

ROM:

JONATHAN M RODELL
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L)
4 JUNE 1992

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-4 JUN 1992
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698
JUN 1992
SERVICE

cc: PS/Secretary of State (L&B)
PS/Mr Hanley (L&B, DENI)
PS/PUS (L&B)
PS/Mr Fell
Mr Thomas
Mr Alston
Mr Bell
Mr Cooke
Mr Dodds
Mr D J R Hill
Mr Archer, RID
HMA Dublin
Ms Lodge

- B
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W. J. Hill

a Mr Watkins

Jonathan Stephens - B

BRIEFING FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH TAOISEACH

Thank you for your minute of 3 June and the attached draft letter to Stephen Wall for signature by PS/Foreign Secretary. The Secretary of State has asked that the draft letter be amended so as to refer to the hope both of the Unionists and HM Government that a new and more broadly based agreement will emerge from the current political talks to replace existing Anglo-Irish Agreement.

SIGNED

JONATHAN M RODELL
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L)
OAB EXTN 6461
4 JUNE 1992

Mr. J. Hill
Ms Murphy
mm 255/6.
ASST
SEC -5 JUN 1992
CENT SEC

SOFS/14239/CAO

DM: JONATHAN STEPHENS
TALKS PLANNING UNIT
JUNE 1992

6558
-4 JUN 1992

CC PS/Mr Hanley (L&B)
PS/PUS (L&B)
PS/Mr Fell
Mr Thomas (L&B)
Mr Alston
Mr Bell (L&B)
Mr Cooke
Mr Dodds
Mr D J R Hill (L&B)
Mr Archer, RID
HMA Dublin
Ms Lodge

- B

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B)

BRIEFING FOR THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH

The Prime Minister is meeting the Taoiseach for half an hour in Rio on Thursday 11 June. The FCO provide briefing to No 10, but have asked us for a contribution on the political Talks, which is likely to be the main issue.

2. I attach a contribution, in the form of a draft letter for the FCO to send to No 10. We have suggested that briefing on progress in Strand 1 should be provided by telegram nearer the time. But detailed points to make are provided on the approach to Strands 2 and 3, including:

- the possibility of a joint message from the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach to the opening session of Strand 2
- how the agenda of Strand 2 might be approached
- the importance to the unionists of the Irish indicating at an early stage their readiness to amend Articles 2 and 3

SC/SIL/19518

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER

ADDRESSER'S REFERENCE - probing as to what outcome the Irish may be looking for from Strands 2 and 3.

3. Is the Secretary of State content with this briefing?

TO: PS/Prime Minister

ENCLOSURES:

COPIES TO BE SENT TO

(SIGNED)

JONATHAN STEPHENS
TALKS PLANNING UNIT
3 JUNE 1992
OAB EXT 6502

FOR SIGNATURE BY / FOREIGN SECRETARY

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH: BID DE JANSIRO

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach are meeting for 30 minutes at 4.30pm on Thursday 11 June during UNCED in Rio. The meeting is likely to focus on the current political talks in Northern Ireland. There are two main issues to cover:

- Progress in Strand 1. There are some signs of progress, but the outlook remains very uncertain. The situation changes by the day, so we shall provide detailed briefing by telegram, nearer the time.

- Approach to Strands 2 and 3. Assuming the talks do not break down, it would be helpful to discuss how the two

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DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE

TO: PS/Prime Minister

ENCLOSURES:

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FOR SIGNATURE BY: PS/FOREIGN SECRETARY

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH: RIO DE JANEIRO

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach are meeting for 30 minutes at 4.30pm on Thursday 11 June during UNCED in Rio. The meeting is likely to focus on the current political Talks in Northern Ireland. There are two main issues to cover:

- Progress in Strand 1. There are some signs of progress, but the outlook remains very uncertain. The situation changes by the day, so we shall provide detailed briefing by telegram, nearer the time.
- Approach to Strands 2 and 3. Assuming the Talks do not break down, it would be helpful to discuss how the two

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Governments plan to approach Strand 2, and what they each hope to get from it. The rest of this letter therefore offers points to make on the main issues which will arise in Strand 2. These will be updated if necessary with the further briefing we shall provide by telegram.

Handling Strand 2

The decision when to propose the launch of Strand 2 is for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, after consultation with all the participants. The Irish (and the SDLP) want an early move to Strand 2. In the groundrules of 26 March 1991 all the participants agreed that all three Strands should be under way 'within weeks' of each other. By the time of the meeting with the Taoiseach Strand 1 will have been underway for six weeks. But there is no point in proposing the launch of Strand 2, until there is a reasonable prospect that all the NI parties will be ready to make the transition. Realistically, that will not be before 15 June at the earliest.

