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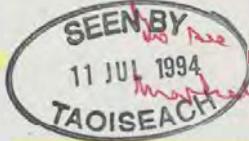
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Secret



Meeting with Paddy McGrory, Belfast, 5 July 1994

Comp circ to PST (27)

PSS
Mr B. Murray
Mr M. Maurice
Mr T. Dalton
SOS

Please - passages marked on pages 1 & 2.

11/7/94

W. Holden

JM

I met Paddy McGrory yesterday in the course of a visit to Belfast. (My previous meeting with him was last week, on 29 June. See my report of 4 July). Points of interest:

11/7/94

- he suspects that an Army Convention is likely to be convened, probably under cover of the forthcoming Sinn Fein delegate conference. He believes that the delegate conference will take place very soon and will have major implications - a belief which is strengthened by a hint he received earlier in the day from Siobhán O'Hanlon (Gerry Adams's secretary). (NOTE: the General Army Convention is the "Supreme Army Authority", superior to the Army Council);
- his understanding is that Adams can bring all those who matter with him. He does not believe that Adams would embark on a delegate conference without being absolutely sure that he has squared all those who matter and without knowing with certainty the outcome of the conference;
- As to the shape of any decision from the delegate conference, McGrory believes that what will emerge are general lines which will constitute guidelines for the Sinn Fein leadership in subsequent political dialogue. In answer to my question, he was optimistic that the delegate conference will lay the ground for a fairly speedy end to violence although he did not go so far as to predict that a clear and unequivocal decision to end violence will necessarily emerge;
- his perception is that the possibility of a violent split has probably been reduced as far as possible. He recalled that within the prisons, Danny Morrison (who has been consistently negative) submitted an essentially

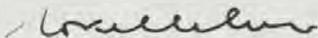
negative response to the leadership some months ago but McGrory believes (as he has said to me before) that the bulk of those who are unhappy will quietly acquiesce. He has also become aware in the last few days that, within the Maze, the Provos have been isolating those in INLA who are seen as a possible focus of trouble e.g. by hiving them off from the Republican wing structure within the Maze. The Provos see some INLA members as useful and will try to re-absorb them. Others will be marginalised, by non violent means where possible;

- The media remain extremely curious about what is happening. McGrory remarked that the Sinn Féin leadership will not leak and will have no compunction about disseminating sanctioned untruths to the press if that suits their interests. He remarked that Ed Moloney, for example, has done a complete U-turn in his analysis and is still casting around, unsuccessfully, for nuggets. Another journalist, with a background of good relations with the Provos, recently wined and dined Rita O'Hare and was told at the end of the meal "Listen. We are a secret revolutionary organisation. I'm not telling you anything";
- Gerry Adams had contacted McGrory earlier in the day to ask that he meet Adams and his core group on Friday of this week. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss further the constitutional issues (on which McGrory has supplied Adams with two short factual papers: one on the British constitution and the second on the Northern Ireland constitution) with a view to charting a way forward;
- Adams seemed impatient for the meeting. While this may stem from the fact that McGrory had indicated to Adams's secretary that he plans to go to his holiday home in Donegal at the weekend (until end-August), McGrory also

sees it as further evidence of the quickening pace of developments;

- McGrory remains unenthusiastic about a role for himself in this area and mentioned again his concerns about confidentiality in relation to himself. He summarised in very general terms his initial thoughts on the approach which he will suggest to Sinn Féin:
 - That the process will be lengthy, possibly as long as 25 years, and that, in stages, a federal arrangement would eventually be reached. (Note: this approach is not dissimilar to the ideas which he privately shared with us last year, although he spoke then of a 10 - 15 year time frame);
 - In the first instance, the priorities should be set against the background of what he describes as the "greening of Northern Ireland" e.g. the continuing process of advancement by the Nationalist community, the tackling of disadvantages and rights abuses affecting the Nationalist community, full and guaranteed respect for the Nationalist identity and parity of esteem;
 - Non-constitutional issues (i.e. the easier type of issue) should be dealt with first, and then the difficult constitutional questions should be tackled;
 - One area of possible difficulty with Sinn Féin, which he mentioned specifically is the question of British citizenship for future generations of Unionists. Sinn Féin argue that the right to British citizenship should not be passed on beyond this generation;

The approach he envisages is an incrementalist one, in which each step, although not the all-embracing solution, will lend itself to further progress.



Declan Kelleher

6 July, 1994