



10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

8 December 1993

Dear Jonathan,

JOINT DECLARATION: VIEWS OF THE DEFENCE SECRETARY

As Mr. Rifkind cannot attend the Prime Minister's meeting at 0900 on 9 December, I asked his Private Office for his comments on the papers circulated by the Cabinet Secretary on 7 December. They have relayed his views as follows:

- the Defence Secretary is broadly content with the text as now amended, though not enthusiastic;
- he has some concerns about the tone and language (not specified in detail);
- however, he is ready to accept the judgement of those who have been involved in the negotiations, and will give full support to his colleagues if they decide to proceed on this basis.

I detected a sense that Mr. Rifkind might feel that we have made too many concessions to the Irish in the negotiations. I told his Private Secretary that virtually all the concessions made since the last Ministerial discussion had come from Ireland; and that I hoped that this would emerge fairly clearly from the further papers which you will be circulating today.

I am copying this letter only to Sir Robin Butler and will ensure that the Prime Minister sees it before tomorrow's meeting.

Yours truly,
Roderic
RODERIC LYNE

Jonathan Stephens, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.