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TO: HQ
FOR: Second Secretary O hUginnFROM: Belfast
FROM: K. Dowling4869
PST; PSS; Ministers Owen,
de Rossa & Párlor; Attorney
General; Minister of State
Covoley; Messrs. Teahon,
Donlon & Dalton; Amb.
London and Washington; Joint
Secretary; Counsellors A-I.Subj: Minister Ancram's meeting yesterday with DUP

1. Chris Maccabe advised John Fisher here this morning that Minister Ancram instructed that we be informed of the outcome of discussions he had with the DUP at around 5.30 pm yesterday.

COPY TO:

2.
MR. O'DONNELL
MR. HICKEY,
MR. BROSNAN
MR. FAY
MR. CALLAGHAN
MR. ROUGHNEEN

Paisley was accompanied by Ian Paisley Junior and DUP Omagh District Councillor (and member of their talks team) Oliver Gibson. Ancram was accompanied by Chris Maccabe, Richard Lemon, Alan Whysall and Lavery (Central Secretariat).

The background was that Ancram had arranged for the DUP to stay on, after a meeting on education yesterday afternoon, to discuss talks. Paisley had refused to do so, feeling that he had been "snubbed" by the Secretary of State (something he went public about this morning on the radio). Ancram had, however, been able to persuade him to stay to discuss the talks, but only on the basis that their discussions did not constitute a "meeting". Accordingly, there is no formal note of the discussions on the British side.

4. The British had known beforehand that Paisley and his colleagues would make great play on the Loyalist issue and would wish to see the PUP and the UDP excluded from the talks. The British see the reasons for this as a combination of "old enmities" and the realisation that if the PUP and UDP were to be excluded, and assuming continuation of the DUP's alliance with the UKUP party, the DUP, under the consensus rules, would effectively have a veto over the proceedings.
5. The discussions were completely devoted to the subject of the Loyalists. Paisley said that the DUP would make "representations" against them at the resumed talks on Monday. He himself, however, will not be there as he is in Canada. They were not, however, demanding a debate. They accepted that the "representations" must be considered by the book.

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6. They suggested, however, that the talks should be immediately adjourned once the representations were made. Otherwise, the DUP would "probably" withdraw from the talks permanently.
7. They also suggested that, if the Loyalists were allowed to stay, others also (members of the UUP, it must be presumed) would feel obliged to leave. There was very strong feeling on the matter within Northern Ireland, and it could have the effect that the talks process could not survive.
8. Ancram declined to say whether the Governments would be amenable to an adjournment. The procedures would have to be carried out with great care as precedents would be set. Paisley had retaliated by saying that there were suspicions of "kite flying" by the Governments, against the day when Sinn Féin were in the talks.
9. Ancram recalled that there were still representations outstanding against a number of parties (those made by the SDLP against the UUP and Trimble after Drumcree, it must be presumed). I understand that, in this regard, Paisley implored him to have the DUP thrown out over Drumcree with, apparently, Paisley Junior adding that it should be as near to an election as possible.
10. The British side told me with great reluctance (because of sensitivity as to how we might take it), that at one point Paisley had observed that if the Irish Government followed a certain course of conduct (it is not clear what precisely he had meant - there was a lot of nodding and innuendo on the DUP's part in the discussions), it would have its innards kicked out. Again according to the British, he seemed unconcerned whether this amounted to dishonouring the principles.
11. Ancram also raised briefly the question of the agenda. It seemed that Paisley would be content with a reference to "constitutional issues", as long, of course, as he was not obliged to discuss the constitutional status of Northern Ireland.
12. The British understand that the DUP have organised a Press Conference for 9am on Monday in Castle Buildings (presumably to announce their intention to seek an adjournment of the plenary until there is a decision by the two Governments on the exclusion of the PUP/UDP). There is a worry that they may even go public on the matter today.