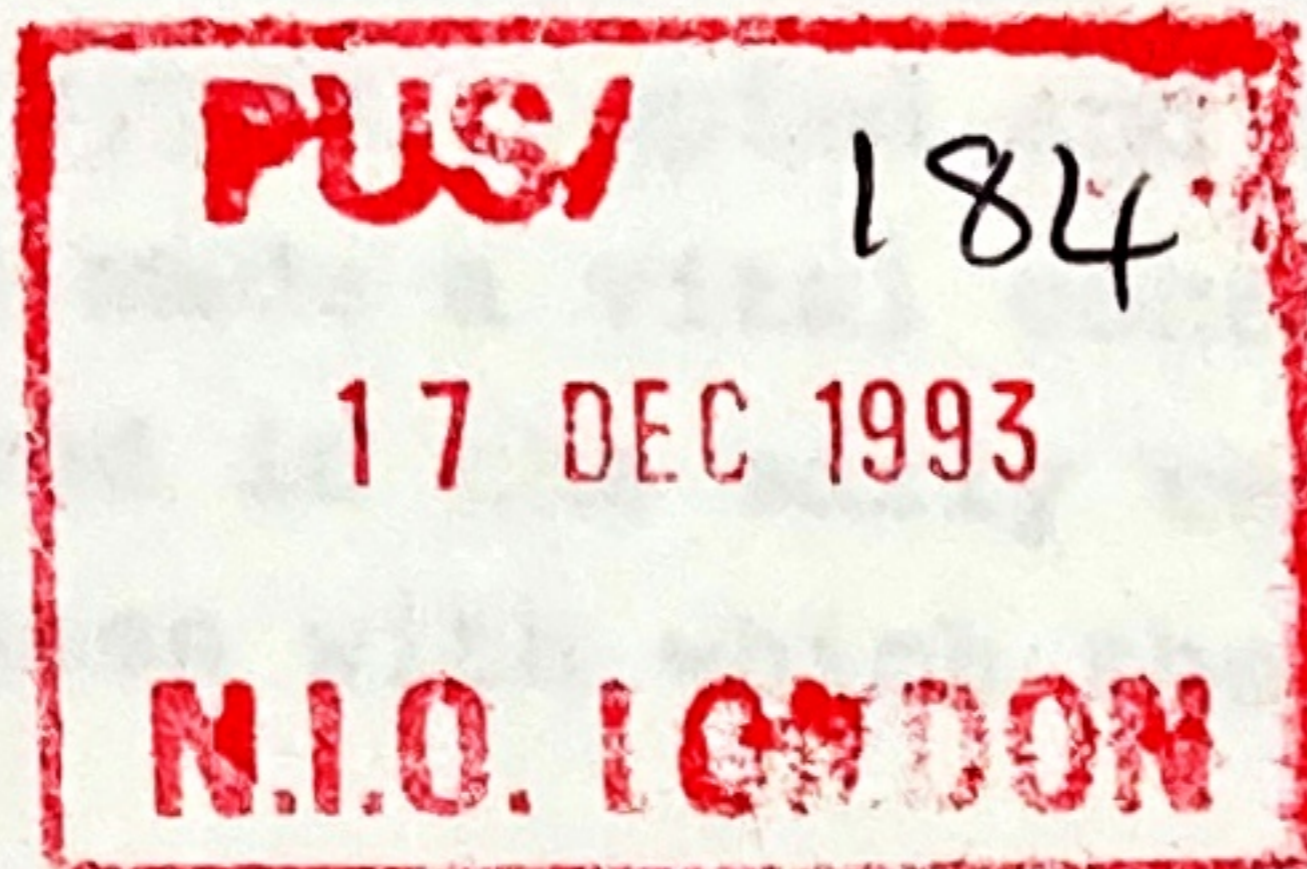


F J.D.

FROM: SECRETARY OF STATE
17 December 1993



cc PS/SofS (B&L)
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L)
Mr Fell
Mr Thomas
Mr Bell
Mr Deverell
Mr Watkins
Mr Williams
Mr Wood (B&L)
Mr Brooker
Mr Cooke
Mr Maccabe
Mr Beeton
Mr May
Mr Caine

PUS (B&L)

JOINT DECLARATION

At Cabinet yesterday the Prime Minister thanked all officials involved in the Joint Declaration and its presentation, for their hard work - often late into the night. Most of this burden fell to the Northern Ireland Office. I attach a Personal Minute from the Prime Minister recording his thanks to the NIO. In passing it on, I should like to add my own.

2. The negotiation of the Declaration involved many long hours of careful analysis and persistent discussion with the Irish, by a very small team of officials. The balance of the final document, and the protection given to the Government's long held principles, reflect the skill and care with which the innumerable drafts were studied, and advice was prepared.

3. The text was only finalised some 12 hours before it was released. So it is all the more remarkable that the department has been able to put together such an effective presentation plan, including the distribution of 200,000 copies of the Declaration already. I know this has involved a large number of people working very long hours and, in many cases, having to get to grips very



10 DOWNING STREET

quickly with an unfamiliar and complex document. Those who planned, prepared, typed, copied and distributed the briefing material and final text made a vital contribution. This work has already shown its dividend in the early reaction to the Declaration and the effectiveness with which the Government has been able to present its case.

4. It is still too early to tell the final outcome of reaction to the Joint Declaration. But whatever else happens, the Joint Declaration will have served its purpose in setting out the positions of both Governments, and in providing a clear opportunity for peace if those who are breaking the peace are prepared to take it.

5. I am most grateful for the excellent support which Ministers have received throughout. Please pass this on to all who have played a part.

This has been a long and difficult road, and it has required enormous hard work from your small and dedicated team, and from Robin Butler, who has done so far. Could you please pass my warmest thanks to all who have worked so hard on this?

Patrick Trayhern
