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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

**NORTHERN IRELAND: BILATERAL MEETING BETWEEN THE
PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND: THURSDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 1993**

After NI Committee on Thursday 30 September, the Prime Minister and Sir Patrick Mayhew discussed the Joint Declaration Initiative. Sir Robin Butler, Quentin Thomas (NIO) and Sir Timothy Daunt (FCO) were present.

Sir Patrick Mayhew said that the content of the Hume/Adams report to the Irish Government was not yet known to us, though it would doubtless be similar to the Joint Declaration Initiative. Although the latest Joint Declaration text (JD8) had moved in the right direction, it was still well short of what might be acceptable. As explained in the NIO's letter of 27 September, there were serious defects in paragraph 4.

In discussion, it was agreed that the consent principle had to be protected; and that many questions would need to be answered before we could judge whether the House of Commons and the majority community in Northern Ireland might accept a "Joint Declaration". If, for example, an Irish Convention was established unilaterally in the Republic, we would face questions on how we would react to advice from the Convention. There would need to be clear evidence of a cessation of IRA violence; the Unionists might also wish to know in advance how HMG would react if the ceasefire broke down. Arrangements

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for the handover of weapons as part of the ceasefire would have to be established. These and many other questions arising from the document would need to be discussed with the Irish Government.

It was agreed that, at the Anglo-Irish Liaison Group meeting on 1 October, Quentin Thomas would tell his Irish counterpart that we were not yet able to reply substantively to JD8, and would take an interrogative line. In these talks, and at the next meeting between Sir Robin Butler and Dermot Nally, our objective would be to persuade the Irish Government to improve its text. We would not offer written amendments of our own. The meeting agreed on a number of adjustments to the draft replacement language for paragraph 4 attached at

Annex A to the Northern Ireland Office letter. The amended text provided guidelines for the further talks with the Irish Government. We would not be able to offer any commitment to a text until there had been wider consultation with Ministerial colleagues.

It was also agreed that a general approach should be made to the Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Mr Jim Molyneux, on Privy Counsellor terms.

RODERIC LYNE

5 October 1993

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