

Nigel

Clare
I will pass in a copy as
receive the digest. Mike

THE FORTHCOMING STRIKE MONDAY MAKES THE HEADLINES THIS MORNING WITH SEVERAL PAPERS TAKING DIFFERENT POINTS OF VIEW.

THE NEWS LETTER, FOR EXAMPLE, LEADS ITS FRONT PAGE WITH THE HEADLINE "THATCHER SCORNFUL" UNDER WHICH IT SAYS UNIONIST POLITICIANS LAST NIGHT BRUSHED ASIDE ELEVENTH HOUR APPEALS FROM THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO CALL OFF THE DAY OF ACTION. THE PAPER ALSO RECORDS A PLEA FROM THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LAST NIGHT FOR THE TWO GOVERNMENTS TO URGENTLY HEAR THE CRIES OF THE ULSTER UNIONIST MAJORITY. IN A LEADING ARTICLE THE PAPER SAYS THAT THE PROTEST MUST BE A PEACEFUL ONE. "THERE IS A GRAVE ONUS ON ALL CONCERNED WITH THE DEMONSTRATION TO ENSURE THAT A TRUE PICTURE OF THE SORT OF ULSTER THAT ITS PEOPLE SO DEARLY WANT EMERGES ON MONDAY." THE PAPER A HALF-PAGE AD FROM THE TWO UNIONIST LEADERS TELLING PEOPLE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER ON FEBRUARY 25 REJECTED THEIR CALL TO SET THE AGREEMENT ASIDE AND ASKS PEOPLE TO JOIN THE DAY OF ACTION.

THE IRISH NEWS LEADS ITS FRONT PAGE WITH A WARNING FROM THE PRIME MINISTER THAT THE PROTEST COULD LEAD TO EROSION OF SUPPORT FOR THE UNION. THE PAPER SAYS SHE REAFFIRMED HER SUPPORT FOR THE AGREEMENT WHEN SPEAKING IN THE COMMONS YESTERDAY. IN ANOTHER MAJOR PAGE 1 PIECE THE PAPER REPORTS ON JOHN HUME'S MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER IN LONDON LAST NIGHT IN WHICH HE AGAIN OFFERED TO ENTER INTO TALKS WITH UNIONISTS WITHOUT ANY PRE-CONDITIONS. INDUSTRY MINISTER, DR BOYSON, YESTERDAY WARNED OF THE DANGERS OF POLITICAL STRIKES, ACCORDING TO THE PAPER'S FRONT PAGE. REVEALING AN INCREASE OF 600 UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS HE SAID THE STRIKE WOULD NOT HELP THE IDB'S DRIVE FOR NEW JOBS. ALSO ON THE PAPER'S FRONT PAGE A COMMENT FROM GERRY ADAMS THAT THE STRIKE COULD LEAD TO MORE SECTARIAN ATTACKS AND THE MURDER OF CATHOLICS, AND A REPORT THAT THE RUC ARE MAKING FINAL PREPARATIONS TO DEAL WITH THE DAY OF ACTION. THE PAPER SAYS NIO MINISTER NICHOLAS SCOTT PROMISED TO DO EVERYTHING THAT WOULD ALLOW PEOPLE TO GO TO WORK. THE PAPER ALSO SAYS THAT PRESIDENT REGAN YESTERDAY PROPOSED TO CONGRESS THAT A 250 MILLION DOLLAR AID PACKAGE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND OVER 5 YEARS BE IMPLEMENTED.

THE IRISH TIMES, IN A FRONT PAGE STORY, SAYS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT YESTERDAY SEEMED RESIGNED TO LET THE STOPPAGE GO AHEAD, ALTHOUGH THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT LAW AND ORDER WOULD BE PRESERVED "TO DEFEAT THE CURSE OF INTIMIDATION". THE PAPER SAYS THE RUC WERE LAST NIGHT MAKING FINAL PLANS TO DEAL WITH INTIMIDATION AND THE IDB WARNED THAT THE STRIKE COULD DAMAGE PROSPECTS OF NEW JOBS. THE PAPER SAYS SHORT BROS ISSUED LETTER TO ITS 700 EMPLOYEES ASKING THEM TO IGNORE THE PROTEST AND THE INDUSTRY MINISTER, DR BOYSON, ANNOUNCED INCREASED UNEMPLOYMENT LEVELS AND APPEALED FOR PEOPLE TO IGNORE THE STRIKE.

THE SAME PAPER RECORDS THE PRIME MINISTER'S DETERMINATION, AS STATED IN THE COMMONS YESTERDAY, THAT THE STRIKE WILL NOT ALTER THE ACCORD AND ALSO RECORDS JOHN HUME'S STATEMENT, AFTER HIS MEETING WITH THE PM, THAT HE IS PREPARED TO ENTER INTO DISCUSSIONS ON DEVOLUTION WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS. IN THE SAME PAGE THE PAPER SAYS THE GENERAL BOARD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH APPEALED YESTERDAY TO LEADERS OF ALL NI CONSTITUTIONAL PARTIES TO SEEK TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AND TO TAKE PART IN TALKS WITHOUT PRE-CONDITIONS FOR DEVOLUTION OR ANOTHER AGREEMENT.

