

FROM: PUS  
12 OCTOBER 1993

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- cc. PS/Secretary of State (L) [1] ←
- Mr Thomas [2] ←
- Mr Deverell [3] ←
- Mr Cooke [4] ←
- Mr Rickard [5] ←
- Mr C Glyn-Jones [6] ←
- Mr Beeton [7] ←
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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

MR JOHN HUME

I saw John Hume at his request at a colleague's house this afternoon, 12 October.

2. There were no new developments and we agreed, together with Mr Wood that if any news of the meeting should come out and lead to press inquiries we should say, truthfully, that the discussion had touched on a wide range of matters, did not involve the Secretary of State or other Ministers and was one of a series of meetings with which Mr Hume like other Northern Ireland politicians had with officials from time to time.

3. No significant new information emerged. Mr Hume confirmed that what he had said to the Taoiseach yesterday in preparation for the meeting of the Irish Cabinet today was no more than a repetition and continuation of his Joint Declaration initiative. There were no hidden aspects to it and there was no new text.

4. Mr Hume went to some lengths to explain why he had found it necessary to make a public statement together with Adams on the eve of his departure for the United States. I said that that had caused

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more difficulties for the Irish Government than for us and British Ministers had been careful to avoid critical comments. John Hume said that he accepted that that was so and was grateful for it.

5. He asked what the prospects were and what would happen next given the urgency of the situation and the continuing pressures on him and his SDLP colleagues in particular. I said it was for the Taoiseach to raise, with the Prime Minister if he wished to do so any outcome from today's Irish Cabinet meeting; otherwise the position was as Mr Hume had heard it from the Prime Minister himself when they last met. I expected that decisions would be reached shortly in both Dublin and London about the viability of the initiative and John Hume emphasised most energetically the following points:

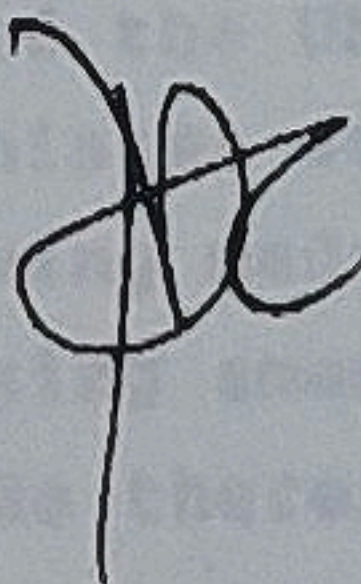
- (i) while he could not say that Adams had accepted the separate consent of the North in a dual referendum or otherwise in explicit language he believed it entirely possible that the Provisionals could be brought to accept it. He understood very well it was sine qua non for HMG;
- (ii) all the information available to him indicated that if the Joint Declaration were made in acceptable form, this would bring at once a permanent end to violence. Adams had assured him of this while as a realist he knew that there were likely to be some dissenters who would seek to continue violence. He was confident the great bulk of the Republican movement would follow the leadership;
- (iii) he was much cheered by the maturity and positive nature of Mr Martin Smyth's statement the previous evening about the acceptability of Sinn Fein as a partner in a talks process once the violence had ended and there had been a clear demonstration of their sincerity over a sufficient period. He had without making too much of it endorsed that

statement and would do so again in television interviews but did not want to go over the top about it;

(iv) by contrast he was very gloomy about the prospect in the event of the initiative failing. He did not think the present leadership of the Provisionals would continue for very long in those circumstances and a new younger generation of hard men would be all too likely to take over (despite the noise of axes being ground here, I believe he meant it genuinely).

6. The rest of the discussion was a re-run of familiar themes both historical and political; John Hume emphasised the continuing support he was receiving from all sections of the community in Northern Ireland (and he would indeed be speaking to the Presbyterian Church in East Belfast on a Sunday soon as one example of that).

7. He closed by saying that he had had the opportunity while in the United States last week to dine privately at the White House (though the President was away) to emphasise the potential importance of US support in the event of peace being achieved but also the delicacy of the situation and the need to avoid clumsy interventions. On the peace envoy he said it was clear that only at the willing invitation of both Governments would the idea serve any useful purpose.



J A CHILCOT

12 OCTOBER 1993