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- 4 OCT 1993
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FROM: PS/Secretary of State
4 October 1993

DESK IMMEDIATE

- cc PS/Secretary of State (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
- Mrs Collins - B
- Mr Cooke - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Quinn - B
- Mr Caine - B

Mr Thomas - B

CONVERSATION WITH MR MOLYNEAUX

The Secretary of State rang Mr Molyneaux this morning to discuss recent developments, in particular the line Dr Paisley had been taking following his meeting with Michael Ancram last week.

2. The Secretary of State said that he had noted Dr Paisley's criticism. But the reality was that Mr Hume was operating off his own bat; he was not acting or negotiating as any sort of intermediary or surrogate emissary on behalf of the Government. In response to the previous weekend's statement, the Secretary of State had emphasised that the Government would not talk or negotiate with those who used or supported violence. But, contrary to what Dr Paisley had been saying, it would have been childish to say he would not even look at anything which the Irish Government thought it worth showing him.

3. Mr Molyneaux said that he thought the Secretary of State had taken a very strong position last week; it was reassuring that the Government would have no truck with terrorism, until there was convincing evidence that violence had stopped and the terrorists had surrendered their weaponry. Mr Molyneaux said that he was coming under some pressure to comment and would be discussing the situation with his party officers this morning.

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4. The Secretary of State said that he recognised that there would be concern about talk of 'self-determination'; there was no weakening in the Government's position that the unit of self-determination which mattered was Northern Ireland. From newspaper reports it seemed that Mr Hume might try to fudge this point, possibly through joint referenda; but it must be absolutely clear that it was the consent of the people of Northern Ireland that mattered.

5. Mr Molyneaux commented that Dr Paisley had contributed to the idea of joint referenda, by insisting that any settlement should be approved by the people of Northern Ireland. The UUP had pointed out that this opened the way to simultaneous referenda north and south, which nationalists could then claim amounted to an exercise in self determination for the island as a whole.

6. The Secretary of State noted that it did not matter what was done in the South, what would be decisive would be the wishes of a majority in the North. It would be helpful if Mr Molyneaux felt able to welcome the Government's insistence that Northern Ireland would not cease to be part of the UK, save by the self-determination of the people of Northern Ireland.

7. Mr Molyneaux agreed to ring back after he had met his party officers. He mentioned that he was aware of deep unease within the SDLP about Mr Hume's leadership. The three other MPs had told him he was in the 'last chance' saloon: only 48hrs before the statement with Adams was issued, Hume had assured his colleagues that no statement would be made.

Signed

JONATHAN STEPHENS
Private Secretary

BB/SOFS/15614