

FOIA MARKER

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Folder Title:

Northern Ireland-Prelude to IRA Ceasefire, 1994

Staff Office-Individual:

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Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

Clinton Library

DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. cable	re: EU Corfu Summit-Anglo/Irish Talks (3 pages)	06/29/1994	P1/b(1) KBH 8/29/2023
002. cable	re: Northern Ireland: HMG Preparing Answers to Sinn Fein Questions (3 pages)	05/16/1994	P1/b(1) KBH 8/29/2023
003. cable	re: Northern Ireland: British Government Responds to Sinn Fein Questions (5 pages)	05/20/1994	P1/b(1) KBH 8/29/2023
004. cable	re: Possible Breakthrough in Northern Ireland Peace Process (3 pages)	05/13/1994	P1/b(1) KBH 8/29/2023

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Staff Director (Nancy Soderberg)
OA/Box Number: 1397

FOLDER TITLE:

Northern Ireland-Prelude to IRA Ceasefire, 1994

2011-0355-F
rs1713

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

IMMEDIATE

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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PRT: SODERBERG

SIT: BLEICKEN BLEICKENN LEBOURGEOIS NSC SUM2 VAX

<PREC> IMMEDIATE <CLAS> ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ <DTG> 291308Z JUN 94

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5625
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 2172
RUSNSTB/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 0012
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 DUBLIN 003607
LONDON PLS PASS BELFAST
E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, PHUM, PTER, UK, EI
SUBJECT: EU CORFU SUMMIT - ANGLO/IRISH TALKS
REF: (A) ATHENS 06605
(B) DUBLIN 03453 (NOTAL)

DECLASSIFIED
PER E.O. 13526
2011-035J-F(5.16)
K8H 4/11/2023

1. ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ -- ENTIRE TEXT.
2. (2) SUMMARY. FERGUS FINLAY, PERSONAL ADVISOR TO FOREIGN MINISTER DICK SPRING, SAYS THAT PRIME MINISTER REYNOLDS PRESENTED JOHN MAJOR WITH A "FORMULA" FOR RESOLVING THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE AND WITH IDEAS ABOUT THE NATURE OF NORTH-SOUTH INSTITUTIONS IN CORFU. FINLAY HAS HEARD RUMORS ABOUT A 3-MONTH IRA CEASEFIRE AND SAYS THAT SINN FEIN LEADER GERRY ADAMS IS "OPTIMISTIC" ABOUT PEACE. THE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT MAY BE READY BY THE NEXT MAJOR/REYNOLDS SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR JULY. IF NOT, IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO POSTPONE IT UNTIL SEPTEMBER. EVEN THEN, FINLAY IS UNCERTAIN THAT MOLYNEAUX'S ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY WILL AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN NEW TALKS. SPRING RESENTS REYNOLDS' ATTEMPT TO ENCROACH ON HIS TURF IN REGARD TO DISCUSSIONS ON A JOINT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT; A SERIOUS CONFLICT BETWEEN THEM COULD OCCUR IN THE NEAR FUTURE. END SUMMARY.

MEETING WITH FINLAY

3. ON JUNE 28, WE MET WITH FERGUS FINLAY, PERSONAL ADVISOR TO FOREIGN MINISTER DICK SPRING, TO DISCUSS THE ANGLO-IRISH TALKS AT THE CORFU SUMMIT (REF. A). FINLAY ACCOMPANIED PRIME MINISTER REYNOLDS AND HIM TO CORFU, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS DISTINGUISHED BY ITS BEAUTY, HEAT AND HIGH PRICES.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE

4. FINLAY SAID THAT REYNOLDS PRESENTED MAJOR WITH A "FORMULA" FOR RESOLVING THE SO-CALLED CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUE. IT PROPOSES AMENDMENT OF ARTICLES 2 AND 3 OF THE IRISH CONSTITUTION TO MAKE IRISH SOVEREIGNTY OVER NORTHERN

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IRELAND AN ASPIRATION RATHER THAN A CLAIM. IN RETURN, THE BRITISH WOULD AMEND ARTICLE 75 OF THE 1920 GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND (GOI) ACT TO PROVIDE FOR PARLIAMENTARY SOVEREIGNTY OVER NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY AS LONG AS A MAJORITY OF THE NORTH'S RESIDENTS WANT TO REMAIN PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. THE IRISH HOPE TO RECEIVE THE BRITISH RESPONSE LATER THIS WEEK.