Strand 2 will come under the independent chairmanship of Sir Ninian Stephen. He has already met the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in London, and the Irish Foreign Minister, Mr Andrews, in Dublin. Once Strand 2 is reached, the procedure and agenda will be for Sir Ninian to determine, although we can expect him to take the advice of both Governments. It therefore makes sense for the two Governments to discuss how they would like

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to see Strand 2 handled. But it will be important to respect the position of the Irish Government as co-sponsor of the Talks (they have recently shown some sensitivity about this, and about our commitment to all three strands of the Talks process). The Prime Minister might like to make the following points:

- We remain firmly committed to all three strands of the Talks process as envisaged by Peter Brooke last year. We want to reach Strand 2 as much as you do. Patrick Mayhew's judgement, after consultation, on when to propose the launch of Strand 2 will be on the basis of the 26 March guidelines. He is determined to do everything he can to bring the parties to the point where Strand 2 would be worthwhile.

- My own preference is to hold myself in reserve rather than to participate in the opening session of Strand 2. But I wonder if we might send a joint message, giving our support to Strand 2 and wishing it success? But we would need to avoid any suggestion - which could be fatal to the Talks - that we were seeking jointly to impose solutions on the parties. If you agree, we could ask officials to agree a draft.

- The agenda will be for Sir Ninian Stephen to determine. But he may appreciate some guidance from us both. We think

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are looking for. The Prime Minister might like to draw on the following points:

it's important that everyone has the opportunity to raise constitutional issues at the start. But that Strand 2 does not get bogged down on these issues before it has a chance to consider others.

- The fact is already clear that there are some issues which must be addressed in Strand 2 if there is to be any agreement.

- So the best sequence might be: opening statements and debate, including on the constitutional issue, but without prejudice to the detailed positions of the participants; definition of common interests and areas of co-operation; exploration of institutional proposals from Strand 2 participants (including any relating to the EC); and the constitutional issue. What do you think?

- But the unionists have also made it clear Strand 2 must recognise that the Irish Government's position in Northern Ireland's

constitutional position. They will be looking for an early

It will be important to stress the need for a realistic Irish opening position in Strand 2. For the unionists, an Irish indication that they are prepared to abandon their territorial claim to Northern Ireland by amending Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution, is probably a necessary condition of completing Strand 2, and they are likely to press for such an assurance early on. The Irish are unlikely to make any concessions at least before they have made their own demands. It would be helpful to discover what the Irish hope to secure from Strands 2 and 3: they have so far not disclosed the outcome they

Recognise that you too will want to raise constitutional issues as Government of Ireland Act 1920. And recognise

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are looking for. The Prime Minister might like to draw on the following points:

- The Talks process is built on securing the agreement of all participants. But it is already clear that there are some issues which must be addressed in Strand 2 if there is to be any agreement.
- SDLP have already made it clear that there must be recognition of the Irish identity of the minority. Strand 2 must explore how that can be done.
- But the unionists have also made it clear Strand 2 must resolve the uncertainties they see in Northern Ireland's constitutional position. They will be looking for an early indication of the Irish Government's willingness to promote amendment of Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution.
- Historic achievement if unionists prepared to sit down with Irish Government. Very much hope Irish Government will be prepared to recognise the risk unionists will have taken. Look for an appropriately historic response from the Irish.
- Recognise that you too will want to raise constitutional issues eg Government of Ireland Act 1920. And recognise

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that you may also see this as a way into discussion of institutions such as a Council of Ireland (although specific historical connotations from 1920 and 1973-74 may not make this the best way of broaching the topic with the unionists). Agenda allows for any such issues to be raised.

- For our part we will not be departing from the principle in Article 1 of the Agreement, to which you are co-signatories, that Northern Ireland is part of the UK unless a majority there wishes otherwise. But we do look forward to constructive discussion of possible new North/South institutions.

- Unionists seem prepared to be flexible on North/South institutions, if they can be satisfied on the constitutional point. They have promised to make proposals in Strand 2 to recognise the Irish identity of the minority. Some form of institutionalised co-operation and consultation between North and South is bound to be on Strand 2 agenda.

- And unionists seem now to accept that institutionalised co-operation and consultation between London and Dublin will continue on matters not devolved. For our part, we shall attach importance to continued co-operation and

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consultation - not least on further enhancement of cross-border security co-operation.

- What are your views on possible outcomes of Strand 2?

- Very much hope that our two Governments will keep in close contact before and during Strand 2.

- For our part we will not be departing from the principle in Article 1 of the Agreement, to which you are co-signatories, that Northern Ireland is part of the UK unless a majority there wishes otherwise. But we do look forward to constructive discussion of possible new North/South institutions.

- Unionists seem prepared to be flexible on North/South institutions, if they can be satisfied on the constitutional policy. They have promised to make proposals in Strand 2 to recognise the Irish identity of the minority. Some form of institutionalised co-operation and consultation between North and South is bound to be a Strand 2 agenda.

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