



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Under pressure from
here, and through gritted
teeth, NIO are beginning to
sharpen up their act.

Two points on my agenda
not covered here are the
joint presentation in the
NSA with the Irish (may
be worth one more go at
Dublin); and the FERB
"dinner" with Murray or Hally.
I think arrangements for
the latter are in hand.

Rodney.

(Good.

cc CMJ
RLJ



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400/1. A 1/2 day with
NIO, FEdb et al
to run this all
4 February 1994
This ought to be worked over.
They are talk!
4.6.2.

Dear Roderic,

NORTHERN IRELAND UP-DATE

This note offers an update on developments since the Prime Minister's meeting on 26 January, together with an Action Plan. Attached as an Annex is an analysis of what Adams said in the States.

Summary

Sir Patrick considers that the strategy set out in his minute of 24 January, and endorsed by colleagues, remains valid. We must vigorously pursue the complementary objectives of peace and a political settlement. ✓

On the Joint Declaration, our strongest weapon against the Provisionals remains our alliance with the Irish Government. On the political talks, Sir Patrick's FT interview successfully regained the political initiative, demonstrated that the process is alive and moving forward, but represented no departure in policy terms. ✓

But there are limits to how much we can force the pace on either the Declaration or talks. We can exert persuasive and other pressure, but we have to carry others with us. In particular, political



progress, through the Talks Process, requires the commitment of both the UUP and the SDLP and Irish Government. Our key task is to persuade them that they can best achieve their objectives through a consensual approach - however frustrating this may be. ✓

The Joint Declaration

We should not yet write off the Provisionals' eventual response. ✓
The attached analysis shows that Adams said little new or different in the US. His triumphs there may persuade the 'hard men' that they can reap the rewards of peace while firing mortars. Or they may have given Adams more authority and space to argue for peace. But while the debate continues, my Secretary of State believes that it would be folly to throw away what still remains our strongest weapon: standing, in public, shoulder to shoulder with the Irish ✓
behind the Joint Declaration.

Political Talks

But, at the same time, we need to convince the Irish Government and John Hume that accelerating progress on the Talks will not give the Provisionals a pretext to reject the Joint Declaration. Momentum on the talks is needed in its own right, as well as to bring further pressure on the Provisionals. We began this process of persuasion at last week's IGC, although this demonstrated that the Irish Government harbour suspicions of our motives, because of what they see as our excessively close relationship with the UUP. Sir Patrick also plans to speak to John Hume on his return from the US.

Action

So far as the "peace" process is concerned, we are keeping up the pressure on the Provisionals by putting across, in measured terms, our message that the Joint Declaration is a balanced document offering much to Nationalists (and Republicans) as well as to Unionists. My Secretary of State plans a newspaper article shortly as well as further Ministerial speeches, including one by the Foreign Secretary. In these, we should continue to expound the Declaration and the processes associated with it, while pointing out that Adams has not sought clarification on any specific point.

As to the political Talks process, the Prime Minister is writing to the Taoiseach paving the way for the informal meeting in the margins of the Rugby International on 18/19 February. That letter spells out (again) that we must demonstrate that the three stranded talks process remains on course if we are to sustain the broad coalition behind the Joint Declaration.

In parallel, my Secretary of State will keep pressing the Irish to complete our long standing work on a joint 'framework document' for the Talks, to which both sides are publicly committed. He will also be seeing the Northern Ireland party leaders personally in the next week or two. In these meetings, Sir Patrick aims to go as far as he can to focus on specific issues, so as to sustain the Unionist appetite for the process without getting irretrievably out of step with the Irish. It may not be easy. The Irish insist on the principle that we should work as partners, while in practice dragging their feet. They are, in particular, suspicious of our bilateral contacts with the Unionists, and of any British paper or

* Quite so. But how can we let others veto internal progress. If necessary, we may have (voluntarily) to move abroad.

papers that we might introduce, unilaterally, in order to give focus and direction to the process. We have reassured the Irish that the Secretary of State's objective is to float ideas (rather than 'proposals' as the FT put it) to help the constitutional parties, with the two Governments, to move forward. Our commitment to a settlement across all three strands remain unchanged, and we are not going for an internal settlement.

Further down the track

Even if they go along with this procedure, the Irish side are likely to remain preoccupied with the "peace process" at least until the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis later this month. A Summit may therefore be needed in early March to draw a line under "peace" and to secure the Taoiseach's re-dedication to talks if our current efforts do not succeed. This will require a well prepared Communiqué. In the meantime we must continue to take every opportunity to get across the various messages sketched above.

I am sending copies of this letter and Annex, together with the attached summary 'Action Plan', to John Sawers and Melanie Leech.

