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Taoiseach
Do see please
John

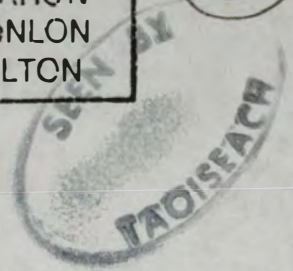
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SECURE FAX 1198

[This line has been responded to by D.P. AHM.]



11 November 1995

No of pages including this one: 1

To: HQ From: Belfast
For: Second Secretary O hUiginn From: B Callaghan

NIO Reaction to Taoiseach's London Speech

The following has been dictated to the NIO press officer by a "Government source" (the Secretary of State, we have been told off the record) and has been given to a number of journalists:

This is O.T.T. → This is an extraordinary speech, at an extraordinary time - the eve of Remembrance Sunday - and delivered in Britain through a megaphone. We regret it. Its thrust is that it is Britain that is holding up the talks, yet it was the Irish Government who cancelled, at a day's notice, the Summit arranged for 6 September when proposals they had agreed with the British Government for advancing the talks process - the twin track approach - were to be announced.

Nor does the speech refer to more than one of the measures, numbering over 100, by which this Government has responded to the ceasefires. Most recently these have included the Remission of Sentences Act by which some 90 terrorist prisoners will be released before Christmas.

Friday's bomb, certainly intended for a target in Northern Ireland, and thankfully intercepted by the Gardai, graphically illustrates why we do not regard the possession of arms as an "insignificant obstacle to talks".