5. FINLAY NOTED THAT REYNOLDS HAD WANTED TO HAVE ANY REFERENCE TO PARLIAMENTARY SOVEREIGNTY OVER NORTHERN IRELAND DELETED, BUT HAD AGREED WITH SPRING'S ARGUMENT THAT, IF THE IRISH AMENDED ARTICLES 2 AND 3 AND THE BRITISH DELETED THEIR CLAIM OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE NORTH, IT WOULD ENJOY "DE FACTO" INDEPENDENCE, AND CIVIL WAR COULD ENSUE. NORTH-SOUTH INSTITUTIONS

6. FINLAY CONTINUED THAT THE OTHER "PROPOSAL" REYNOLDS MADE TO MAJOR IN CORFU WAS A SUGGESTION ABOUT THE EVENTUAL SCOPE AND NATURE OF FUTURE NORTH-SOUTH INSTITUTIONS. REFERRING TO REYNOLDS "IRISH TIMES" INTERVIEW IN BOSTON (REF. B) IN WHICH HE TALKED ABOUT A NORTH-SOUTH "AUTHORITY" WITH EXECUTIVE POWERS, FINLAY SAID THAT THE TAOISEACH'S REMARKS CAME ACROSS AS A VARIANT OF "JOINT SOVEREIGNTY," ANATHEMA TO UNIONISTS. WHAT THE IRISH HAVE IN MIND, RATHER, IS A CORPUS OF INSTITUTIONS CONTRIBUTING TO CLOSER COMMUNICATION BETWEEN, AND GREATER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN, BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH. EXAMPLES OF AREAS TO BE COVERED ARE TOURISM AND INVESTMENT. ERADICATION OF DISEASES IN LIVESTOCK IS ANOTHER, BUT IT MAY BE TOO "LOW-PROFILE" TO APPEAL TO MOST NATIONALISTS. WHAT THE IRISH ARE ANXIOUS TO AVOID IS ANYTHING WHICH SMACKS OF "AN AGENDA FOR REUNIFICATION" LEST THE UNIONIST BE PROVOKED INTO PREMATURE REJECTION OF NORTH-SOUTH INSTITUTIONS.

THE JULY SUMMIT

7. GIVEN WHERE THINGS STAND IN REGARD TO THE FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT, FINLAY BELIEVES THAT IT MAY NOT BE READY IN TIME FOR THE REYNOLDS/MAJOR SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR JULY. IN THAT CASE, IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO POSTPONE IT UNTIL SEPTEMBER. EVEN IF A FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT IS READY BY THEN, MOLYNEAUX'S ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY MIGHT REFUSE TO PARTICIPATE IN NEW TALKS.

SINN FEIN/IRA

8. FINLAY

HAS HEARD RUMORS OF A POSSIBLE 3-MONTH IRA CEASEFIRE AND OF AN IMMINENT 2-DAY, 200-PARTICIPANT, IRA "COUNCIL" MEETING SOMEWHERE IN THE REPUBLIC DURING WHICH THE ORGANIZATION'S RESPONSE TO THE JOINT DECLARATION WILL BE DEBATED AND A VOTE TAKEN. IF THERE IS A CEASEFIRE, BOTH GOVERNMENTS WILL TAKE THE ALREADY ADOPTED LINE THAT THERE

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CAN BE NO/NO NEGOTIATIONS WITH SINN FEIN/IRA BEFORE A
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 DUBLIN 003607

LONDON PLS PASS BELFAST

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, PHUM, PTER, UK, EI

SUBJECT: EU CORFU SUMMIT - ANGLO/IRISH TALKS

PERMANENT RENUNCIATION OF VIOLENCE. FINLAY ADDED THAT HE WOULD NOT BE SURPRISED, HOWEVER, IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WERE TO ENTER INTO "DISCUSSIONS" WITH THE IRA IN THE EVENT OF A TEMPORARY CEASEFIRE. FINLAY ALSO MENTIONED THAT A JOURNALIST WORKING IN THE NORTH WHO MEETS REGULARLY WITH SINN FEIN LEADER GERRY ADAMS HAD SAID RECENTLY THAT ADAMS' "GUT FEELING" ABOUT PEACE IS ONE OF OPTIMISM.

REYNOLDS VS. SPRING

9. FINLAY (PROTECT) SAID THAT THE REASON FOR REYNOLDS' RECENT "IRISH TIMES" INTERVIEW (REF. B) WAS HIS DESIRE TO PREEMPT SPRING IN REGARD TO NEW TALKS NOW THAT THE PEACE PROCESS, WHICH HAD MONOPOLIZED THE PRIME MINISTER'S ATTENTION, HAD BEGUN TO RUN OUT OF STEAM. NOTING THAT SPRING WAS NOT/NOT AMUSED BY THIS TURN OF EVENTS, FINLAY ALLOWED THAT HE COULD FORESEE A SERIOUS CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IF IT OCCURRED, FINLAY ASSERTED, IT WOULD BE MORE ABOUT "TURF" THAN ABOUT POLICY.

