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SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR

~~ROBERTO LYONS~~ Esq
Private Secretary to Prime Minister
10 Downing Street

10 December 1993

Dear Rod,

JOINT DECLARATION INITIATIVE: BRUSSELS NEGOTIATIONS

Thank you for your earlier note of this afternoon negotiations. I attach, in response, a briefing note in similar style. It is the product of discussions here with Quintin Thomas, and brief discussion with my Secretary of State and Michael Ancram.

Our analysis here is that the Irish are either deliberately playing hard in the end game to see what they can get out of us, or (less likely) have already heard that JD will not do the trick with the Provisionals and would not therefore mind a break with the British. Either way, since the Irish seem prepared to open up a few issues which we thought to be closed, you might want to counter with some suggestions which will be equally unpalatable to the Irish. Examples include insisting on references to "separate consent" in paragraph 4 and a commitment now to a referendum to withdraw the Irish claim of right (some sources are suggesting that the Irish might have been prepared to concede this).

The key issues are obviously paragraph 4 and the Convention/Forum. Both go to the heart of how unionists will react to the declaration. Ministers on Thursday judged that the reference to "a sovereign united Ireland" in paragraph 4 and any reference to the

Convention/Forum would stoke unionist fears. Our view is that this remains a valid judgement. But Mr Molyneux subsequently said that a reference to the Forum would be acceptable if the original Irish paragraphs 10 and 11 were proving difficult to remove. So we reluctantly conclude we can accept a reference to the Forum providing it is clearly limited to an advisory role.

On paragraph 4, we should continue to insist on removal of the words "as of right" and sovereign united Ireland". The latter in particular was of concern to Mr Molyneux. We have suggested possible fallbacks.

Copies go to John Sawers and Melanie Leach.

Yours,

Tonathan