

(RN/SILMAIL/34103)

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

5 January 1994

Dear Roderic

COMMENTS ON THE JOINT DECLARATION

I attach copies of Mr Adams' and Mr Hume's recent statements on the Joint Declaration.

Mr Adams' statement, issued on 3 January, contains much standard republican rhetoric about partition being the cause of conflict in Ireland. But amongst this dross, there are one or two nuggets including: describing the reference to self-determination in paragraph 4 of the Declaration as "a potentially significant development"; recognising the need for "obtaining maximum consent" to the exercise of national self-determination, which should be done "in consultation and co-operation with the representatives of the unionists"; and recognition that what is ultimately sought is "an agreed accommodation". As a whole, the statement is consistent with Sinn Fein's current line of refusing to give a straight answer. However, after a few days in which their statements seemed to veer more towards the negative, this contains some positive messages.

Mr Hume's lengthy statement puts the full force of his authority, both as the leading constitutional nationalist politician in Northern Ireland and as a participant in the Hume/Adams dialogue, behind the Joint Declaration. His

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PS/Michael Aueran (LAB) - 2

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PS/Mr Pell - 2

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statement is essentially addressed to republicans and argues that the Joint Declaration makes it clear that the reasons previously given for justifying the use of the violence no longer exist. He cites in particular the "no selfish strategic economic interest" formula, the reference to self-determination in paragraph 4 of the Declaration and the proposed establishment by the Taoiseach of the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation.

Mr Archer, AID - 2

Mr Hume's support is all that we could have hoped for, and it very usefully maintains the pressure of Sinn Fein. Given this, we see considerable advantage in the Prime Minister finding time to see Mr Hume. We know Mr Hume would appreciate this and, even if diary problems mean that a meeting cannot be arranged for a little time, the offer of a meeting would indicate the importance we attach to Mr Hume's contribution.

A copy of this letter goes to John Sawes and Melanie Leach.

SIGNED

JONATHAN STEPHENS