SMITH

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PRT: SODERBERG

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<DTG> 161725Z MAY 94

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1869

INFO RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN 1681

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 007918

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PTER, UK, EI

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: HMG PREPARING ANSWERS TO
SINN FEIN QUESTIONS

THIS IS A JOINT LONDON/BELFAST MESSAGE

REF: DUBLIN 2716

1. ~~SECRET~~ -- ENTIRE TEXT.

SUMMARY

2. BRITISH OFFICIALS HAVE PREPARED A RESPONSE TO SINN FEIN'S "20 QUESTIONS" (REFTEL AND PREVIOUS) AND HOPE TO OBTAIN MINISTERIAL APPROVAL BY MAY 17. THEY RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO TREAT THE INITIATIVE SERIOUSLY, AND NOT BE SEEN TO DISMISS IT, BUT ARE CONCERNED ABOUT ADVERSE UNIONIST REACTION TO ANY PERCEIVED DIALOGUE. THE ANSWERS WILL NOT GO BEYOND POSITIONS ALREADY ELABORATED IN THE DOWNING STREET DECLARATION AND OTHER HMG STATEMENTS. SINN FEIN AND THE PROVISIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY (PIRA) PROBABLY WILL NOT LIKE THE RESPONSES, BUT MAY SUSPEND TERRORIST ACTIONS WHILE CONSIDERING THEM. END SUMMARY.

THE VIEW FROM BELFAST

3. NORTHERN IRELAND CIVIL SERVICE HEAD DAVID FELL TOLD BELFAST CONSUL GENERAL MAY 14 THAT HMG WOULD REPLY IN WRITING TO THE "CLARIFICATIONS" REQUESTED BY SINN FEIN. HE WOULD URGE THAT BOTH THE QUESTIONS AND HMG'S RESPONSE BE MADE PUBLIC, THOUGH PRIME MINISTER MAJOR WOULD MAKE HE ULTIMATE DECISION ON THIS. HMG INTENDED TO BE AS CLEAR AND FORTHCOMING AS POSS BLE, BUT FELL WAS CERTAIN THAT SINN FEIN WOULD NOT BE HAPPY WITH ALL OF THE ANSWERS. HMG WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S "APPROVAL" OF ITS ANSWERS, BUT DID NOT WANT TO ACCORD DUBLIN FORMAL "CLEARANCE."

4. NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE (NIO) BELFAST SECURITY CHIEF JOHN STEELE TOLD THE CG MAY 15 THAT HE, TOO, STRONGLY BELIEVED THAT THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS SHOULD

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KJH 4/11/2023

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BE MADE PUBLIC; ANYTHING LESS THAN FULL DISCLOSURE WOULD ONLY FUEL MORE LOYALIST VIOLENCE.

THE VIEW FROM LONDON

5. NIO LONDON ASSISTANT SECRETARY JIM DANIELL TOLD US MAY 16 THAT HE AND OTHERS HAD WORKED THROUGH THE WEEKEND PREPARING A DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS. THEIR DRAFT WOULD GO TO MINISTERS THAT EVENING, AND DANIELL HOPED TO HAVE A FIRM HMG POSITION TO SHARE WITH US MAY 17 -- "UNLESS I'M ON A FLIGHT TO DUBLIN."

6. DANIELL SAID THE DRAFTERS HAD OPERATED WITHIN THE FOLLOWING PARAMETERS:

- THE ANSWERS MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE JOINT DECLARATION, AND WITH OTHER SUBSEQUENT HMG STATEMENTS.
- NOTHING IN THE ANSWERS WOULD GO BEYOND PREVIOUSLY STATED POSITIONS.

7. DANIELL AGREED WITH OUR SUGGESTION THAT THE TONE OF THE RESPONSE WOULD BE AS IMPORTANT AS ITS CONTENT. MOST BRITISH OFFICIALS WERE SKEPTICAL ABOUT THE SINCERITY OF THE QUESTIONS (MANY OF WHICH WERE CLEARLY CRAFTED TO ELICIT BRITISH CONCESSIONS), BUT THEY RECOGNIZED THE NEED TO TREAT THE SINN FEIN INITIATIVE SERIOUSLY, AND TO AVOID ANY APPEARANCE OF CONDESCENSION OR ARROGANCE. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, THEY NEEDED TO CONSIDER THE REACTION OF "OUR OTHER CONSTITUENCIES."

