

(3 deal with Northern Ireland audiences below.)

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PRIME MINISTER

X

JOINT DECLARATION

X

- The achievement of peace, on terms consistent with HMG's principles, would be received in Great Britain and elsewhere with enthusiasm and relief. ^{By contrast,} there is some risk that HMG would be criticised if it could plausibly be claimed that it had rejected an opportunity for peace on terms which ~~the public~~ ^{might} be presented as acceptable.

We are meeting on Thursday to consider the Joint Declaration.

2. The attached set of papers comprises:

- the latest version of the Joint Declaration text passed to us by the Irish Government
- a paper setting out where we have got to in the light of the most recent Butler/Nally meeting on 6 October, what is at stake, and the decisions now needed
- a supporting up-to-date intelligence assessment
- a short account of the history of the Joint Declaration proposal.

The central points are these:

- ^{best assessment is} the ~~most recent intelligence~~ confirms that a Joint Declaration by the British and Irish Governments in terms which ^{the Provisionals' leadership} PIRA accept, would result in a ^{cessation which the} deliverable and sustained cessation of violence by PIRA. ^{leadership could deliver on behalf of} ^{The bulk, and perhaps even the whole, of the Provisional Movement}
- the latest Irish text has been further improved. It no longer implies that HMG would join the ranks of the persuaders. The principle of self determination by the people of the island of Ireland is genuinely qualified by the need for the freely and concurrently

That the Provisional leadership are serious about bringing about an end to the violence, and

There is some indication that preparatory steps towards a ceasefire have ~~not~~ ^{been taken,} ~~not~~ ^{but}

also ~~that~~ ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~leadership~~ ~~have~~ ~~rejected~~ ~~the~~ ~~option~~ ~~of~~ ~~self~~ ~~determination~~

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ending violence unilaterally.

Before any Joint Declaration were made, we would have to have a bankable and publicly usable assurance that PIRA violence would end.

Boz

~~The~~
As the days pass with no public product, suspicions increase.
There have been Loyalist attacks presented as a direct response

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for part of the price for peace would be recognition for the principle of Irish self-determination.

If the Irish Government were to put a final text ~~on~~ to ~~the~~ the Provisionals, they have agreed that they would say that it represented the Taoiseach's judgement of the order limit of acceptability to HMG.

given consent of the people of Northern Ireland. There are clear, although not explicit, references to HMG's commitment to the constitutional guarantee that Northern Ireland will stay part of the United Kingdom while that is the wish of a majority in Northern Ireland

speculation and tensions have been greatly heightened by the Hume/Adams statement ^{of 25} at the end of September. The Irish Government privately do not disguise their annoyance at Hume, Paisley, although not Molyneaux, has clearly staked out an unreasonable but troublesome position (for instance after his meeting with Michael Ancram on 30 September) that it would be wrong for the British Government even to receive a report from the Irish Government which is tainted by Adams' involvement with Hume. There has been unhelpful speculation that ~~the Hume/Adams~~ [bring in (A) on p.3]

for jeopardizing in this way what the Taoiseach prefers to see as his own initiative.

the position is still that the initiative has involved the Irish Government, but not HMG, in negotiating via intermediaries with the Provisionals. We have not ~~thus far~~ contributed textual amendments (eg our own draft paragraph 4, which has been held in reserve) through the Butler/Nally Group, although we have, as agreed, indicated principles which we could accept and those which we could not. The work of the Butler/Nally Group has in no sense amounted to indirect ^{negotiation} dealings with PIRA. But our position is not risk-free. In particular, Hume has been telling people privately in the USA that he has kept both Governments informed of his dialogue with Adams.

on the question of HMG's exposure,

And the statement by the Taoiseach and the Tanaiste on 7 October, after their briefing by Mr Hume, ~~blatantly~~ matters ~~by~~ has not helped by

while an acceptable Declaration would deliver a PIRA cessation of violence, the impact on the loyalists, the Unionist parties, and the wider community in

