



21 May, 1996.

Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

cc (by fax) "E"
Mark Howard,
NIO
+ back to
John
21/5.

The Right Honourable John Major, M. P.,
Prime Minister.

Dear John,

Having reflected on our telephone conversation of yesterday evening, and on earlier exchanges between us and between our officials I am writing to underline my belief in the importance of remaining with the words you used in your article last week on the decommissioning issue, "decommissioning will also need to be addressed at the beginning of the talks and agreement reached on how Mitchell's recommendations on decommissioning can be taken forward, without blocking the negotiations".

I believe our conversation last evening was useful in focusing of the value of using only the words of the Mitchell Report in providing references for the Decommissioning Sub-Committee. I enclose a proposal on this basis for those Terms of Reference.

I believe we now need to redouble our efforts to agree on remaining issues for the talks procedures. I believe this can be done at tomorrow's Conference. I look forward to speaking to you again later in the week.

Yours sincerely,

John Bruton
Taoiseach.Oifig an Taoisigh, Tithe an Riailais, Baile Átha Chath 2.
Office of the Taoiseach, Government Buildings, Dublin 2.

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Proposed Terms of Reference of Sub-Committee

on

Decommissioning

(a) To secure agreement on the modalities of decommissioning on the basis of the guidelines contained in paragraphs 36 to 50 of the Report of the International Body.

(b) To consider an approach under which some decommissioning would take place during the process of all-party negotiations, rather than before or after, such that consistent with the view of the International Body, as progress is made on political issues, even modest mutual steps on decommissioning could help create the atmosphere needed for further steps in a progressive pattern of mounting trust and confidence, including the role that other confidence building measures set out in the Report of the International Body might play.

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- (c) To advise both Governments, in the light of these discussions, on the legislative and practical implications of the course which is recommended.