

SECRET AND PERSONAL

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

9 December 1993

From the Private Secretary

*Dear Jonathan,***MEETING WITH MR JAMES MOLYNEAUX MP, 9 DECEMBER**

As agreed at the earlier Ministerial meeting, the Prime Minister, accompanied by your Secretary of State and by Mr Michael Ancram MP, met Mr James Molyneaux MP in Downing Street at 1315 on 9 December.

The Prime Minister thanked Mr Molyneaux for the draft "blueprint for stability", which he looked forward to reading carefully. It was very important that we should continue the talks process as a complementary exercise to the Joint Declaration initiative.

The Prime Minister reviewed the objectives of the Joint Declaration. There was a chance that it would help to achieve a cessation of violence, without compromising our principles or any points of fundamental importance. He accepted that the odds were probably against us. However, so long as its substance was acceptable, the Joint Declaration would have a number of attractions even without a cessation of violence. It would pre-empt the Provisionals from taking the initiative by stating their own terms for a cessation. It would put them on the defensive. If they turned it down they would be rejecting a very reasonable and widely supported position; and would be exposed as continuing the fight for extreme ends. The JD would register the support of the Irish Government for language which went much further than they had ever gone before. It would reinforce the right of the people of Northern Ireland to determine their own future, and would not concede any steps towards joint authority or any recognition of the "value" of a united Ireland. It would wind up the initiative rather than leave it open.

The Prime Minister said that the Government was awaiting the Taoiseach's definitive answer to the amendments we had proposed. If the Taoiseach accepted our points, the Government intended to go ahead with the Declaration.

The Prime Minister did not show a text to Mr Molyneaux, but summarised the key points. He then described the likely pattern of further action. His meeting in Brussels with the Taoiseach might open the way to a further meeting in London next week, at which the Joint Declaration would be published.

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Mr Molyneaux interjected the odd comment and question, but otherwise said little. He expressed appreciation to the Prime Minister for keeping him in the picture. He seemed relaxed, and did not express concern at anything which the Prime Minister had said.

I am sending copies of this letter to John Sawers (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

*yours ever,
Roderic*

RODERIC LYNE

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Northern Ireland Office

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