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referring to their continuing "discussions with the British Government for the achievement of the objective of peace on this island."

with reasonable prospects for sustaining this,

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The intelligence assessment on the loyalist reaction is that much would depend on the wording. Overall,

Northern Ireland remains hard to assess. The textual subtleties will matter a great deal to some audiences, not ^{at all} to others. The two most important points are whether the making of the Declaration can be clearly enough associated with the delivery of peace, and whether there is enough in ^{the Declaration} ~~it~~ to counter claims that it is a betrayal of Northern Ireland

- If the Joint Declaration were made there would be no prospects of reconvening the political development Talks for a considerable time. But the right text need not kill off all constructive political activity involving the Unionists, especially once ^{the benefits of a} the sustained cessation of violence began to be experienced.

~~Michael Ancram~~ does not consider that such a Declaration ^{need not} ~~would automatically~~ end the ^{promising} private dialogue which ^{Michael Ancram} ~~he~~ has been having bilaterally with the parties

- an important uncertainty is that, so far as we know, the most recent version of the text has not been seen by the Provisionals. The Irish Government judge that they would accept it as it stands, but believe it would be unsaleable if it contained an explicit statement of the constitutional guarantee. I return to this key issue in the following paragraph

- there is much support for Hume in Washington and Dublin, although little of this is based on any notion how peace might be brought about. In Dublin and elsewhere in the Republic, however, there is also a strand of scepticism that Hume has gone out on a limb and cannot deliver. Adams has cleverly exploited his association with Hume to improve his standing: for instance, there is already talk in political circles

The Irish Government believes the Joint Declaration is formally compatible with the political development Talks process. It remains committed to the talks, although the Taoiseach attaches ~~such~~ greater priority to the Joint Declaration.

(A)

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... to a United Ireland, or ...

~~before any Joint Declaration could be made we would have to~~

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~~have a bankable and public~~

in Washington of the need to look again at refusal of a visa for Adams to visit the USA

and
the operation of
the proposed
Convention to be
established by
the Irish
Government

- the papers identify ^{Further} key issues about handling, the implementation sequence, and implementation modalities, There will need to be further intensive engagement with the Irish Government if we embark on this path. (The Taoiseach has recently conveyed a number of guarantees about the role played by the Irish Government.) ~~The Irish side has already been consulted~~ stat

4. As the paper brings out, the next steps turn critically on whether we conclude that it would be counter-productive, or at least unsafe, to proceed further unless a more explicit reference to the constitutional guarantee is included in paragraph 4 of the text. The key considerations are these:

(F/S)
(although in
paragraph 3
rather than the
~~critical~~ crucial
paragraph 4)

- the present text already refers ^{paragraph 3,} to the commitment of the two Governments to guarantees which each has given. It is clearly understood by the Irish side that we would re-emphasise the constitutional guarantee in accompanying statements and presentation if the Joint Declaration were made. The Taoiseach's present clear position is that it is unnecessary to make the text itself more explicit, and that this would make the text unsaleable to the Provisionals
- Irish officials in the Butler/Nally Group readily accepted, however, that if HMG were to decide not to proceed with the Joint Declaration, the absence of an explicit reference to the constitutional guarantee would be a reasonable ground for doing so
an understandable
- on the other hand, there is an argument that if the Provisionals will not accept an explicit reference to

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He won't be particularly supportive
Private understanding.
Cautious & sceptical rather than...

A sufficient objective if we
know this path would be to secure

his private
understanding and
a public position
which is no more
than cautious
and sceptical.

what is clearly already implicit in the text, this
will raise a question about their good faith. Against
this, the PIRA leadership will not want to make their
task of selling and enforcing a cessation of violence
by their "volunteers" more difficult than it would
otherwise be

and will report
orally on that.

I have been in close touch with him
about since
Hume/Adams
statement, He has
stressed in particular

the need
for the
Government
HMG
to go on
saying
that it
would
stand by
the
democratically
expressed
wishes of
the
people of
Northern
Ireland.