IN A LEADING ARTICLE THE PAPER SAYS NEXT WEEK MAY BE A TRAGEDY. "SOMETIME UNIONISTS HAVE TO LEARN THAT THEY DO NOT LIVE IN ISOLATION, ARE THEY SO FAR GONE IN ANGER THAT THEY CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHAT IS GOING ON? WHEN IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS THEY ARE WARNED THAT THEY ARE THREATENING THE UNION? ASKS THE PAPER.

THE IRISH PRESS LEADS ITS FRONT PAGE WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR AID PACKAGE PROPOSAL AND ON THE SAME PAGE THE PAPER REPORT THAT POWER CUTS IN NI ARE INEVITABLE NEXT MONDAY BECAUSE POWER WORKERS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY COME OUT. THE STORY SAYS, HOWEVER, THAT SUPPORT FOR THE STRIKE IS NOT NEARLY AS STRONG AS IN 1974 AND IT QUOTES THE RECENT BELFAST TELEGRAPH SURVEY SHOWING THAT 73 PER CENT ARE AGAINST SUCH ACTION.

INSIDE, THE PAPER REPORTS THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT IN THE COMMONS YESTERDAY IN WHICH SHE SAID THE STRIKE COULD ERODE THE UNION AND IN A LEADING ARTICLE THE PAPER SAYS THAT WHEN LOYALISTS STAGED THEIR 1974 STRIKE THERE WERE 190,000 PEOPLE UNEMPLOYED IN INDUSTRY AND THE JOBLESS RATE WAS LESS THAN 10 PER CENT. NOW THERE ARE ONLY 90,000 MANUFACTURING JOBS AND THE PRECARIOUS STATE OF INDUSTRY IS ONE REASON WHY MANY UNIONISTS ARE DEPRESSED AT THE THOUGHT OF A STRIKE.

THE PAPER SAYS THAT THE MAIN REASON, HOWEVER, WHY MANY UNIONISTS OPPOSE THE STRIKE IS THAT THEY FEAR THE RE-EMERGENCE OF PARAMILITARY CONTROL OVER THEIR LIVES.

THE IRISH INDEPENDENT LEADS ITS FRONT PAGE WITH MRS THACHTER'S COMMENTS IN THE COMMONS YESTERDAY THAT THE AGREEMENT STANDS IN SPITE OF THE STRIKE. INSIDE THE PAPER'S NORTHERN EDITOR, JOHN DEVINE, SAYS THERE IS A CLEAR SPLIT AMONG UNIONISTS, MANY OF WHOM DO NOT AGREE WITH THE STRIKE ACTION.

THE CROSS-CHANNEL "HEAVIES GIVE SUBSTANTIAL COVERAGE TO NI QUESTION TIME.

TYPICAL OF THE COVERAGE IS THAT IN THE TIMES, WHICH RUNS A PAGE 1 PIECE HEADED "ULSTER LINK TO BRITAIN AT RISK, SAYS MINISTER" AND QUOTES COMMENTS ON THE STRIKE BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE INDICATING POSSIBLE LOSS OF SYMPATHY WITH THE UNIONISTS.

+++ENDS+++

28 FEBRUARY 1986

JOHN HUME - INTERVIEW ON NORTHERN IRELAND AGREEMENT

Transcript from: BBC Radio 4, Today, 28 February 1986

INTERVIEWER: (Peter Hobday) Well Ulster Unionists say that the strike on Monday against the Anglo Irish agreement will be solid. The Prime Minister says nonetheless she will not be deflected. Last night she held talks with the SDLP leader John Hume, the member for Foyle, at which he reiterated his willingness to enter into discussions on devolution at any time and without preconditions. Well Mr Hume is with me now; what else did you talk about in your meeting with the Prime Minister?

HUME: Well the Prime Minister's main concern was to, as she put it, to get the parties in Northern Ireland around the table. And I think that's a common sense approach that most people would agree with. Because that if we're to move forward in Northern Ireland we've got to tackle the central problem, which is division in the Northern Ireland society. The only way that'll ever be tackled is by both sections of the community working together. And the first step on that road is round table talks. And I was making clear that for our part our Party would be ready and available when such talks took place and when the Unionists find themselves ready to come round the table.

INTERVIEWER: But given the strike on Monday, given the attitude of the two political leaders who saw Mrs Thatcher just before you did, are such talks likely?

HUME: Well I don't think in the present atmosphere that they're likely. But I do believe that when the strike takes place I think it's very clear to most people that the strike doesn't make any sense whatsoever. It's self inflicted wounds. We have 22% unemployment in Northern Ireland and bringing politics onto the factory floor is not the way of encouraging the sort of investment that we need if we're to tackle our unemployment problems. I believe that the leadership of Unionism, that politically this Union doesn't know where it's going, hasn't thought out

where it's going and I believe that as a result of that there's a lot of unease within the Unionist community. And when they discover that the methods that are essentially bully boy methods, because the overwhelming majority of the British Parliament voted for this agreement - 473 to 47 - that it's the Unionists who are supposed to be the loyalists and yet they are rejecting the decisions of that Parliament. That's a challenge to the sovereignty of the British Parliament. When they realise that that is getting them nowhere I believe that at that state of the debate which is under the surface of the militant Unionism will come right out into the open and that there will be forces that will recognise that talking between the two sections of the community is the first step to sanity.

