

FROM Q J THOMAS, DUS(L)
15 October 1993
DUSL/MR/42498

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE(L)-[1]
(Jonathan Stephens)

cc Michael Ancram(B)-[2]*
PS/PUS(L)-[3]
Mr Deverell-[4]*
Mr Cooke-[5]
Mr Rickard-[6]*
Mr C Glyn-Jones-[7]+
Mr Beeton-[8]
Mr May-[9]*
PS/Sir R Butler-[10]-+
Sir T Daunt-[11]-+
Mr Roderic Lyne-[12]-+
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* Mufax via Liaison(L)
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JOINT DECLARATION INITIATIVE: IRISH EXPECTATIONS

At the end of the Anglo Irish Liaison Group meeting on 14 October I had a private word with Mr O hUiginn. I was able before doing so to speak to the Secretary of State briefly who gave me guidance on what I should say to Mr O hUiginn about the Joint Declaration Initiative, in the light of the Prime Minister's meeting earlier that afternoon.

2. I duly reported to Mr O hUiginn that the Joint Declaration Initiative was receiving the most serious consideration at the highest level; that it was unlikely that a decision could be communicated to the Irish Government in the next few days; but that all those concerned were well seized of the shortage of time.

3. Mr O hUiginn appeared to have hoped, and to have built up the Taoiseach's hopes, that some firm news might be available that day. He emphasised that the Taoiseach might accordingly be disappointed by the sign that the British Government would not

give a response yet. The Taoiseach might even seek to speak to the Prime Minister. He asked whether I thought that would be helpful. I said that if the Taoiseach was seriously concerned it might be right for him to make his views known but I did not myself think that the British side lacked information which the Irish side could provide. Mr O hUiginn emphasised that there was, on the Irish view, very little time and that much delay would amount to taking a decision. I in turn emphasised that there was no sense in which the British side were delaying things with the expectation that the decision would take itself. It was rather that the British side did not wish to mislead. When it reached a decision it would be one reflecting full assessment of the issues.

4. I said that I did not wish to anticipate the decision which might be reached. I had however no sense that the various points which had been discussed between officials required further clarification. The one point on which I thought the British side might insist, if it decided to go ahead at all, was the need for some more explicit reference to the "constitutional guarantee". This led Mr O hUiginn to express again the Taoiseach's view that this would be fatal to the enterprise. The psychology of the Provisionals would mean that this was simply unacceptable to them.

5. Mr O hUiginn mentioned that Mr Adams' reported remarks that peace came at the end of the process rather than at the beginning might be explicable in terms of Republican theology. But it raised an issue which the Irish side would no doubt wish to clarify.

6. Mr O hUiginn repeated his judgement that unless the Joint Declaration Initiative were brought to fruition it might be difficult to achieve a soft landing. There was a worry that the

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Irish Government would be faced with the difficult choice of either aligning themselves with Hume and accordingly by implication with Adams or with the British Government. This was the kind of choice the Irish Government would prefer to avoid. It was a complication that there was great interest in the Hume/Adams initiative in the United States and that had been some partial briefing of some there by Hume and indeed, in Bruce Morrison's case, by Adams.

[SIGNED]

Q J THOMAS
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