

S E C R E T A N D P E R S O N A L

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SC/SIL/22045

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
Principal Private Secretary
to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

18 October 1993

Dear Mr Lyne,

JOINT DECLARATION - BRIEFING MR MOLYNEAUX

The Prime Minister will be briefing Mr Molyneaux on the Joint Declaration Initiative.

We recommend that the Prime Minister should not ask Mr Molyneaux for a yes or no to the Initiative, nor seek his commitment to it. The most that can be expected is to secure Mr Molyneaux's private understanding and agreement to react publicly in a cautious rather than hostile way.

While making it clear that the judgment on whether to proceed is for the Government alone, the Prime Minister should ask Mr Molyneaux for his advice as an experienced political leader in Northern Ireland on the likely reaction to the Initiative. The Prime Minister may also wish to seek Mr Molyneaux's personal support for his decision to make the difficult judgement that the Initiative was something that should be considered, given the possibility of securing the great prize of an ending of violence by the Provisionals.

If Mr Molyneaux jibs, the Prime Minister might ask him to reflect overnight (but without taking the text away). If he suggests textual amendments, the Prime Minister can say that we will consider them seriously.

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In outlining the position to Mr Molyneaux the Prime Minister may wish to sketch the background to the present position, including an explanation that the Initiative does not arise wholly from Mr Hume's contacts with Mr Adams, and that the Government's view has been conditioned by its own intelligence assessments of the likelihood of a Joint Declaration leading to peace. He will also wish to emphasise the Government's insistence that any Declaration would have to make explicit reference to the guarantee of Northern Ireland's constitutional status. This should provide reassurance to Mr Molyneaux who, in a weekend interview, claimed that the Hume/Adams Initiative had the objective of bringing about a British withdrawal from Northern Ireland within 25 to 30 years.

I enclose a speaking note in bull point form and an annotated version of the Joint Declaration text for the Prime Minister; and copies of a slightly revised intelligence assessment, and a plain version of the current draft of the Joint Declaration incorporating our proposed amendments (minus a single phrase in the additional sentence in paragraph 4) for the Prime Minister to show to Mr Molyneaux during the meeting.

A copy goes to Melanie Leech.

Yours sincerely,

David Cote

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