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(c) May I see the Callaghan text on overnight please? (I mentioned this about a fortnight ago).

From: RODERIC LYNE
Date: 21 January 1994

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND

Loch. H. wants NIO with: -
(a) Publication of 12 of yr. notes - what are these or are they?
(b) This comment of local press (as in the intelligence we saw a fortnight ago) - what is below is inadequate at a response. Why lose the instructions + we can't afford that.

The NIO could not keep their faithful promise to deliver Sir Patrick Mayhew's long-awaited paper today. His two speeches of the past 24 hours prevented this. With some difficulty, I have sucked the attached draft out of them. The Secretary of State will be considering this over the weekend. ✓

The draft paper should be read against the background of a separate JIC assessment (in the hot box) which concludes that the Provisional leadership will not accept the Joint Declaration as it stands; and appear to be preparing to increase the level of violence.

The NIO draft is disappointing. It is long on words, and short on specific proposals. It does not provide a sharp focus for discussion at Wednesday's Ministerial meeting.

Stripped down, the NIO suggest that we should respond to rejection by the Provisionals of the JD (or prolonged prevarication) by:

- "intensification" of the talks process - but not on a timetable which could lead to a Northern Ireland assembly as early as this autumn; //
- attempts to enhance cross-border cooperation with the Irish Government, and pressure on the Irish to improve their security abilities; //

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- perhaps an increase in our own helicopter assets; //
- consideration of possible (but difficult) changes to the law. //

No evidence of creative thinking here. And no political dimension, other than the talks process.

The great benefit of the Joint Declaration is that it has given us the political initiative. It is supported by a wide spectrum, from moderate Unionists to most Nationalists. It would be nice to know how the NIO think we can drive wedges into support for the Provisionals, without breaking the coalition. In particular:

- can we do more to undermine Nationalist support for Sinn Fein, and progressively increase their isolation and discomfort? Is there anything in John Hume's idea of a referendum on the Joint Declaration (perhaps too gimmicky, and possibly risky - but it would be nice to see a comment on it)? Can we do anything with the churches? Can we be proactive in community relations? Can we offer visible political benefits to those who accept the Joint Declaration? ✓
Yes.
- what can we do with the Irish Government? Should you start thinking of a further meeting with the Taoiseach? When? To what effect? //
- Can we do anything with or in the United States and Canada, to undercut Sinn Fein? //

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- 3 -

If you agree, I shall see if the NIO can't be persuaded to do some more creative thinking by Wednesday.

Sir P Mayhew's speech today, and a summary of his speech yesterday, are attached.

Roderic

RODERIC LYNE

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PERSONAL
FOR RODERIC LYNE

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND - THE WAY FORWARD

Introduction

I have prepared, for your stocktaking meeting next Wednesday, my assessment of the current political and security scene in Northern Ireland, and how I see the way forward.

2. Northern Ireland remains dominated by the Joint Declaration and Sinn Féin's procrastination in response. Meanwhile, terrorist activity remains high and there is growing unease in Ulster Unionists circles. We must, therefore continue to demonstrate that the Government retains the initiative and is taking forward the Talks Process intensively - which will require a greater sense of urgency on the part of the Irish. In general, however, the broad thrust of our policy - seeking both peace and political progress in terms of the 'three stranded' analysis - remains sound, and the crucial message to get across now is 'business as usual'. Our contingency planning against all eventualities is well advanced.

The political scene

3. There is little to add to the 'Tour d'Horizon' which my Private Secretary circulated in his letter to yours of 7 January. However the strains on the UUP, who have hitherto been holding up well, are beginning to show. There is a realisation that Sinn Féin need time to reach a decision. But there is now growing concern that the gap with the DUP - and the threat which they represent in this year's Euro Elections - should not increase further. Mr Molyneux continues to talk of a NI Assembly in late Spring or early Autumn if the four parties could agree. But this is not a realistic prospect and only serves to alarm Nationalists and the Irish. A primary objective of our policy must accordingly be to

Why is
early
Autumn not
realistic?

Yes - not what
NIO - I need more to
believe before?

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keep Mr Molyneux and his party on side. This will require, in turn, the intensification of the bilaterals Michael Ancram is currently undertaking. This itself partly depends on Irish (and SDLP) willingness to engage seriously and early in Talks, not least by getting down to devising with us the joint framework for future talks to which they committed themselves at the September IGC.

4. The DUP continue, at all levels, not to trust our view of the Joint Declaration and hope to use it to take advantage of the UUP. They have yet to accept the invitation to have discussions with Michael Ancram. The longer the Provisionals hesitate before giving a formal response, while continuing their terrorist campaign, the stronger the DUP challenge will become.

