

cc M. Bell
R. Brink

SECRET AND PERSONAL



DESK IMMEDIATE

From: PS/Michael Ancram
7 December 1993

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cc PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) [3&4] - B
PS/PUS (B&L) [5&6] - B
PS/Mr Fell [7] - B
Mr Thomas [8] - B
Mr Deverell [9] - B
Mr Rickard [10] - B
Mr Maccabe [11] - B
Mr Cooke [12] - B
Mr Beeton [13] - B

PS/Secretary of State (B&L) [1&2] - B

MEETING WITH JAMES MOLYNEAUX

Michael Ancram sought out Jim Molyneaux at the latter's request last night in the House of Commons to discuss the progression of the Ancram Round and more particularly Strand I issues within the Round. The following represents the key points arising from the resulting discussion.

2. Mr Molyneaux reported that he was quite happy with the Secretary of State's report of the Dublin Summit. He remained very fearful and suspicious of officials being left to seek drafting compromises on the Joint Declaration Initiative. Michael Ancram assured him that ultimately this exercise remained under political supervision and decision.

3. Mr Molyneaux said that he was not keen to be drawn back into Strand II at present. He stressed the Prime Minister's comment this month at the private meeting involving the Prime Minister, Michael Ancram and Jim Molyneaux at which the Prime Minister in Mr Molyneaux's view indicated to Michael Ancram that he should concentrate on Strand I issues. Mr Molyneaux was not prepared to be cajoled into exploring Strand II solutions at present, although he accepted that ultimately this would be necessary. Rather he wants

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to continue to develop Strand I. He accepted that this can be a credible process only if the SDLP is involved but is of the view that they could be persuaded to join these discussions. He did not elaborate.

4. Mr Molyneaux indicated to Michael Ancram that the UUP was about to publish its Blueprint, including an "interesting addendum" which had been supplied at the eleventh hour by a group of "very prominent local businessmen" whose names he had promised to keep confidential. He indicated that much to his surprise these particular businessmen were "to the right" of him in their propositions which should be taken seriously. These seemed to refer to a Strand I settlement, but he did not elaborate further. He did indicate however that HMG would get an advance copy of the Blueprint and that he is prepared to hold off a further Ancram Round meeting until we have had a chance to read the document. He added that he would be happy at that stage to discuss a Bill of Rights (Mr Empey's comments at the last UUP Ancram Round meeting refers).

5. Mr Molyneaux is convinced that the Republic of Ireland Government wants peace before talks in order to bring the IRA into the political process. He takes the view that the Irish have promised the IRA more than what they would have gained under the "conflict is over" scenario of February, had this been carried through, and that this is what prevented the February initiative from progressing.

6. The meeting concluded with agreement to make further contact once Michael Ancram has had sight of the Blueprint which will be sent as well to the PM and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. Michael Ancram and James Molyneaux both agreed that it was essential for the Talks process to be seen to have momentum and to be continued.

Signed

KEITH JAGELMAN
Private Secretary