8. DANIELL WAS HEARTENED BY A STATEMENT BY ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY (UUP) LEADER JAMES MOLYNEAUX THAT THE SINN FEIN QUESTIONS OFFERED HMG AN OPPORTUNITY TO "CALL HEIR BLUFF." THIS IMPLIED THAT THE UUP AT LEAST WOULD NOT REACT TOO STRONGLY AGAINST THE FACT OF A RESPONSE.
DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH

9. DANIELL CAUTIONED AGAINST EXCESSIVE OPTIMISM OVER AN EARLY OUTBREAK OF PEACE, RECALLING AN EARLIER STATEMENT BY SINN FEIN'S MARTIN MCGUINNESS THAT CLARIFICATION WOULD NOT BE "THE END OF THE STORY." SINN FEIN, MCGUINNESS SAID, WOULD HAVE TO "CONSULT OUR MILITARY COLLEAGUES" BEFORE MAKING ANY FINAL DECISION TO ACCEPT OR REJECT THE JOINT DECLARATION. THIS DELIBERATION COULD TAKE QUITE SOME TIME.

10. WHAT SINN FEIN AND PIRA MIGHT DO, DANIELL SUGGESTED, WAS TO SUSPEND ITS ARMED OPERATIONS DURING THE DELIBERATION PROCESS. A CEASEFIRE ANNOUNCED DURING THE COMING WEEK WOULD COINCIDE NICELY WITH THE EUROPEAN ELECTION CAMPAIGN, AND MIGHT BOOST THE PROSPECTS OF SINN FEIN CANDIDATES.

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~~SECRET~~ SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 007918

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PTER, UK, EI

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: HMG PREPARING ANSWERS TO
SINN FEIN QUESTIONS

COMMENT

11. MOST BRITISH OFFICIALS DO NOT TAKE THE SINN FEIN
QUESTIONS SERIOUSLY -- REGARDING THEM AS A FURTHER
DELAYING TACTIC, AND A GAMBIT TO EXPLOIT DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN LONDON AND DUBLIN -- BUT WILL TREAT THEM
SERIOUSLY ON THE OFF CHANCE THAT THEY REPRESENT SINCERE
CONFUSION, AND TO AVOID A RIFT WITH DUBLIN AND
WASHINGTON. HMG IS WRESTLING (AS IT HAS FOR OVER A
YEAR) WITH THE DILEMMA OF MAKING THE MOST ATTRACTIVE
POSSIBLE OFFER TO REPUBLICAN MODERATES WITHOUT LOSING
THE COOPERATION OF MODERATE UNIONISTS. DEAL

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PRT: SIT SODERBERG

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<PREC> IMMEDIATE <CLAS> ~~SECRET~~

<DTG> 201516Z MAY 94

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2170

INFO RUEHDL/AMEMBASSY DUBLIN PRIORITY 1697

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 008256

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PTER, UK, EI

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: BRITISH GOVERNMENT RESPONDS
TO SINN FEIN QUESTIONS

REF: LONDON 7993 AND PREVIOUS
SUMMARY

1. (C) HMG'S RESPONSE TO SINN FEIN'S "20 QUESTIONS" (FAXED TO EUR/NE) IS A LENGTHY AND SERIOUS DOCUMENT, COUCHED IN TERMS AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE WITHIN THE BOUNDS OF EXISTING POLICY. IT CONTAINS LITTLE NEW INFORMATION, AND IS UNLIKELY TO SWAY HARD-LINERS IN SINN FEIN AND THE PROVISIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY (PIRA), BUT IS DESIGNED TO APPEAL TO THOSE ON THE FRINGES OF THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT, AND TO BROADER IRISH AND INTERNATIONAL OPINION.

2. (S) FINAL DETAILS OF THE STATEMENT WERE IRONED OUT ONLY MINUTES BEFORE ITS RELEASE. THE CABINET HAD CONSIDERED SEVERAL OPTIONS ON FORMAT AND PRESENTATION, TRYING TO RESPOND ADEQUATELY TO EACH OF THE QUESTIONS WITHOUT APPEARING TO LET SINN FEIN DICTATE THE AGENDA.

3. (C) INITIAL REACTION HAS BEEN FAVORABLE. THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AND NORTHERN NATIONALISTS STRONGLY ENDORSED IT, MAKING CLEAR THAT SINN FEIN SHOULD RESPOND QUICKLY. ONLY IAN PAISLEY DENOUNCED IT AS A "LOVE LETTER TO GERRY ADAMS." SINN FEIN SAID SOME OF THE ANSWERS WERE ENCOURAGING, BUT THAT THE MOVEMENT NEEDED SEVERAL WEEKS TO CONSIDER IT. END SUMMARY.
GROUPING THE QUESTIONS

4. (C) AFTER MUCH INTERNAL DEBATE, HMG DECIDED TO "COMMENT ON" (NOT "ANSWER") SINN FEIN'S 20 QUESTIONS BY GROUPING THEM IN SIX CATEGORIES. ONLY ONE OF THE QUESTIONS WAS CONSIDERED A GENUINE REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE JOINT DECLARATION. THE REST, ACCORDING TO THE STATEMENT, EITHER COULD BE ANSWERED BY REFERENCE TO THE DECLARATION, OR RELATED TO ISSUES TO BE

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KSH 7/11/2023

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RESOLVED IN THE COURSE OF POLITICAL DIALOGUE.

