

Dermot Nally Papers

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SECRET

Report of Meeting between John Hume and Prime Minister Major
16th September, 1993

1. I spoke to Mr. Hume recently about the meeting which he had with the British Prime Minister on the 16th September.
2. Hume said that almost the entire discussion was given over to the Hume-Adams talks. Mr. Major, who was accompanied by Mayhew and Chilcot, had concentrated his questions on three areas:
 - (a) He was concerned about the treatment of self-determination. He found it was contradictory for the two Governments to say there was a right of self-determination and then to prescribe in detail what result its exercise should produce. Hume made clear that the valid exercise of self-determination was not confined merely to the outcome of Irish unity, but rather referred to any arrangement endorsed collectively by the Irish people.
 - (b) Mr. Major was interested in what a cessation of violence would involve. Would it mean the people concerned laid down their arms? On this Hume said that he did not discuss military aspects with any of his interlocutors, but suggested the British themselves might have lines to do so. According to Hume, Major looked significantly at Mayhew at this point.
 - (c) The Prime Minister wanted to know what the effect of the proposal would be on the three-stranded talks process. On that point Hume thought the declaration could be integrated under Strand Three.

3. Hume made the point to the Prime Minister that if their difficulty related to the wording of a declaration, he felt this was something that he could sort out in very short order. Mr. Major indicated that they were looking at that aspect and that they would discuss it with him in due course. He suggested that Mr. Chilcot would fix a time to do so.

4. As regards the three-stranded talks, Hume made clear that there was no need to ask the SDLP about their attitude. If the British issued a call to the table, the SDLP would be there in the morning. He also made the point that when the British called on politicians to assume their responsibilities, they should make it clear who was ready to come to the table and who was not. (He was irritated by the fact that his meeting with Mr. Major was linked in the media to that of Paisley and speculated that the leaking of information to Frank Millar of the Irish Times about his proposed meeting was a deliberate ploy by the British).



Sean O hUiginn

24 September