

JD

C O N F I D E N T I A L



FROM: PUS  
24 NOVEMBER 1993

4. ... to say that he for his ... doubts about the deliverability by the Provisional ... ending of violence at any price that the British Government let ... alone the Unionists could conceivably afford. So far as John Hume was concerned (and I caught a ... mutual relations which we had all ... year's Talks) Dr Alderdice said he ... soon in No 10 before seeing the ... genuinely shocked at his condition ... were very marked indeed and this ... Dr Alderdice offered a professional ... undergoing exceptionally severe ... physical and political dangers was ... initiative with Adams in his own ... touch with the surrounding reality ... more and more especially with the ... the initiative. His flight to the ... subsequent retreat first to Donegal ... be related to this, as a natural ... intolerable pain as reality bore ... for John Hume's well-being could be ...

cc. PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B  
 PS/Michael Ancram (L,B&DENI) - B  
 PS/Mr Fell - B  
 Mr Thomas - B  
 Mr Legge - B  
 Mr Bell - B  
 Mr Steele - B  
 Mr Watkins - B  
 Mr Williams - B  
 Mr Deverell - B  
 Mr Wood (B) - B  
 Mr Brooker - B  
 Mr Cooke - B  
 Mr Leach - B  
 Mr Maccabe - B  
 Mr Marsh - B  
 Mr Beeton - B  
 Mr May - B

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

CONVERSATION WITH DR ALDERDICE

Dr Alderdice called on me on Monday 22 November at his request in Stormont.

2. He had recently seen the Prime Minister (I was present) and he said his reason for calling was to be updated on developments since that meeting, so as to enable him to continue to play his chosen role of helping the official Unionists, in particular Jim Molyneaux, to hold their forward-looking and progressive positions both on the search for peace and on the resumption of Talks.

3. So far as the search for peace was concerned, he said that he had been consulted by the Taoiseach. The Taoiseach had wanted, in effect, to get Dr Alderdice's assessment of the feeling and mood in the Protestant community, its willingness to respond to a peace initiative, and the extent to which he and Dr Alderdice could both help to assess official Unionist opinion and help to support it in coming forward. Dr Alderdice said he believed the Taoiseach was genuine in his approach; he also said he was convinced that Jim Molyneaux had complete confidence in the Prime Minister, though very anxious about the scale and difficulty in the issues which the search for peace presented to him in particular.

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4. Dr Alderdice went on to say that he for his part had real doubts about the deliverability by the Provisionals of a genuine ending of violence at any price that the British Government let alone the Unionists could conceivably afford. So far as John Hume was concerned (and I caught none of the personal edge in their mutual relations which we had all seen during and after last year's Talks) Dr Alderdice said he met John Hume in the Waiting Room in No.10 before seeing the Prime Minister and had been genuinely shocked at his condition. The physical signs of stress were very marked indeed and this was borne out in his behaviour. Dr Alderdice offered a professional opinion that John Hume was undergoing exceptionally severe stress. The reason apart from physical and political dangers was that he had built up his initiative with Adams in his own mind to the point he had lost touch with the surrounding reality. That reality was bearing in more and more especially with the Irish Government's rejection of the initiative. His flight to the United States and his subsequent retreat first to Donegall and then to Strasbourg could be related to this, as a natural flight phenomenon from the intolerable pain as reality bore in. He thought the consequences for John Hume's well-being could be serious and permanent.

5. Unasked, and largely unprovoked, Dr Alderdice volunteered the opinion that so far as Church leaders were concerned both as assessors and potential leaders of Protestant opinion John Dunlop's views should be given particular weight even as compared with those of the Archbishop of Armagh. Presbyterians were not any more numerous, and perhaps more important than the Church of Ireland as a body of opinion but John Dunlop's integrity and distance for secular politics was such that his voice would carry particular weight. I said I noted this and understood what Dr Alderdice was saying.

Dictated by the Mr Chilcot and signed in his absence  
Joanna Nixon

J A CHILCOT

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