5. (C) THE ONLY NEW INFORMATION IN THE STATEMENT IS THE REPLY TO SINN FEIN'S QUESTION ABOUT HOW MAJORITY OPINION ON IRISH UNIFICATION IN THE NORTH WOULD BE DETERMINED. THE ANSWER IS THAT A NEW "BORDER POLL" OR REFERENDUM, AS ENVISAGED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT OF 1973, WOULD BE HELD AT SOME UNSPECIFIED FUTURE DATE. A SERIOUS EFFORT

6. (C) ITS SHORTAGE OF NEW INFORMATION NOTWITHSTANDING, THE BRITISH STATEMENT IS A SERIOUS, LENGTHY (21 PAGES) AND GENERALLY FORTHCOMING DOCUMENT. IT ADDRESSES EACH OF SINN FEIN'S QUESTIONS, AND DUCKS ONLY THE QUESTION ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE JOINT DECLARATION AND THE HUME-ADAMS AGREEMENT, NOTING SIMPLY THAT "THE ONLY TEXT THAT BEARS OUR NAME AND ON WHICH WE CAN COMMENT" IS THE JOINT DECLARATION.

7. (C) BRITISH MEDIA REPORTING EARLIER IN THE DAY (PRESUMABLY BASED ON DOWNING STREET BACKGROUNDS) HAD SUGGESTED THAT THE RESPONSE WOULD AMOUNT TO A "BRUSH-OFF." OFFICIALS IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE (NIO), WHO HAD LABORED NIGHT AND DAY FOR A WEEK ON THE DOCUMENT, WERE INFURIATED BY THIS SPIN. THEIR GOAL -- SHARED BY NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY SIR PATRICK MAYHEW -- WAS TO TREAT THE QUESTIONS AS A SERIOUS OVERTURE, AND TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT GOING BEYOND THE JOINT DECLARATION AND OTHER PREVIOUS STATEMENTS. TARGETING THE AUDIENCE

8. (C) NIO ASSISTANT SECRETARY JIM DANIELL, WHO BRIEFED US ON THE DOCUMENT JUST BEFORE ITS RELEASE, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT WAS UNLIKELY TO SWAY OPINIONS WITHIN THE HARD CORE OF THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT. NOTHING IN THE STATEMENT, OR IN THE JOINT DECLARATION, OFFERED SINN FEIN ANY BETTER TERMS THAN THOSE THAT WERE AVAILABLE IN THE SUNNINGDALE AGREEMENT IN 1973, AND IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE THAT MANY IN PIRA WOULD RESIST ACCEPTING THE SAME OFFER AFTER TWO MORE DECADES OF CONFLICT.

9. (C) THE AIM OF THE STATEMENT, DANIELL SAID, WAS TO APPEAL TO THOSE WITHIN THE REPUBLICAN MOVEMENT WHO WERE WEARY OF THE CONFLICT AND LOOKING FOR A WAY OUT. IF ENOUGH OF THEM COULD BE CONVINCED THAT THIS WAS THE BEST AND FINAL OFFER FROM BOTH GOVERNMENTS, THE HARD-CORE REMAINDER COULD BE ISOLATED. THIS WAS THE POINT OF THE CONCLUDING SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT:

-- "SINN FEIN HAVE ASKED THEIR QUESTIONS. BUT THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION BEING ASKED BY THE PEOPLE

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OF THESE ISLANDS IS FOR THEM TO ANSWER. DEMOCRACY
AND VIOLENCE CANNOT BE RECONCILED."

-- "THE ALTERNATIVE IS ISOLATION -- STANDING ON THE

~~SECRET~~ SECTION 02 OF 03 LONDON 008256

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PTER, UK, EI

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: BRITISH GOVERNMENT RESPONDS
TO SINN FEIN QUESTIONS

OUTSIDE WHILE THOSE COMMITTED TO DEMOCRACY SHAPE
THE AGREEMENT, STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONS THAT
WILL DETERMINE THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE
PEOPLES OF THESE ISLANDS."

-- "THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE IN IRELAND, NORTH AND
SOUTH AND OF BOTH TRADITIONS, DEMAND AN END TO
VIOLENCE NOW. THEIR WISHES COULD NOT BE CLEARER."

-- "SINN FEIN ASK WHAT COMES NEXT. CERTAINLY NO
FURTHER PLAYING FOR TIME. IF THE JOINT DECLARATION
IS 'THE STARTING POINT OF A PEACE PROCESS,' THE
NEXT STEP IS FOR VIOLENCE TO END FOR GOOD."

