

27/56/94

Desk Immediate

cc PS | S q S (L+B)

PS | M. Antram (L+B)

PS | PUS (L+B)

PS | Mr. Fell

Mr Thomas

Mr Bell

Mr Watkins

Mr Williams

Mr Brooker

Mr Daniell

Mr Rickard

Mr Maccabe.



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F J.D.



*Handwritten:* 49 file 56/94  
PUS

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

14 January 1994

*Red stamp:* PUS/  
18 JAN 1994  
N.I.O. LONDON

*Handwritten:* Dear Jonathan,

**PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MR JOHN HUME MP  
FRIDAY 14 JANUARY 1994**

The Prime Minister and Mr Michael Ancram MP saw John Hume for about 40 minutes on the afternoon of 14 January. Sir John Chilcot was also present.

Hume said that during his visit to the United States he had stressed the economic benefits of peace in Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister said that he had used this theme.

The Prime Minister said that he would continue to present the Joint Declaration as a balanced document, fair to both sides of the community. He had done this in the recent interview with Sir David Frost. In calling for clarification of the document, Gerry Adams appeared partly to be playing for time and partly looking for an excuse to reject it. "Clarification" could in effect amount to entering some form of negotiation, without an end to violence. The Prime Minister was not prepared to do this. But it had been made clear to Sinn Fein, for example in the 5 November message which was in the public domain, that the exploratory talks would cover their route into an inclusive political talks process.

John Hume said that his feeling was that there was a mood in the ranks of urban Provisionals to end violence, which Adams was leading. Attitudes were different in rural areas where the "defenders" tradition held sway.

John Hume said that he had met Gerry Adams two days ago. He felt that Adams genuinely wanted clarification, and was entirely pragmatic about the means by which this would be conveyed. Three points in particular were of concern to Adams:

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- the concept of "exploratory talks after a decontamination period" (I think a phrase used by Michael Mates MP rather than a Minister);
- the notion that there was a Unionist veto on self-determination. Hume felt that he had made headway with the argument that self-determination was necessarily a process of reaching agreement, and was therefore incompatible with coercion;
- the "mechanism" for reaching agreement in the longer term. Would there be a timetable? What would happen if the Unionists simply blocked progress? Hume felt that, in extremis, the two Governments could play the card of threatening to put proposals directly to the people, over the heads of politicians.

Hume hoped that the Prime Minister would be able to say that there was no question of vetoes, but that agreement was necessary (ie putting these points in the positive rather than negative sense). The Prime Minister could say that agreement was a theme running through the Joint Declaration; and that agreement could only be achieved without coercion. The Prime Minister might also say that the people of Ireland of course had a right to self-determination; but it was a fact that they were divided.

Hume floated the idea that parallel referendums should be held in the north and south of Ireland if the Provisionals rejected the Joint Declaration. The people would be asked whether they accepted the Joint Declaration and rejected violence.

The Prime Minister asked how Hume assessed the chances of acceptance by the Provisionals. Hume said that Gerry Adams wanted above all to avoid splitting the movement. A split was a serious matter in the IRA. It did not just mean disagreement: it meant fighting each other. Hume was encouraged by the recent poll which showed that 87% of the Nationalists in the north, and 56% of the population as a whole, favoured the Joint Declaration. He described this as the largest cross-community consensus which had been achieved.

On the talks process, the Prime Minister noted that Michael Ancram would be meeting the SDLP on 24 January. It had been made explicit to the IRA that the talks would not stop while they considered the Joint Declaration. John Hume said the talks would benefit enormously if they took place in an atmosphere of peace.



Hume said that Adams had claimed to him that there had been a de-escalation of violence.

The meeting ended with a discussion of the line to be taken with the Press. The Prime Minister said that he could not and would not offer clarification of the Joint Declaration. Hume agreed not to suggest otherwise. The Prime Minister said that he would reflect on the points which Hume had made about Gerry Adams.

I enclose a copy of the statement made by our Press Office after the meeting.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Sawers (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Joan MacNaughton (Home Office), John Pitt-Brooke (Ministry of Defence), Nick Macpherson (HM Treasury) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

*Yours etc,  
Roderic*

RODERIC LYNE

*On hand  
he would  
comply  
to the  
wanted  
other  
clarification  
to be  
submitted  
he, Hume,  
would  
agree for  
clarification  
by the 2 letters  
to*

Jonathan Stephens Esq  
Northern Ireland Office



Prime Minister

No 10 Statement. [Hume transcript below]

[Enyl. 14/1]

Mr John Hume MP called on the Prime Minister and Mr Michael Ancram MP, Minister of State, for 40 minutes.

The Prime Minister welcomed the strong support which Mr Hume had given to the Joint Declaration. The Prime Minister stressed that Northern Ireland remained at the top of his agenda. He had invited Mr Hume to call, and would keep in close contact with leaders of the constitutional parties in the period ahead.

He and Mr Hume agreed that an end to violence would bring enormous benefits. Peace would open the prospect of a large increase in investment, and therefore of more jobs and greater prosperity for all the people of Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister and Mr Hume agreed on the importance of pressing ahead with the 3-stranded talks process. Mr Ancram met representatives of the Ulster Unionist Party yesterday, and will meet members of the Social Democratic and Labour Party on 24 January as part of his continuing exchanges.

The Prime Minister reiterated that there was no need for clarification of the Joint Declaration. It spoke for itself. What was needed was a positive response from Sinn Fein and a permanent end to violence.