5. You met Mr Hume on 14 January. In general, the SDLP is pleased that Sinn Féin are under intense pressure, but are more inclined to give them time to resolve their internal problems than we, and increasingly consider the request for 'clarification' to be reasonable and have not hesitated in saying so publicly. Some fear also remains that the establishment of the Select Committee reflected a pro-Unionist agenda and some remain critical of what they perceive as a pro Unionist bias in our 'marketing' of the Joint Declaration. Nevertheless the party will be meeting Michael Ancram next week. And, if we can persuade the Irish Government to engage seriously in the Talks Process; then it will be very hard for Mr Hume - not least when the pressure is ⁱⁿ favour of Talks within his own party - to stand aside although he appeared to make peace a priority over renewed Talks at his last meeting with you.

6. The Alliance Party remain generally supportive but like the UUP are anxious that we should give a lead by tabling proposals of our own within the three strands of the Talks process. Alone of the Northern constitutional parties of 'Unionist' orientation, they have said that they would participate in the 'forum' proposed by the

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Taoiseach, if this is set up, even though they remain unconvinced that the SDLP are serious about the Talks Process. Indeed, their lack of patience with the Nationalists inclines them to think in terms of making progress in terms of internal Northern Ireland institutions if the Nationalists and Irish are not more forthcoming.

7. The position of the Irish Government is more complex: they are wholly committed to the Declaration; they tasked their officials last September with working up ~~with~~ an outline framework for further talks likely to prove acceptable to all the parties; and recent speeches by both the Taoiseach and Tánaiste have been generally helpful. Indeed Mr Reynolds' on 10 January demonstrated that the position of both Governments on the Declaration remain very close, at least on paper. Also Mr Spring seems particularly committed personally to a revitalisation of the Talks Process. However, and bearing in mind that the Government is a coalition one, the Taoiseach's own priority seems to be to make 'peace' and not to forge ahead with Talks. Also, so far as we can judge, the Irish Government generally believe that a positive response from Sinn Féin/IRA is still possible, although they recognise that Mr Adams has a hard job of persuading to do. Hence, the Irish are standing firm on no renegotiation of the Declaration, but want to help Mr Adams and the 'moderates' where possible: for example, explaining the Declaration's advantages for Nationalists, and certainly in part, by abandoning the section 31 Broadcasting Ban. For similar reasons, they continue to favour Mr Adams being given a US visa.

But if
there is
no peace?

8. But although the Irish are prepared to be more patient than we would wish - or Ulster Unionists may be able to tolerate - they do not appear to have seriously considered the next steps, whether or not a positive response has been received. That is why, both you and I have written to Mr Reynolds and Mr Spring respectively seeking not only to consolidate our common front, but also to draw their

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attention to the fact that the Declaration is, as you put it, a platform for talks just as much as a call for peace.

9. It remains my firm belief that such intensification is desirable in its own right. But, also it puts further pressure on Sinn Féin by demonstrating that both Governments will continue to press on with their search for a comprehensive settlement, acceptable to the vast majority of the people of these islands, without them if that is their foolish choice.

10. The main preoccupation of the Provisional Movement seems to be avoiding a split (which could entail their fighting each other). The 'hard men', particularly in rural areas such as South Armagh, oppose the Declaration while others see the advantages of pursuing a purely political strategy. For the time being, however the leadership cannot see how the Declaration enables them to reconcile these views. They are therefore continuing to avoid giving a conclusive reaction, not least by disingenuous requests for 'clarification' (for example Gerry Adams' letter of 7 January which sought no such thing), in the hope that a blunder on our part will get them off the hook and avoid their being blamed for continued violence. Although Irish and SDLP views vary, there may have been disinformation put about by Sinn Féin, both these groups remain markedly more optimistic about Provisional intentions.

11. You will already have noticed that in order to reassert, the coherence and consistency of our political strategy, maximise the chance of a positive response or of the blame the Provisionals will fear in the event of rejection, and to cut the ground from under their insincere demands for 'clarification' by ensuring that the most important sections of the Declaration from their point of view are properly understood, I addressed two major speeches to these

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issues: to the Trinity College Dublin, London Dining Club [yesterday] and in the debate a Private Member's Motion [earlier today].

12. We shall need to continue to monitor Sinn Féin's statements and debates carefully. There were, for example, some hopeful signs in Gerry Adams' reception of my Trinity College Speech. In particular, however, we may need to find ways of ensuring that those Nationalists in Northern Ireland who are tolerant of Provisional violence do not see us as so inflexible that we are blamed should the Provisionals decide against the declaration. This is a distinct risk which could nullify an important part of the benefit of the declaration, to dry up some of the 10% of votes Sinn Fein has, and could drive a wedge between us and the Irish - itself a Sinn Féin goal.