10. (C) THE OTHER TARGET AUDIENCE OF THE STATEMENT,
DANIELL SAID, WAS IRISH OPINION WORLDWIDE -- AND
PARTICULARLY IN THE U.S. THERE WAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE
FOR THE IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY TO PLAY IN CONVINCING
SINN FEIN THAT THE OFFER ON THE TABLE FROM THE TWO
GOVERNMENTS WAS REASONABLE AND THE BEST THEY WOULD GET.
FURTHER VIOLENCE WOULD BE FUTILE AND COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE.
GOVERNMENT OF IRELAND ACT

11. (C) DANIELL CONFESSED TO SOME PUZZLEMENT OVER
REFERENCES IN THE SINN FEIN QUESTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT
OF IRELAND ACT OF 1920. SINN FEIN SEEMED DETERMINED TO
PUT IT ON THE AGENDA, PARTICULARLY THE CLAUSE WHICH
REITERATED THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT'S AUTHORITY OVER
NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT IRISH PRIME MINISTER REYNOLDS HAD
TALKED OF IMPLEMENTING OTHER LONG-NEGLECTED PORTIONS OF
THE ACT, PARTICULARLY ITS PROVISION FOR AN ALL-IRELAND
COUNCIL. THE IRONY, DANIELL MUSED, WAS THAT THERE WAS
VERY LITTLE LEFT OF THE ACT; MOST OF ITS PROVISIONS HAD
BEEN OVERRIDDEN BY SUBSEQUENT AGREEMENTS. HMG WOULD
HAVE NO OBJECTION TO REPEALING THE REMAINDER IF ALL
PARTIES AGREED.

PACKAGING PROBLEMS

12. (S) WHILE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE RESPONSE WAS AGREED
SEVERAL DAYS AGO, AFTER A WEEKEND OF FURIOUS DRAFTING IN
THE NIO, DETAILS OF THE FORMAT AND PRESENTATION REMAINED
UNDECIDED UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE. THE CABINET'S AD HOC

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NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE REVIEWED THE DRAFT TEXT THREE TIMES, SENDING IT BACK FOR REVISION TWICE.

13. (S) THE MAIN QUESTION WAS HOW TO COUCH THE RESPONSES. GIVEN HMG'S PREVIOUS REFUSAL TO PROVIDE "CLARIFICATION," SEVERAL MINISTERS (NOTABLY FOREIGN SECRETARY HURD) INSISTED THAT THERE COULD BE NO DIRECT "ANSWERS." HURD WANTED A STATEMENT THAT MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE QUESTIONS, BUT COMMENTED ON THEM IN THE COURSE OF A SINGLE DOCUMENT. THE NIO FAVORED A MORE DIRECT REPLY TO EACH QUESTION. AFTER THE WEEKLY THURSDAY MORNING CABINET MEETING MAY 19, THE NORTHERN IRELAND COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THREE ALTERNATIVE DRAFTS, AND COMPROMISED ON A "CLUSTERED" RESPONSE.

14. (S) THAT LEFT OPEN THE QUESTION OF HOW TO PRESENT THE DOCUMENT. INITIALLY, THE PREFERRED OPTION WAS TO PLANT A QUESTION DURING PRIME MINISTER'S QUESTION TIME THURSDAY AFTERNOON, BUT DELAYS IN FINALIZING THE DRAFT AND OBTAINING IRISH GOVERNMENT APPROVAL MADE THAT IMPOSSIBLE. IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER SPRING'S ENDORSEMENT OF THE DOCUMENT WAS RECEIVED ONLY 15 MINUTES BEFORE ITS RELEASE. IN THE END, MAYHEW GAVE IT TO THE PRESS AT 1800 LOCAL TIME WITH MINIMAL COMMENTARY.

INITIAL REACTIONS

15. (U) INITIAL REACTIONS TO THE STATEMENT THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH ISLES WERE ALMOST UNIFORMLY POSITIVE. BRITISH MEDIA WERE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED BY THE DOCUMENT'S LENGTH AND SERIOUSNESS, HAVING BEEN LED TO EXPECT A "BRUSH-OFF." SPRING SAID HE WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO CLAIM AUTHORSHIP OF IT. SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC AND LABOUR PARTY (SDLP) LEADERS JOHN HUME AND SEAMUS MALLON OFFERED STRONG ENDORSEMENT, SAYING THE "CLARIFICATION" ISSUE HAD BEEN COMPREHENSIVELY ADDRESSED, AND THAT IT WAS NOW UP TO SINN FEIN TO RESPOND PROMPTLY. ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY (UUP) POLITICIANS WERE MORE LUKEWARM: THEY ACCEPTED THAT THE STATEMENT BROKE NO DANGEROUS NEW GROUND, BUT CONSIDERED THE WHOLE EXERCISE FUTILE. ONLY DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY (DUP) LEADER IAN PAISLEY DENOUNCED THE DOCUMENT OUTRIGHT, DESCRIBING IT AS "A 21-PAGE LOVE LETTER TO GERRY ADAMS."

