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DESK IMMEDIATE

From: PS/Secretary of State
5 October 1993

cc PS/SofS (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Brooker - B
Mr Cooke - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Quinn - B
Mr Caine - B

Mr Thomas - B

MEETING WITH MR MOLYNEAUX

Following their earlier phone conversation, Mr Molyneux asked to see the Secretary of State yesterday afternoon. I was not present, but the Secretary of State subsequently gave me a brief account of their 45 minute meeting.

2. Mr Molyneux said that his meeting with his party officers had left him very shaken. Over the weekend, unlike himself, they had been out and about and in touch with grass roots opinion. There was a great deal of concern following the Hume/Adams statement: there was a widespread fear of betrayal. In some quarters there was a feeling of panic, which inevitably worked to the advantage of those who were prepared to use violent methods. Mr Hume had brought down an "iron curtain" on the political talks: he had wrecked any chance of the UUP sitting down with the SDLP at present.

3. The Secretary of State said that the only people in a position to betray Unionists, were the British Government: but he had spent last week repeating that the Government would not talk or negotiate with terrorists, and would not depart from the principle of consent. Was there anything more he could do? Mr Molyneux said that it was not always helpful to repeat both elements of the principle of consent: it would be better if he could emphasise that

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the Government would respect the democratically-expressed wishes of the people of Northern Ireland. Since there was unlikely to be a debate at the Party Conference, the omission of any mention of Northern Ireland from the Prime Minister's speech would go down badly. The Secretary of State said he would bear these suggestions in mind.

4. In response to questions, Mr Molyneux confirmed that the UUP would continue to participate in the exploratory discussions being undertaken by Michael Ancram. He also agreed that, in response to the Hume/Adams statement, there was no serious alternative to saying that the Government would look at anything which the Irish Government chose to pass on, although it would be helpful if the Secretary of State could emphasise in advance the principles which we would use to assess any such document.

5. Mr Molyneux also revealed that he had received a letter from Mr Spring seeking a meeting. He commented that the problem was that there was everything in it for Mr Spring, and nothing for him. The Secretary of State pressed him as to whether a private meeting might not be arranged: Mr Molyneux was sceptical.

Signed

JONATHAN STEPHENS
Private Secretary

Jonathan Stephens Esq
Northern Ireland Office

cc PM/SOFS (8)
AS/PUS (4)
Mr Thomas
Mr Cooke
Mr Beeton
Mr May

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