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NIO, London

RS/POS

**TRANSCRIPT OF DOORSTEP BY JOHN HUME MP ON 14 JANUARY 1994 AT 3.00PM AFTER HIS MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER**

17 JAN 1994

Well I had a very constructive meeting with the Prime Minister and we discussed the current situation in depth and I am very very encouraged by the fact that there isn't any doubt that our problem is right at the top of the Prime Minister's agenda and that is very encouraging indeed because I believe he is totally committed to try to resolve the problem and of course his total commitment to the Joint Declaration which I have already made my views on very clear, that I see the Joint Declaration as a major step on the road to peace. The Prime Minister was also emphasising to me the enormous economic benefits that he thinks will emerge from lasting peace and I must say that I agree that will be the major benefit to all of our people. He also put to me the talks process which Michael Ancram is underway and I agreed we would continue to take part in that process and I welcomed the fact that it was underlined that that process is about all of the relationships, the Three Strands that go to the heart of our problem. I put my view to the Prime Minister on the whole question of clarification and he put his very clearly to me and I am thinking now very carefully about what the Prime Minister has said to me and I am still going to do everything in my power to ensure that the objective that everyone wants to see, which is lasting peace in our country happens.

Thank you very much.

**Will you be seeing Gerry Adams?**

Well I have made very clear throughout as has Mr Adams that we will maintain contact because the objective of our dialogue throughout has been to bring about the total cessation of violence and lasting peace and as I said I will be doing everything in my power which will be continuing contact there, yes.

**Will you be able to offer any clarification?**

I have nothing to add to what I have already said. The Prime Minister stated his view very clearly which you all know. I stated mine which you all know. I have nothing to add to it but I am thinking very carefully about what was said to me.

**What about peace in a week. Did the Prime Minister raise that?**

I am not interested in your sound bites Norman. If you had listened to what I said I told you, I also told you that I wasn't a government, that the governments take a little more time and as I have said repeatedly since when you are engaged in a peace process, patience is the virtue that you require and patience is what I ask everybody to ask because I believe that everybody in our land wants peace and I am doing everything in my power, other people have to do everything in theirs, but that's what's happening.

I am still very hopeful that we can achieve our objectives.

**Did you discuss Adams statement yesterday?**

No we didn't discuss Mr Adams statement yesterday. I am not a messenger for Mr Adams as I have made repeatedly to you.

**Does Gerry Adams exclusion, continued exclusion from Britain helpful or not. As we understand it the exclusion order has not been lifted?.**

Well actually no, my attitude to exclusion orders, not just Mr Adams, as I find it very strange that in one part of a country as it's called, people are excluded from going from one part to another. I find that very peculiar. And I have already made that public in the past in other exclusion orders.

**But there appears to be an indication today that the British Government is taking a rather gloomy view of the prospects of the IRA ceasing its campaign? Do you agree with that?**

Well I think you can take it from my remarks that I don't have a gloomy prospect.

And I keep my eye on the goal at the end of the road which is lasting peace and I still think that that is very very possible and I am doing everything in my power to ensure that comes about.

**Do you sense that the Government has a gloomy view?**

No I didn't sense any gloom. Anyway we had, as I described, a very constructive discussion. The item is right at the top of the Prime Minister's agenda which I welcome very very much.

**What does it need now to get the process back on course? What does it need to deliver on the Declaration? What do people need to do if there is a question of stalemate?**

Well I have made my views very clear on the Declaration in a very lengthy and detailed statement and I don't wish to repeat that here.

**Did you discuss the question of clarification?**

Well as I have said the Prime Minister stated his position and you know what my position is. I have stated it and I am now thinking about the situation and of course I will be thinking about it.

**Do you still disagree with him over the clarification?**

Well I my position on clarification is very clear and it's different from the Prime Minister's.

**Do you agree with the British Government about the reaction ??????**

Well my position throughout is that we will talk at any time and of course as you know we are committed to the talks process and it was reiterated to me again today that the talks process and any talks process which is going to solve our problem must deal with all the relationships and we will be meeting Mr Ancram as we have already agreed on the 24th of this month.

**Do you think the Unionist leaders should now engage in talks with the Government about the future of Northern Ireland?**

Unionist leaders.

**I'm thinking about the Reverend Ian Paisley**

Ask those questions, I'm not a messenger for Ian Paisley either you know.

**Perhaps you have decided it has run out of steam?**

No I don't, no.

**You said you were going to think very carefully about what John Major said. Well he obviously said something of quite significance to you Mr Hume, can you give us any indication of what it was?**

**Well it's very, to me the fact that this item is really, and there isn't any doubt after talking with the Prime Minister he has given very detailed and deep consideration to this problem and it is very high on his agenda which is where I want it to be.**

**You said it made you think carefully?**

**Well I mean I think carefully all the time about this problem. It's a very serious problem you know.**

**Can you give any indication of what the Prime Minister said?**

**No reply from Mr Hume.**