16. (U) SINN FEIN NORTHERN CHAIRMAN MITCH MCLAUGHLIN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE BRITISH STATEMENT WAS A SERIOUS EFFORT, AND SAID SOME OF THE RESPONSES WERE ENCOURAGING. MARTIN MCGUINNESS DESCRIBED THE STATEMENT AS "A SMALL STEP IN THE SLOWLY EVOLVING PEACE PROCESS." BUT MCLAUGHLIN SAID THE MOVEMENT WOULD NEED SOME TIME TO

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PTER, UK, EI

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: BRITISH GOVERNMENT RESPONDS
TO SINN FEIN QUESTIONS

STUDY THE DOCUMENT BEFORE REACHING A CONCLUSION. PARTY
LEADER GERRY ADAMS HAD EARLIER INDICATED THAT A
CONSIDERED SINN FEIN RESPONSE WAS UNLIKELY BEFORE THE
JUNE 9 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS.

COMMENT

17. (C) THE DOCUMENT IS SIGNIFICANTLY MORE SUBSTANTIVE
THAN WE INITIALLY UNDERSTOOD, WHILE REMAINING WITHIN THE
PARAMETERS OF PREVIOUS POSITIONS. SINN FEIN HAS BEEN
DEMANDING "CLARIFICATION" FOR FOUR MONTHS. IT HAS NOW
ASKED ALL THE QUESTIONS IT COULD THINK OF, AND HAS
GOTTEN A CONSIDERED RESPONSE, ENDORSED BY DUBLIN.

15. (C) THE BALL IS FIRMLY BACK IN THE REPUBLICAN
COURT. IF THEY CONTINUE TO PROCRASTINATE, THEIR MOTIVES
WILL BE MORE SUSPECT THAN EVER. HMG HOPES TO CONVINCE
THEM THAT THE TRAIN IS LEAVING THE STATION, BUT CAN DO
SO ONLY IF THE OTHER PARTIES -- PARTICULARLY DUBLIN AND
THE SDLP -- ARE ON BOARD. DEAL

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

PAGE 01 OF 03

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5273
INFO RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE 2064
~~SECRET~~ DUBLIN 002702

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LONDON PASS BELFAST

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR

TAGS: PREL, EI, UK

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE BREAKTHROUGH IN NORTHERN IRELAND
.....PEACE PROCESS

REF: (A) DUBLIN 02608
(B) LONDON 07022
(C) DUBLIN 02191

1. ~~SECRET~~ - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. RELIABLE SOURCES CLOSE TO SINN FEIN/IRA INFORMED ME EARLY MAY 13 THAT SINN FEIN WILL ANNOUNCE ON SUNDAY, MAY 15, THAT IT HAS GIVEN THE IRISH GOVERNMENT THE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE JOINT DECLARATION WHICH IT WANTS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO CLARIFY. THE TAOISEACH, WHO IS IN THE U.S., WILL THEN ANNOUNCE FROM THERE THAT HE WILL GIVE THE QUESTIONS TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. (SINN FEIN SECRETLY PASSED THESE QUESTIONS ON TO THE IRISH GOVERNMENT ON APRIL 19. THE IRISH, IN TURN, PASSED THEM ON TO THE BRITISH SHORTLY THEREAFTER).

3. THE BRITISH, IF THEY ARE AFRAID OF SECRECY, WILL THEN PUBLISH THE QUESTIONS ON MONDAY, MAY 16. NOEL DORR, SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (DFA), TOLD ME ON MAY 13 THAT BOTH SIR PATRICK MAYHEW AND BRITISH AMBASSADOR BLATHERWICK HAD TOLD HIM THE PREVIOUS EVENING THAT THEIR PREFERENCE WAS TO PUBLISH THE QUESTIONS. IF THE QUESTION OF WHETHER TO PUBLISH THEM WAS THE ONLY PROBLEM, DORR ASSURED ME, HE WOULD SORT IT OUT BEFORE MONDAY. HE TOLD ME THAT HE WOULD CONTACT SEAN O'HUIGINN, HEAD OF DFA'S ANGLO-IRISH DIVISION, WHO IS IN LONDON, ABOUT THIS. MY SOURCES IMPLIED THAT SINN FEIN WOULD PROBABLY NOT STRENUOUSLY OBJECT TO BRITISH PUBLICATION OF THE QUESTIONS.

4. MY SOURCES ADDED THAT THE KEY QUESTION FOR SINN FEIN/IRA IN REGARD TO BRITISH CLARIFICATION IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE AND THE JOINT DECLARATION. SINN FEIN/IRA WANT TO KNOW WHY, IF

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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THE BRITISH PERCEIVE NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM, THEY REJECTED HUME/ADAMS LAST YEAR. AND, IF THE BRITISH PERCEIVE A DIFFERENCE, SINN FEIN/IRA WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT IS.