- a point of cardinal importance for us is whether the
latest text already sufficiently guards against the
charge that it is a betrayal, or whether a clearer
talisman of non-betrayal is needed on the face of the
text itself. This is central to the reactions to any
Declaration of a number of key audiences, including
the loyalist paramilitaries, the Unionist parties, the
protestant community in Northern Ireland, and
political and domestic opinion in Great Britain,
including that within the Conservative Party. ~~we~~

5. It would be vital to get Jim Molyneaux on side. The paper
envisages that he would be briefed on Privy Councillor terms. His
reaction is central to how a Joint Declaration ^{if made and} accompanied by a
PIRA cessation ^{would be central to how such a development} would be perceived by moderate unionists ^{would be received} and wider opinion. We do not need ^{and cannot expect} him to be enthusiastic, but we
can be sure that his ^{outspoken} ~~outright~~ opposition ^{from him} would increase the risk
of a loyalist backlash, as well as causing serious domestic
political difficulties.

particularly in the light of my
contact with Jim

6. [There is a difficult balance of arguments. My own ^{Molyneaux}
judgement is that it is a political imperative for us to have a
more explicit reference to the constitutional guarantee in the
text itself; but that if we had it and had squared Jim Molyneaux
the position would be sufficiently secure to proceed in the
interests of bringing about peace. I do not believe that if the
Irish Government were to incorporate an explicit reference to the
constitutional guarantee this would ^{necessarily} automatically render the text

specifically about the ~~proposed~~
Joint Declaration if we decided
to proceed with the initiative.

(X)

8. This seems to me to be a ~~far~~ defensible and principled position for us to take, ~~and one which~~ ~~to which the Irish Government could not~~ ~~reasonably say~~ The Irish Government could not reasonably say (and I think would not) that we had been unconstructive or unimaginative. There is some chance that a peace process would result. ~~But~~ If, instead, it were a question of soft landings, we have to accept that we should not be in direct drive, given that it would be for the Irish Government to decide how to handle the Provisionals. ~~I hope we could~~ ~~agree with them~~ They would be likely to share ~~out~~ They ~~want~~ would want to They would ~~so~~ want the Provisionals, not Hume, to carry the blame, although it would be difficult completely to extricate the latter after the publicity given to the Hume/Adams demarche.

(In that event we would need to work with the Irish Government to ensure that the blame was carried by the Provisionals.)

They won't still get a self-determination which they are known to seek,

unsaleable to the Provisionals. We must recognise the risk that such insistence will end the Taoiseach's initiative. But I judge that it would be too dangerous, to proceed without it. It would be for the Taoiseach to decide whether the text, as amended in this way, should be put to the Provisionals. But we would make it clear to him that we needed an explicit reference to the constitutional guarantee not because we were signing off, but because we judged it necessary in the interests of seeing whether a genuine end to violence could be secured.]

and sustainable

and secured a satisfactory response from the Provisionals

establishing

7. If the Taoiseach accepted this, I would propose to brief Jim Molyneux on Privy Councillor terms, and attempt to secure his support for minimising any adverse unionist reaction.

[Take in (X)]

8. I am copying this minute and papers only to the Foreign Secretary and Sir Robin Butler at this stage, although you may want to consider whether the circle should be slightly widened for the purpose of discussing these issues on Thursday, ~~the~~ ~~after~~, for or after Thursday's meeting.

and the Irish Convention (as yet not picked up in the press.

Their public posture has focused on the notion of self det. Text gives

(In that event, we would

8. If it comes to soft landings

from Irish Gov. also a precedent. Not trailed.

It's been imaginative

A possible formulation would be to amend the sixth sentence of paragraph 4 of the text to read:

"They reaffirm as binding obligations both Northern Ireland's statutory constitutional guarantee

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[that its status will not change without majority consent here] and that they will, for their part, introduce the necessary legislation to give effect to a United Ireland, or to ..."

It's not in line - difficult to bring to end without people suffering - Irish have some choice.