Temptations to avoid

13. Although the current situation is not entirely satisfactory, there is nothing in the above analysis that should induce us to depart from a strategy that is intellectually well founded, publicly defensible - and alone capable of security, in the long run, peace and a comprehensive political settlement. In particular, we should not let the current attacks by the IRA or their continuing prevarication over a response either knock us off course or allow the IRA to dictate our agenda.

14. Equally, we should not conclude prematurely that the Irish will not enter talks unless Sinn Féin are present, nor, if the Irish are unlikely to contribute positively to the talks process while Sinn Féin's reaction remains unclear, should we attempt to set any kind of public 'deadline'. This would be wrong in principle: it would suggest that the Joint Declaration, which sets out a wide range of constitutional and political realities going far beyond the issue of

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'peace', would expire or be withdrawn after the deadline. This is not the case. The Declaration, and our offer to enter exploratory dialogue with Sinn Féin three months after the ending of violence, should continue to stand even if the Provisional Movement refuse to accept it now. To suggest otherwise would profoundly damage our relationship with the Irish - and could blight, possibly irreversibly, all hopes of taking the talks process forward for the foreseeable future as well as putting back the day when Republicans might become amenable to the Declaration approach.

The Way Forward - Politics

15. Our strategy should, therefore, remain focused on maintaining and intensifying the momentum in the Talks Process, both in its own right and as a means of pressure on Sinn Féin. Second, we must continue to present the Joint Declaration as a 'balanced and fair' document with much in it to attract Nationalists of all persuasions as well as Unionists. But, as well as pressing the Irish for greater practical commitment to the Talks Process, we need to press the UUP and other Parties in parallel as to whether they also are prepared to re-enter multilateral talks at a suitable, early date (ie where there is a fair likelihood that the resulting Talks would succeed). If so, it will be hard for the Irish (and also for Mr Hume) to decline to participate.

16. Michael Ancram has resumed his programme of bilaterals, having met Ulster Unionists and the Alliance on 13 and 18 January respectively. A meeting with the SDLP is planned for next Monday. While these continue, the Irish and SDLP may suspect that we may be planning to pursue 'Strand 1' only - and are seeking to use the Talks as an alternative, rather than a complement, to the peace process. The Irish and the SDLP must be reassured that this is not the case. Equally we can point out to them that the best way to prevent any drift in that direction amongst Unionists is, once again, to re-invigorate the Talks.

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17. Of course, if as we hope, the IRA abandon violence, there would be a hiatus. Political talks could not realistically reach a conclusion before Sinn Féin had then joined them, which could be sometime after violence had ceased. In that case we would need to avoid any impression of drift, although our primary concern then would be to suck the Provisional Movement into the constitutional political process - in circumstances where the absence of violence ought to make a dramatic, and benign difference to the political scene. Such a scenario is one we could cheerfully live with.

18. On the other hand, if the Provisionals reject the Joint Declaration, or Sinn Féin continues to make no clear response, we cannot wait until the June elections to put in place a developed political strategy. We should, on the one hand, have to consider if any new security options were available to us - whether in terms of changing the law or operationally - in circumstances where we might find the Irish disposed to be helpful. (The Taoiseach has already hinted as much.) There is, however, little prospect of immediate major measures being introduced, certainly not North of the border (hence my desire not to refer to security "crackdown"). At the same time, we would need to have a clear public strategy in place by Easter: the first step would be to press the Irish, the SDLP and Unionists to talks. If resisted, we might then publish a White Paper. Indeed, the very possibility of publishing such a document unilaterally might, at an appropriate point, be a subtle form of pressure on the Irish to be more forthcoming in support of the Talks Process.

The Way Forward - Security

19. In the event of a declared end to violence, there are various steps we could take to lower the profile of Security Force activities, but we should need to proceed very cautiously in making any significant reductions in operational capability until we were very sure of the durability of the cessation of violence.

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20. We have also reviewed the measures which might be taken in the security field in the event of rejection of the Joint Declaration, building on the options set out in the attachment to my Private Secretary's letter of 29 December to Alex Allan. These include actions we might take ourselves to strengthen the position of the security forces; enhanced cross-border co-operation; and measures that we could press the Irish to take in the Republic.

