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FROM: R P LEMON
PS/Michael Ancram
12 June 1996

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas (B&L) - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Leach - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Hill - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Lavery - B
Mr Beeton - B

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Note for the Record

BILATERALS WITH THE PARTIES: 11 JUNE 1996

As part of a series of bilaterals on the afternoon of 11 June, Michael Ancram met a delegation headed by Hugh Smyth and David Ervine from the PUP in Castle Buildings. The meeting had been requested by the PUP and was brief.

Main Points

2. McMichael began by saying that he accepted Mitchell and believed that the Government's should proceed on the basis of him as Chairman. Ervine asked how strong HMG would be on getting parties to sign up to the Mitchell principles. He said that his party would not accept a collapse forced by Ian Paisley and McCartney and suggested that there might be a reconvening if no agreement was reached. Hutchinson referred to the larger parties and said that their domination was a matter which effected all the smaller parties not just PUP and they would not accept being marginalised by them.

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3. The Minister described a changing situation and said that a further change had developed just before 1500 hours which was still under consideration. The Minister referred to the 1991 rules and the delegation asked for a copy, which was handed over. Ervine said on more than one occasion that if the larger unionist parties blocked progress this would send the wrong message into the community.

4. Mr Smyth asked if the 'devil' would walk out (apparently a reference to Reverend Ian Paisley). Hutchinson repeated that they did not want Paisley and McCartney pulling the smaller parties apart.

5. The Minister said that he did not know if Ian Paisley intended to walk out but he did know that every effort was being made to keep the process going.

SIGNED

R P LEMON
PS/Michael Ancram

Summary

After the "plenary" broke at about 5.30pm the Secretary of State and Michael Ancram had a series of meetings to discuss the situation which had been reached and to identify a possible way of moving forward to the acceptance of the Independent Chairmen's appointments and the substantive business of the proposed agenda, including the securing of commitments to the Mitchell principles.

2. Although the positions revealed were not compatible the conversations suggested that it might be possible, given further time for reflection and informal consultation, to find a way through by the following morning. Accordingly, the Secretary of State eventually proposed that the meeting should adjourn until the

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