Yours,

Jonathan

JONATHAN STEPHENS

ACTION PLAN

Done (i) The Prime Minister writes to the Taoiseach. ✓

Attached

(ii) The Secretary of State writes to the Tanaiste urging that Liaison Group work on a Joint Framework Document should be brought to early completion, and advising that meanwhile the parties will be given "notions" consolidating Ancram round discussions and looking ahead. *Good.*

(iii) Another round of meetings, involving the Secretary of State personally, with Northern Ireland parties (except DUP), to deploy "notions". (Possible separate meeting with Hume on Joint Declaration.) ✓

Yes

(iv) Liaison Group work on Joint Framework Document on securing a basis for new round table Talks. Other Anglo-Irish contacts, eg Diner. ✓

(v) Informal meetings with Tanaiste and Taoiseach at Twickenham (19 February). ✓

Yes - take forward

(vi) Possible summit in early March: communiqué important. *How if communiqué is ready enough.*

(vii) Information efforts in USA, [centred around Prime Minister's visit (28 February).]*

(viii) Further Ministerial speeches and newspaper articles.

Not too

(ix) Later on, possible White Paper if no prospect of political progress in Talks. *How late on: when? (The sounds like putting back pr. earlier date) / H. check*

* We surely don't want your Washington visit to be Ireland-centric. And you will be there just after the Ard fheis.

We can't avoid Ireland. But to centre on it in the (now) 'split' states.

ADAMS' VISIT TO THE US: WHAT HE SAID

1. This is an analysis of the things which Adams said in America. It takes account of his address to the National Committee on Foreign Policy and some of the interviews which he has given - we have not yet received full reports on all that he has said in newspaper and radio interviews.

2. It is worth stressing at the outset that, despite rumours amongst the press corps that he might have something significant to say on "Peace", there was little new in his remarks, although they were of course tailored to suit an American audience. His keynote address was well summed up by Geraldine Broal writing in the Wall Street Journal:-

"It wasn't quite the great day for the Irish that many had hoped for. Gerry Adams, leader of Sinn Fein, used his 48 hour visa in the US to deliver a dense history lesson but failed to pack a clearly identifiable olive branch in his overnight bag."

3. The scene was set for the visit in the statement issued by Adams on 29 January, following his interview with the US Consul General in Belfast to discuss his visa application. While he was unable to meet the conditions imposed on him, he made a clear pitch to swing the decision his way. He talked of the Clinton Administration having a positive role to play in the peace process and, in carefully chosen words, expressed a desire to see an end to all violence - an end to the British Army presence, the disbandment of the IRA and an end to the Loyalist death squads - "in other words a demilitarisation of the situation". These themes were to reappear many times during the visit. The trick was to distance himself from IRA violence without appearing to disown them.

4. In interviews given in the US, Adams was questioned about his attitude to violence; but interviewers, unfamiliar with the

situation, did not follow up with any penetrating points. His interview with Larry King on CNN was handled in a particularly naïve way and John Alderdice, who appeared alongside Adams during part of the programme, was not afforded the opportunity to challenge him on the fundamentals. Adams evaded suggestions that he might renounce violence by distancing himself from the issue with statements like "we need to get the violence ended", which of course included "removal of the British military presence." He denied that Sinn Fein was part of the IRA and, in other interviews, denied that he was personally involved in violence or was a member of the Provisional Army Council - he had "no responsibility or involvement in IRA operations".

5. In his keynote address, Adams presented himself as the "man of peace". The whole thrust of much of his visit was to ensure that the two words "peace" and "Adams" were imprinted on the public consciousness side by side. He set the scene by referring to the end of apartheid in South Africa and the Middle East Peace process; and talking yesterday to 1500 Irish Americans brought together by a group calling itself New Irish Agenda, he spoke of himself in the same breath as George Washington, Nelson Mandela and Yasser Arafat - all people who had been depicted as terrorists "by the opposing colonial power".

6. The 'peacemonger' image did apparently slip at least once when in a New York Post interview, Adams is reported to have said:-

"I think in circumstances where there is military occupation, that it is legitimate for people to exercise resistance. If you have British troops on the street, you will always have people to counter that with resistance."

This was a reprise of his comments in an interview given in Dublin on 20 January:-

"...Irish citizens, in our view, have the right to exercise armed resistance to counter British armed occupation of a part of our country."

7. Self-determination and the so-called Unionist veto featured prominently in the address. There was nothing new in the presentation of the "British presence" and partition as being the cause of Ireland's problems or in the assertion that the Irish people as a whole have the right to self-determination - a right that should not be subject to a Unionist veto. However, Adams argued particularly strongly against the notion that unionist consent should be required for political movement - and in a passage that appeared in the press release of his speech, but which he did not deliver, this was taken to lengths which have not been apparent in his recent public utterances on this side of the Atlantic:-

"The argument that the consent of a national minority, elevated into a majority within an undemocratic artificially created state, is necessary before any constitutional changes can occur is a nonsense."

