

SECRET AND PERSONAL



FROM: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE
7 December 1993

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cc PS/SofS [2&3] (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram [4&5] (B&L) - B
PS/PUS [6&7] (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell [8] - B
Mr Thomas [9] - B
Mr Deverell [10] - B
Mr Williams [11] - B
Mr Maccabe [12] - B
Mr Beeton [13] - B

Mr Cooke [1] - B

MEETING WITH MR HUME: 2 DECEMBER

John Hume called, at his own request, on the Secretary of State on the evening of Thursday 2 December.

2. Mr Hume was preoccupied with the prospects for the summit the next day and the future of the Joint Declaration initiative. He said that the original document he had presented in June sought to provide a basis on which violence could be brought to an end, without sacrificing any essential principles. The key point was to adopt republican language on the right of self determination of the Irish people as a whole, but to make it clear that this had to be exercised with the consent of the people of Northern Ireland and on the basis of agreement throughout the island of Ireland. He understood the British difficulties with some of the language of paragraph 4 and had sought to clarify it: the British Government were not being asked to join the ranks of the persuaders, but only to promote agreement, which might or might not take the form of a United Ireland.

3. Mr Hume said that he had seen the alternative British text. Our continued emphasis on 'separate' consent was the old language of division: we should move on instead to talk of self determination being exercised with agreement and consent, North and South. His own opinion was that the idea of joint referenda would ultimately be

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acceptable to PIRA, although they might not accept it in the first instance. His message to unionists was that they should sort out their relationship with the island of Ireland now, while they were in a majority in Northern Ireland. It would only be when they had a stable long term relationship with the rest of the people in the island of Ireland that their fear of betrayal would decrease.

4. The Secretary of State said that the British Government were serious about achieving an end to violence. But it would not be durable unless it were acceptable to both communities in Northern Ireland. It was absolutely fundamental that the constitutional guarantee should be recognised and accepted: the danger with the sort of formula suggested by Mr Hume was that it tended to put the consent of the people of Northern Ireland into a second order and make it subsidiary to self determination by the people of the whole Island. It was a question of language on both sides and there was no point in a formula which only shifted the seat of violence from one side to another. Having said that, the British Government had no problems with the idea of separate and concurrent referenda.

5. Mr Hume speculated about the source of the leak of contacts between the Government and the IRA. The Reverend William McCrea claimed that he had received the document from 'inside the British system'. PIRA's own belief seemed to be that we had leaked the paper. The series of messages confirmed Mr Hume's own view that PIRA wanted to bring violence to an end. Although Mr Spring was sore at the revelations, Mr Hume was not surprised at them: he assumed that we would have been checking out his own assessment of PIRA's intentions.

6. The Secretary of State said that he had already commented on the Reverend William McCrea's action in the House of Commons. His own assessment was that the leak had come from PIRA and that possibly Mr McGuinness had not had authority to issue some of the messages. The further Sinn Fein revelations were simply an effort to divert attention from the 22 February message.

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7. Turning to the next day's summit, the Secretary of State said that expectations had been over hyped. The British position was that, if peace could be attained on proper terms, we did not care about the route by which it was attained. We had to be certain, however, that any peace would last and that it would not be on terms which were perceived as a 'sell-out', which would lead to an upsurge in loyalist violence. Prospects had not been helped by the ferocious Irish briefing which, it seemed, even the Irish were beginning to realise had gone too far. Nevertheless, there did seem to be a tide flowing which should be caught.

John Longman

Mr Beverell - 5
Mr Rickard - 6

Mr Beaton - 8
Mr May - 9

Signed

MINISTERIAL MEETING ON NORTHERN IRELAND: 23 NOVEMBER

JONATHAN STEPHENS
Private Secretary

The Prime Minister held a meeting on Northern Ireland on 23 November. The Foreign Secretary, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Home Secretary, the Defence Secretary, the Cabinet Secretary, H.M. Ambassador at Dublin, John Chilcot, Quentin Thomas and John Dorewell were present.

Copies of this letter should not be circulated beyond the Private Offices of recipient Departments.

Your Secretary of State described discussion of the Taoiseach's draft joint declaration between Albert Reynolds, Archbishop Eames, and James Moynaux. After the leak of an Irish government document on 19 November, Moynaux had decided that he could not take any further part for the time being. On 20 November, he had issued a press statement warning that the British Government was acting on flawed advice. Sir Patrick Mayhew and the Prime Minister had spoken to Moynaux by telephone over the weekend. He was evidently under pressure within his own party, and also needed to avoid being outflanked by the DUP.

In discussion, the following points were made:

debate within PIRA appeared to be continuing. No conclusions had been reached. McGuinness seemed somewhat isolated. There was considerable opposition to a cessation of violence. Attacks on the Security Forces continued. However, at brigade level a cessation of these attacks was under discussion.