5. MY SOURCES ASSERT THAT SINNFEIN/IRA HAVE ALREADY MADE A SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION BY BACKING DOWN FROM THEIR DEMAND FOR DIRECT TALKS WITH THE BRITISH TO CLARIFY THE JOINT DECLARATION. THIS IS WHY THEY HAVE PASSED THE CLARIFICATION QUESTION THROUGH THE IRISH, AND THEY HOPE THAT THIS ACTION WILL BE SEEN AS A SIGNIFICANT GESTURE OF GOOD WILL. THESE SOURCES ADDED THAT THE SINN FEIN/IRA LEADERSHIP HAS CONCLUDED THAT 25 YEARS OF STRUGGLE HAVE LED NOWHERE. THE PROBLEM IS THAT THEY MUST MOVE SLOWLY, IN SMALL STEPS, IF THEY ARE TO BRING THE OTHERS WITH THEM.

6. MY SOURCES FURTHER EXPECT THAT SINN FEIN/IRA WILL PROVIDE THEIR FORMAL REACTION TO THE JOINT DECLARATION IN A WEEK TO TEN DAYS. ALTHOUGH THEY WILL PROBABLY NOT/NOT COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF THE DECLARATION, THEY WILL SOMEHOW INDICATE A PREFERENCE FOR THE POLITICAL TRACK, I.E., A SEAT AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE, WHICH WOULD CONSTITUTE AN IMPLICIT RENUNCIATION OF VIOLENCE. THEY MUST ALSO ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF NO CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN THE NORTH WITHOUT MAJORITY CONSENT. SINN FEIN/IRA FEARS, HOWEVER, THAT, IF THEY GO TO THE TABLE, THE UNIONISTS WILL NOT. IN THAT CASE, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WILL MOVE AHEAD ON THEIR OWN TO TRY TO WORK OUT A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT.

7. COMMENT: THIS TRACKS WITH WHAT SEAN O'HUIGINN, HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS' ANGLO-IRISH DIVISION, RECENTLY SUGGESTED TO US, I.E., THAT WE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED IF WE SEE MOVEMENT SOON. HE SAID THAT HUME HAD TOLD ADAMS THAT TIME WAS UP AND THAT HE HAD ONE MORE CHANCE: TO PASS QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION TO THE IRISH GOVERNMENT WHICH, IN TURN, WOULD PASS THEM ON TO THE BRITISH. THE CONDITION, HUME TOLD ADAMS, WAS A PERMANENT CESSATION OF VIOLENCE.

8. WE ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THIS COMPLICATED MANEUVERING ON ALL SIDES WILL PRODUCE A BREAKTHROUGH ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT SINN FEIN IS REACTING TO POSITIVE SIGNALS FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. END COMMENT.
WHAT ROLE FOR THE U.S.?

9. OUR SOURCES STRESSED THAT IT IS TIME FOR US TO PREVAIL ON THE BRITISH TO BE "OBLIGING, POSITIVE, AND FRIENDLY" IN RESPONDING TO THIS INITIATIVE. WE SHOULD TRY TO CONVINCE THEM TO PUBLICLY RECOGNIZE THAT THIS IS A GENUINE ATTEMPT ON THE PART OF THE SINN FEIN/IRA TO COME ON BOARD THE POLITICAL PROCESS. IF THE BRITISH DISMISS THIS EFFORT OR DO NOT GREET IT SERIOUSLY, THIS WILL FEED

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WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

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SINN FEIN/IRA'S PARANOIA AND BLOCK THE PEACE PROCESS.

10. COMMENT: AS THE ABOVE WAS BEING DRAFTED, WE LEARNED THAT THE BRITISH INTEND TO PUBLISH SINN FEIN/IRA'S QUESTIONS BECAUSE THEY ARE ANGRY THAT NEWS OF AN IMMINENT BREAKTHROUGH WAS LEAKED TO THE "IRISH TIMES," WHICH RAN A FRONT-PAGE STORY ON SUGGESTING THAT SOMETHING WAS AFOOT ON MAY 12. SINN FEIN/IRA, IN TURN, IS UPSET BECAUSE THEY HAVE HEARD ABOUT BRITISH PLANS TO PUBLISH THE QUESTIONS. THE LEAK ITSELF PROBABLY DERIVED FROM DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS, I.E. PRIME MINISTER REYNOLD'S DESIRE TO BE ON RECORD PRIOR TO LEAVING FOR THE U.S. THAT HE WAS "LOOKING FORWARD TO SOME POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT TO REMOVE THE LOGJAM ON CLARIFICATION."

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