*31
Ark Hume
about
this. //*

This is the passage picked up by Seamus Mallon MP in his question to the Prime Minister on 3 February. It does not sit easily with suggestions that Adams may have come to accept the "consent" principle in his dialogue with Hume. It is entirely contrary to one of the cornerstones of the Joint Declaration; and it flies in the face of a recent speech by the Taoiseach on self-determination when he went out of his way to stress the internationally accepted principle that where there is any suggestion of transferring sovereignty from one state to another, the consent of the inhabitants would be required to validate such a change.

8. The central part of Adams' address was a rather turgid exposition of Sinn Fein's search for peace over the past seven years. It followed the format of a 10 page press release issued on 13 January, taking the audience through "Scenario for Peace" (1987), "Pathway to Peace", "Towards a Lasting Peace" and the Hume-Adams dialogue. He claimed that the peace strategy became Sinn Fein's central function as a political party. In discussing his dialogue with Hume, Adams said "By September 93, we had reached agreement on a set of proposals ...". Interestingly in the 13 January Press Release, he said:-

"We reached the point of agreement on a set of proposals."

The difference in wording is of interest, given speculation over whether the Hume-Adams process ever did produce an agreed document. The proposals, which Adams went on to list, were the same as those set out in the 13 January Release (see attachment to my briefing letter for the meeting with John Hume on 17 January). Our assessment continues to be that they are so vague and ambiguous that most of them could be interpreted as being consistent with the Joint Declaration.

9. Adams represented the Joint Declaration as a response to and stimulated by Sinn Fein's peace initiatives. It was Sinn Fein who put 'Peace' on the agenda. In familiar terms, he said that he wanted to be persuaded that the Declaration was a basis for peace and called for clarification as, he claimed, had been given to other political parties. In vague language, he identified three issues for clarification:-

- (i) aspects of the Declaration itself;
- (ii) contradictory statements by the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach;
- (iii) processes, measures and steps envisaged.

These three points have appeared several times before, although not with precisely the same wording; on at least one occasion he has called for clarification on self-determination, which is of course set out in very clear terms in paragraph 4 of the Joint Declaration. The reference to "contradictory statements" is most likely an allusion to Adams' claim that, in his Parliamentary statement on 15 December, the Prime Minister said the Joint Declaration meant 'No' to: the value of a united Ireland; Britain joining the persuaders; joint authority; any change in the Unionist veto etc. Of course what the Prime Minister actually said was that the Joint Declaration did not contain any of these things.

10. Adams, from the evidence of this address and other statements, appears to be placing increasing emphasis on the third of the points for clarification. He asked what were the next steps in the peace process and what measures were there to move the situation forward. (No suggestion of course that the next step is for the Provisionals to give up violence!) One optimistic interpretation of this would be that there is a genuine interest in what would happen in relation to Sinn Fein if violence came to an end; however, taking Adams' comments overall, we think that it would be premature to read too much into this. If Adams' concern is the modalities through which Sinn Fein would enter the political talks process and the consequences of an end to violence, then it has already been made clear that these are matters that would be on the agenda of the exploratory dialogue that would take place, within three months of a permanent end to violence.

11. It is difficult to interpret the language used by Adams as pointing in any other direction than a demand for negotiation. Over the last month he has variously used phrases such as "there is a gap between what is now on offer and what is required" (RTE interview: 23 January) and "I don't have ... a package [to bring to the IRA leadership]" (Irish News: 9 January). In his American address he said "If there is a gap between what is required and what is on offer we should all move to bridge that gap". The clear implication is that HMG should be prepared to change its position which in turn would involve a negotiating process.

12. Adams used the clarification issue to attempt to drive a wedge between the British and Irish Governments - talking about the "more constructive attitude of the Dublin Government" and commending Albert Reynolds for taking a positive and common-sense attitude to clarification. He said that he hoped HMG would follow Mr Reynold's lead - as Sinn Fein's inability to come to a definitive attitude was tied totally to the British refusal to provide clarification. In the address and other interviews Adams also referred to "demilitarisation" and "amnesties", terms which have come to be associated with Mr Reynolds not HMG.

13. Adams ended his address with a plea that the US Government should assist the peace process by seeking to encourage dialogue and agreement - a plea firmly rejected in subsequent comments from President Clinton.

14. To sum up, Adams obviously made an impact through skilful manipulation of the US media. From what we have seen so far he was not put under pressure during interviews and has been able to portray himself as a man of peace. He did play on anti-colonialist sentiment in the US, but said little new of any significance (except perhaps the reference at paragraph 7 above). We do not judge that anything said suggests a more forthcoming attitude towards the Joint Declaration or necessarily points to preparation for a negative response. Adams continues to prevaricate.

Northern Ireland Office
February 1994