21. Bearing in mind that the level of PIRA attacks against the security forces is currently at a comparable level to that which pertained for most of last year, both in intensity and geographic spread, there is not a great deal over and above present efforts which the Chief Constable or GOC believe needs to be done to enhance the operational effectiveness of the RUC and Army. While some adjustments might be made to patrolling patterns, there is no case at present for major changes in operational activity or enhanced force levels, apart from an increase in helicopter assets which would greatly enhance our capability to deal with the serious sniper threat especially in border areas. On the non-operational side we are pressing ahead with consideration of possible changes to the law; several of the proposals under consideration appear feasible but they would involve moving further away from practice in the rest of the UK and take some time to put into effect.

22. We are continuing to pursue the agenda for cross border co-operation set out in the earlier letter. Several of the issues - for example border flight safety zones, extra-territorial interviewing by police officers and joint operations on either side of the border - present considerable political difficulties for the Irish, and in the event of rejection of the Declaration we will be in a much better position to press these forward. We propose to lay the groundwork for this at the forthcoming IGC meeting, but in spite of the Taoiseach's comments on tougher measures it will probably require pressure at Summit level to achieve a breakthrough.

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23. Similar considerations apply to actions which the Irish might take themselves. We would like to see the Garda restructured in order to enhance cross-border co-operation, and will put proposals to the Irish on this. But more importantly, we would wish to see a substantially increased anti-terrorist effort by the Irish on their side of the border, both in terms of a higher level of activity and in the apprehension of suspects. Apart from resource limitations, this is essentially a matter of political will on their part, but one which would require a decision at the highest level.

Conclusions

24. The Provisional Movement's final intentions on the Joint Declaration are still unclear, and UUP nerves are fraying. It is essential, therefore, to avoid the impression that Sinn Féin holds the initiative, or that Unionist restraint and political courage will have been for nothing. Pursuing the Talks Process is compatible with the Declaration, which sought in fact to complement and underpin it; shows that business is continuing as usual; and increases the pressure on Sinn Féin. We accordingly need to press, in parallel, both the Irish Government and the Unionists (almost certainly only the UUP) on their attitude towards the Talks. The former should be reassured that we remain fully committed to the 'three stranded' basis for the Talks and will not seek to implement Strand I only. We should similarly emphasise our recognition of the balance on the Joint Declaration between Nationalist and Unionist interests and present the Talks as complementary to the Joint Declaration, and in no sense a rival. Unionists, for their part, we should press on their attitude towards a resumption of multilateral talks and the opportunity which this would afford to gain Irish views at first hand. Their attempts to talk exclusively about internal arrangements in Northern Ireland (Strand I) should be resisted - and Unionists reminded that Strand I would not, in

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practice, be agreed unless it formed part of a comprehensive settlement. Talk of deadlines or security crackdowns is incompatible with this.

Presentation

25. We have been taking pains to get these messages, including the crucial one of 'business as usual', across on all available occasions: in our own personal contacts and correspondence with Irish Ministers; in my own most recent speeches; in Michael Ancram's discussions and in meetings between officials. (In Michael's discussions, as well as pressing the UUP on their attitude to multilateral Talks, I believe Michael could usefully open up discussion of a possible agenda for such Talks if he judges it necessary to maintain momentum.) We must also ensure these themes are positively and consistently put across in the media. By the time we meet on Wednesday, we shall have also had the chance to learn more about SDLP thinking (thanks to Michael Ancram's planned meeting), and to have digested the reactions to my two speeches of 20 and 21 January.

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27. Of critical importance, however, in the taking forward of our strategy will be the meeting of the IGC planned for 28 January. Subject to your views and those of colleagues, my intention would be to press the Irish hard then on both Talks and on security co-operation in the terms I have sketched out above.

28. Copies of this minute go to Douglas Hurd, Kenneth Clarke, Michael Howard, Malcolm Rifkind and Sir Robin Butler.



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DISCUSSION

25. We have been talking to get these messages, including the
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occasions: in our own personal contacts and correspondence with
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discussions and in meetings between officials. In Michael's
discussions, as well as presenting the DUP on their attitude to
multilateral talks, I believe Michael could usefully open up
discussion of a possible agenda for such talks if he judges it
necessary to maintain momentum. We need also ensure these messages
are positively and consistently put across in the media. By the
time we meet on Wednesday, we will have also had the chance to
learn more about GDP forecasts (thanks to Michael Adams's planned
meeting), and to have discussed the reactions to my two speeches of
30 and 31 January.

27. Of critical importance, however, is the timing forward of our
strategy will be the timing of the ICC planned for 28 January.
Subject to your views and those of colleagues, my intention would be
to press the Irish hard line on Irish talks and on security
co-operation in the form I have sketched out above.

28. Copies of this should go to Douglas Hurd, Kenneth Clarke,
Michael Howard, Malcolm Rifkind and Sir Robin Butler.