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16 Feb 1981

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Ian Gow Esq MP
10 Downing Street
Whitehall
London SW1

Dear Gow

I am enclosing a letter of thanks to the Prime Minister and a few notes on the present Northern Ireland problems, in the light of the meeting which you so kindly arranged last Thursday. John Brookeborough has seen the notes and agrees with them. I hope they may be of some help.

Yours sincerely
James Moyola

Encs

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Some notes on NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEMS

Background

Historically, there is suspicion of the Conservative Party in Northern Ireland because Stormont was dissolved by them and they brought out the hated Sunningdale agreement.

The existing Public Relations System is totally inadequate, and its inadequacy has built up Paisley support. The problems are as follows:

(1) After twelve years of troubles the people of Northern Ireland are like Britain in war-time. They watch or listen to every news bulletin and it is from this habit that wild rumours spread, unless instantly denied.

(2) Lack of Northern Ireland representation in the Northern Ireland Office with the result that the Secretary of State is unaware of what is below the surface - Most MPs' are either representing what they think is Party Policy or what the activists tell them. As there is no devolved government, there is nothing for moderate people to do and they do not attend meetings, so their views are not heard by MPs'.

(3) Security or lack of it, is the source from which Paisley draws his strength and where there are improvements, these should be announced - ie: the present situation in Fermanagh.

Long Term Requirements

(1) As far as possible, immediate replies to Paisley's allegations.

(2) Clearer communiques' or statements. Both the H Block and Dublin statements could be read to suit anyone's point of view and no one in Northern Ireland knew what to make of them - A Northern Ireland voice (politically orientated) should help in drawing them up. Bear in mind - if they can be misunderstood, they will be misunderstood.

(3) Keep country informed as to security improvements.

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(4) Northern Ireland Office should find a number of politically orientated and objective people to brief it regularly on current thinking.

Immediate Requirements

- (1) Spell out in great detail and keep spelling out the facts about the Dublin Summit.
- (2) A further cementation of the Union now by
 - (a) appointing a Council to advise the Secretary of State. This might consist of Northern Ireland Privy Councillors or Northern Ireland Members of both Houses of Parliament or persons chosen by the Secretary of State; or,
 - (b) Restoring the Governor (only symbolic but very important)
 - (c) Having Northern Ireland observers at further Dublin talks.
- (3) An early visit by Prime Minister to include a Press conference in which the Dublin meeting should figure.

All or any of the above suggestions would be helpful. The main thing, however, is to act quickly and to keep plugging, if need be, daily, on the PR side.

Understandably the SDLP may well object to all or some of these suggestions, but this is a moment where the overall situation has to be considered. The defeat of Paisley is as much in the SDLP's interest as it is in the interest of responsible and thinking Unionists.