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PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

- cc. B/safs (B) - M
- B/Mafs (L/B) - M
- B/Tis (L/B) - M
- Ts/Mr Folly - M
- Mr Leadie - M

- Mr Thomas
- Mr A P Wilson - M
- Mr Aiston - M
- Mr Devereill - M

From the Private Secretary

- Mr Wood (L/B) - M
- Mr Leach - M
- Mr DJR Hill
- Mr Cooke
- Mr Maccabe - M

Mr Looke for advice please on X.

cc M Hamilton

12 February 1992

UNDER SEC 573/2  
17 FEB 1992  
CENT file

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MUFAX FROM  
STC OFFICE ANNEX

ASST. SEC

*Dea Wilson*  
mm 466/2

CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER BY JAMES KILFEDDER MP

Mr M. McNeill

Thank you for the briefing which you provided for the call on the Prime Minister by Mr. Kilfedder which took place this afternoon. The Northern Ireland Secretary was present.

Mr. Kilfedder had been told that the meeting would last twenty minutes. He stuck rigorously to the timetable and, having made his points, got up and left so the Prime Minister had no real opportunity to reply.

Mr. Kilfedder said he felt strongly about being left out of the talks. They had been initiated by Mr. Brooke in a speech in his constituency at a time when Mr. Kilfedder had been the only Unionist prepared to be seen with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. From that moment on Mr. Kilfedder had had no involvement and had been given no information. A PPS had recently offered to keep him informed. Mr. Kilfedder was dismissive of that offer. He was the only Party Leader in the House of Commons not represented at the talks. In two successive elections to the European Parliament he had obtained more votes than the Alliance Party. He was the longest-serving Member of Parliament from Northern Ireland. He had been an impartial speaker in the Northern Ireland Assembly. He was the only Unionist who had been in favour of the constitutional talks.

Mr. Brooke noted that he and Mr. Kilfedder had always had cordial relations. That was not the point, said Mr. Kilfedder. Indeed, Ian Paisley was constantly telling him to be militant. Everyone on the Government side treated him as a Tory - except at election time when they put up a Conservative candidate to run against him. He wanted to be involved in future. If people felt he had no role to play then that could alienate his voters.

Mr. Kilfedder said that the Prime Minister's visit to Northern Ireland had been greatly appreciated. It had acted as a safety valve. People in the Province had also taken heart from the meeting which the Prime Minister had called earlier in the week. On the security front, Mr. Kilfedder believed that internment was necessary. Internment should also be introduced in the Irish Republic. They had had it before so it would not be anything new for them. The Irish had given nothing in return for

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the Anglo-Irish Agreement. We should compel them to introduce internment. He appreciated that it would be bad for our image, not least in the United States but something must be done. People in Northern Ireland had shown enormous resilience and patience. Northern Ireland had not become another Lebanon though the risk had been there. They were entitled to better protection. There should be a greater SAS presence. He also favoured the introduction of identity cards. The Prime Minister said that he had looked at the issue of identity cards. It would be difficult for them to be effective unless they were introduced throughout the United Kingdom. They would also be subject to forgery by the Provisional IRA.

Mr. Kilfedder said that just as the validity of number plates could be rapidly checked by computer - as was done at vehicle check points - so it would be possible to introduce a similar scheme to check, within seconds, the validity of identity cards. He favoured the introduction of identity cards throughout the United Kingdom.

Mr. Kilfedder said that he had been born in the Republic of Ireland, but his family had to take refuge in the North: his father had been a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary. The battle against terrorism was not being won. He thought the Catholic Church should excommunicate IRA terrorists. Could the Pope exert some pressure on the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland to achieve this? This was something our Ambassador to the Holy See might take up. An unequivocal stand of that kind would send a message that the terrorists should be shunned.

Mr. Kilfedder said that he accepted that there had to be political progress as well as tougher security. We should try to get talks going. He did not know how the impetus could be provided though there was a real need for a change.

The Prime Minister asked what outcome Mr. Kilfedder envisaged to the constitutional talks. Mr. Kilfedder said that Mr. Molyneaux wanted integration; others devolution. The DUP were against any form of power-sharing. His own belief was that the SDLP could have been pressured into joining the Assembly. The key point was that politicians needed to be given responsibility. There was not even a select committee for Northern Ireland in the House of Commons. He saw a good case for the Prime Minister to summon a meeting - or perhaps the Speaker of the House of Commons should summon it. It should involve all the Northern Ireland Party leaders, apart from Sinn Fein. The meeting might be confined to those who had representation in Parliament - which would include the Alliance Party who had a member in the House of Lords. Would it not be possible to devise another Assembly?

Mr. Kilfedder thought that another way of involving Northern Ireland political parties in a responsible way would be for the investment minister to take representatives from both communities with him on investment promotion visits. He realised there would be difficulty in choosing as between the OUP and the DUP and they might refuse to participate, but it was important to involve the politicians and give them responsibility. At the moment, the only role allotted to them was that of attack in a negative way.

We must do something radical to demonstrate that there was a real change. People in Northern Ireland wanted the talks to succeed.

Follow-up

? ever

Have we even made representations about excommunication of PIRA terrorists? They would obviously have to be handled with some care. But now that Cardinal O'Fiaich has been replaced by Cardinal Daly is there more scope for action?

I am copying this letter to Richard Gozney (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Sonia Phippard (Cabinet Office).

*Jans  
Laphe*

(J. S. WALL)

William Fittall, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office

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