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FROM: M J WILLIAMS
US(POL)

17 December 1993



cc PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
 PS/PUS (L&B) - B
 PS/Mr Fell - B
 Mr Thomas - B
 Mr Legge - B
 Mr Bell - B
 Mr Watkins - B
 Mr Cooke - B
 Mr Brooker - B
 Mr Maccabe - B
 Mr Kyle - B
 Mr Archer, RID, FCO - B
 HMA Dublin - B

2. Back to me
 yes
 17/12

PS/SofS (L&B) - B

Yesterday evening I discussed with Mr Declan O'Donovan the reported response by Gerry Adams to the Joint Declaration. We were both concerned at the report that Adams would be seeking "clarification" of certain points from the Irish Government. This raised the prospect that he would in effect try to re-open the Joint Declaration, and attempt either to drive a wedge between Dublin and Westminster or to re-negotiate certain parts of the text. We both felt that this could be very damaging.

2. We agreed that it would be best if the Irish Government were to respond to any such attempts by Adams, by saying that the Declaration as a whole had been very carefully drafted and stood in its own terms, and refusing to offer any further clarifications. Mr O'Donovan agreed that advice along these lines should be put to Irish Ministers. He seemed reasonably confident that Irish Ministers would accept advice of this nature, at least as regards what they said in public.

3. Any attempt by Adams to get the Irish Government to "interpret" the Joint Declaration, at least beyond what has been said in public by British and Irish Ministers in response to press enquiries, runs

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X | the serious risk of undermining its value as a document to which both governments subscribe. I hope therefore the Secretary of State would agree that the Irish Government should be urged to resist any attempts by Adams to give private interpretations or clarifications of its text. The best way of reinforcing this might be by means of a message in the Secretary of State's name, passed to the Tanaiste via the Embassy in Dublin, or via the Secretariat, or perhaps both.

[signed MJW]

M J WILLIAMS

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