INTERVIEWER: So you don't see this stike and the action surrounding it and the views expressed by Unionist leaders as damaging then to the Anglo Irish Agreement, they can't ditch that almost whatever they do you'r saying?

HUME: Well I don't like it. I mean I don't like to see political leadership because political leadership of any society from any section that affects the other sections and it affects the whole of Northern Ireland. I don't like to see actions that are going to damage the people of Northern Ireland. The only people that will suffer for this action are the people of Northern Ireland. But it can't have any effect at all on the Anglo Irish agreement because the other factor is that of course it's completely mis representing. A question I would put to any Unionist in Northern Ireland; the agreement has been in place now for 3 months, which individual person anywhere in Northern Ireland has had his life in any way damaged by what has happened? AND I MEAN THE UNIONISTS HAVE LOST NOTHING BY THIS AGREEMENT. WHAT HAS HAPPENED IS THAT THE PEOPLE THAT WE REPRESENT HAVE FOR THE FIRST TIME GOT RECOGNITION OF THE VALIDITY OF THEIR TRADITIONS. THERE IS EQUAL VALIDITY FOR BOTH TRADITIONS, IT'S ESSENTIALLY WHAT THIS AGREEMENT DOES. THAT CREATES THE BASIS FOR A

GENUINE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND WHICH IS THE ONLY WAY FORWARD, THE BREAKING DOWN OF BARRIERS. AND THAT'S GOING TO BE A HARD JOB BUT IT WON'T EVEN START IF ONE SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY BELIEVES IN AN OURSELVES ALONE POLICY AND DOESN'T BELIEVE IN THE ACCOMMODATION OF DIFFERENCE IN A DIVIDED SOCIETY.

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THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN IRELAND

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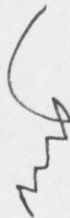
*With the Compliments of
The General Secretary and
Clerk of Assembly*

Prime Minister

NOT much help.

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CHURCH HOUSE
FISHERWICK PLACE
BELFAST BT1 6DW

The Presbyterian Church in Ireland

GSO 1986/4

The following Resolution was passed by the General Board of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland meeting in Church House on Thursday, 27th February, 1986:-

"The General Board, in addressing itself to the uncertain situation presently existing in the North of Ireland, calls upon people to examine themselves before God as to their loyalties, convictions and actions. True peace and justice can only be achieved when men and women submit to the lordship of Christ over their lives and give Him their first loyalty. It is by Him that Kings reign and Princes decree justice. All power and authority is a sacred trust from God to be exercised only in love and justice for all.

"We therefore call upon the whole community - Protestant and Roman Catholic - to turn completely from hatred and bigotry, political or religious. Let no one dominate or manipulate men's consciences, or exploit religious or political fears but let all hold fast to what is just and true as Holy Scripture so prescribes. The situation demands that all seek a common reconciliation to God's will, that violence in every shape and form be denounced and that all in positions of influence refrain from threatening words or provocative actions. The need is for humility and pleading for mercy before the God of Righteousness and Love.

"We call upon politicians to provide statesmanlike leadership and not to abdicate their responsibilities to the lawless or to deny the trust reposed in them. At this time of crisis we plead with all in public office to practise only the highest ideals of democracy, to reject intimidation, confrontation, physical abuse or the use of emotive or insulting expressions for those who differ from them or sectarian strife and to use only legitimate forms of protest or dissent when they feel such must be expressed. We again plead that in any action proposed, the needs of the elderly, the handicapped, the children will not be endangered through lack of food, warmth or compassionate care.

"While recognising that a significant minority of the people of Northern Ireland have welcomed the Anglo-Irish Agreement we, nevertheless, appeal to the Governments at Westminster and in Dublin to treat seriously and urgently the cries of so many sincere and honest men and women for the practice of established democratic principles of consultation, debate and consent, and to realise that secrecy has hurt and harmed respect for Parliament and constitutional government.

"The Board calls upon the Governments to undertake a review of the situation resulting from the Anglo-Irish Agreement, and to seek ways and means by which confidence can be restored and offence removed. The Board welcomes every encouragement towards constitutional politics, every combined effort that will lead to ending of terrorism and every step towards genuine reconciliation and peace in our society.

"We appeal to leaders of all Northern Ireland constitutional parties to seek to avoid a policy of confrontation and to engage urgently in round table talks, without precondition, with a view to devolution or other agreed settlement and in order to create an atmosphere in which such talks can take place we call upon the British and Irish governments to take realistic and urgent steps to facilitate such talks.

"We call upon our Presbyterian people, as we do all Christian people, to weigh most carefully all the implications of strike action and to engage fervently in prayer for God's blessing on the authorities, security forces and the whole community."