

PA
o/b.c.



27a-c.
Sir Robin

Jp 0925

MR POWELL

c Sir Robin Butler

It shows how incautious words can be misinterpreted & do damage.

Sinn Fein's Reaction to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland - 100 Days Interview

CAN
11/11

We have received a report from our Liaison staff in Stormont, drawing on a source who is described as regular and reliable with direct access to a leading member of Sinn Fein.

2. The main points of the report are:

a. The Secretary of State was widely believed to have been speaking for the British Government.

b. His comments had been widely discussed at all levels in Sinn Fein.

c. Opinion was divided on the interpretation of his comments.

- Were they a counter-insurgency ploy to sow discord in the Republican movement?

- Were they a clear indication that the British Government was now war-weary?

d. Most of the Sinn Fein leadership believed they were a mixture of the two.

e. The leadership generally agreed that the comments did not constitute a genuine sign of peace.

f. There was a fear that the Government wanted a permanent ceasefire while negotiating.



- The Government would then prolong negotiations and extend the ceasefire with a view to crushing enthusiasm for the armed struggle.

g. There was no serious discussion about a ceasefire amongst the Sinn Fein leadership.

- But a motion had been received, for the next General Assembly, that "IRA operations could adversely affect the political work of Sinn Fein."
- Although many agreed with the sentiments of the motion, the view was that civilian injuries were an unfortunate result of the general struggle.

3. The source and Liaison Staff have commented:

a. Discussions within Sinn Fein would have included meetings with PIRA.

b. The Secretary of State's comments were a boost for Sinn Fein morale, but only as an extra to PIRA's recent military successes, which were of greater significance.

- The comments went over the heads of most PIRA volunteers; operational successes were far more important to them.

c. Sinn Fein have rejected preconditions for commencing talks and have reiterated their full support for PIRA's campaign.

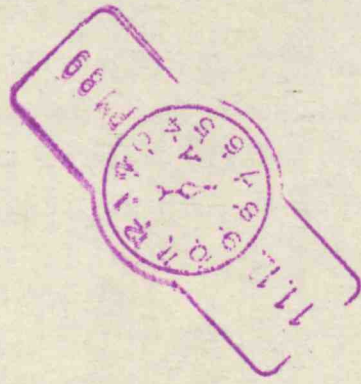


d. Sinn Fein has relaunched its 1987 discussion document "A Scenario for Peace" unamended, which is a signal that despite the Secretary of State's comments Sinn Fein's position has not changed.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'P. Cradock', is written above the typed name.

PERCY CRADOCK

11 December 1989



CONFIDENTIAL

SECRET

CONFIDENTIAL



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ja

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

6 December 1989

**MONITORING OF RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION OF
HOME CIVIL SERVANTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND**

Thank you for your letter of 1 December. You may take it that the Prime Minister would be content to be specified, as Minister for the Civil Service, in Section 3 of the Order as a public authority for the purposes of the relevant sections of the Act.

DOMINIC MORRIS

Ms. Antonia Tatham,
Office of the Minister for the Civil Service

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