

FROM: PUS
28 OCTOBER 1993

Copy no ... 9 ... of [10]

cc. PS/SofS(L)
Mr Stephens [1]
Mr Thomas [2]
Mr Deverell [3]
Mr Cooke [4] ✓
Mr Rickard [5]
Ms Hebdon [6]
Mr C Glyn-Jones [7]
Mr Beeton [8]
Mr May [9]
File [10]

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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

CONVERSATION WITH MR JOHN HUME MP

Mr Hume rang me this morning (28 October) and made the following points:

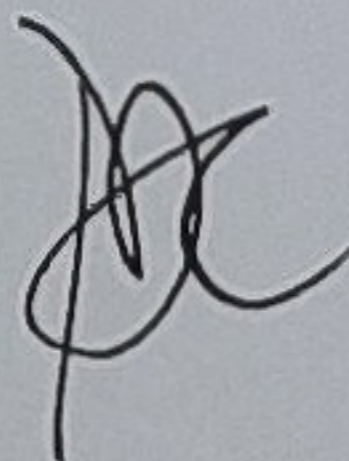
- (i) despite the great pressures on everyone, he hoped the British Government would still see the possibility of progress towards peace, reinforced by what the Tanaiste had said yesterday in the Dail. The principles which the Tanaiste had enunciated reflected the spirit and substance of the Joint Declaration, but in a way which he believed the British Government could easily endorse in terms of their own publicly stated positions;
- (ii) I said we had been studying the text with keen interest, that there would be a holding line until the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach met tomorrow, but that the speech clearly seemed very helpful and there was no question of our rejecting its basic message;
- (iii) John Hume said he had learned with dismay that the Irish continued to handle their indirect dialogue with the Provisionals clumsily. He learned on Saturday night after the Shankill Road atrocity that the Irish Government passed through their clerical intermediary a message on the previous Thursday that the Joint Declaration had been rejected totally. On learning of this on Saturday he challenged Dublin, and was told the message was nothing like as blunt or

uncompromising as that; John Hume believes the clerical intermediary through whom Dublin works is unreliable (probably too Republican in his sympathies, and perhaps also an unsophisticated rapporteur). John Hume had worked since to reinterpret the message, and taken heart especially from the Secretary of State's statement on Monday;

- (iv) John Hume spoke of his own personal position and difficulties. He had been greatly encouraged by the Secretary of State's words in the House of Commons on Monday both politically (in terms of the search for peace) and personally. He had reason to believe that possibly two attempts had been made on his own life: one was the mysterious appearance of an unordered taxi following his broadcast on Sunday, and second some sinister 'goings-on' on the beach and at sea near his house in Donegal. The Garda had however been on the job and all was well there;
- (v) he said he wanted to draw particular attention to Adams' interview with the BBC on Sunday, in particular what he had said about his understanding of there being a legitimate Unionist position and the impossibility of coercion of the Unionist people. He believed that was of real significance and needed to be understood.

2. John Hume said he would be ready at any time to have a private conversation with the Secretary of State or the Prime Minister; and gave his renewed guarantee that his conversations and their content would remain entirely private. He had rebuked Seamus Mallon for what the latter had said in a newspaper interview about the British Government knowing all along what was in the Hume/Adams initiative - that had been done without authority and was not going to recur.

3. John Hume sounded in more buoyant mood than formerly though probably still very tired. A good response to the Tanaiste's speech and a consensual outcome to the Prime Minister's meeting with the Taoiseach are what are in his mind immediately; he hoped that thereafter (different minds thinking alike!) that there could be room for a renewed speech or statement by the Secretary of State, simply repeating well-established themes, to give those who were looking for a path to peace the sense that Saturday's event had not finally and completely slammed the door.



J A CHILCOT

28 OCTOBER 1993