

FROM: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE  
3 NOVEMBER 1993

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- cc. Michael Ancram [2]
- PS/PUS(L) [3]
- Mr Deverell [4]
- Mr Cooke [5]
- Mr Rickard [6]
- Mr Beeton [7]
- Mr May [8]
- File [9]

*-Desha, 24/2/93*

MR THOMAS [1]

**IGC: DISCUSSION OF JOINT DECLARATION INITIATIVE**

I have recorded separately the discussion at this morning's restricted political session on the political talks process. This was interposed with discussion on the follow-up on the Joint Declaration Initiative to the Brussels meeting.

2. Mr Spring said that the Hume/Adams dialogue had put peace on the agenda and created expectations. There was a danger of an anti-climax if, at their December meeting, the two Heads of Government concentrated exclusively on political talks. As he understood it, the two Heads of Government had agreed that, in parallel with further work on the political talks, there should be further reflections this week on the Joint Declaration. It was important to get to the point where the two Governments could be clear whether this was an initiative which could be taken forward. He had been fortified by the views of unionist businessmen that, if there was a real prospect of peace, the two Governments should do everything possible to pursue it.

3. The Secretary of State said that he was unsighted on recent developments: the last text which he had seen, he knew the Prime Minister had told the Taoiseach was unsaleable. Clearly both Governments had a high responsibility to pursue anything which had a real prospect of peace. But to achieve this, it had to be saleable to both republicans and unionists: there was no point in signing up to something which was not acceptable to one side or the other.

4. Mr Spring said that there was a clear basis of trust between the two Governments. They each faced dangers and had successfully stood back to back with each other. It was clear that there would be no public reference to any further exploration of the text. The publicity given to the Hume/Adams dialogue had created a great difficulty, but progress could still be made given time and space. It was important to give the impression that there was work to be done.

5. PUS suggested that the trick was not to leave Mr Hume swinging in the wind, but without tainting the document which the two Governments might produce with the whiff of Hume/Adams. Mr Spring agreed.

6. Mrs Geoghegan-Quinn said that Hume was so well respected internationally, that the impression that he had been abandoned by the two Governments would itself create international pressure on the Governments. They clearly therefore had substantive work to do - not least, those involved needed to persuade colleagues in both Governments that this was a process which should be carried forward.

7. The Secretary of State said that this process, and the political talks, were complementary rather than rivals. But the political talks process had to bear the burden in public: in any case, Mr Hume had a stake in that as well. In pursuing the other

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process, it was important that neither Government crossed the line to the point where unionist confidence would be undermined.

Mr Thomas said that it would be difficult to protect Mr Hume if he maintained his dialogue with Adams.

8. Mr Spring said that he thought the more reassured Mr Hume could be that the substance of his process was being pursued by the two Governments in private, the more helpful he would be in his public stance. He felt bruised and rejected at present: what he needed was a formula through which he could see the process developing.

9. The Secretary of State agreed: he and the Prime Minister had already done much to express admiration for Mr Hume's efforts. It could, however, have come as no surprise to Mr Hume that his efforts had not succeeded so far: when he last met the Prime Minister, it had been made clear that the text then under discussion was unacceptable.

Signed:

J A STEPHENS  
PRIVATE SECRETARY  
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