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FROM: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE
7 SEPTEMBER 1996

cc PS/Secretary of State(L+B) -B
PS/Michael Ancram(L+B) -B
PS/PUS(L+B) -B
PS/Sir David Fell -B
Mr Thomas -B
Mr Leach -B
Mr Bell -B
Mr Steele -B
Mr Watkins -B
Mr Wood(L+B) -B
Mr Stephens -B
Mr Maccabe -B
Mr Lavery -B
Mr Currie -B
Mr Whysall(L+B) -B
Miss Mapstone -B
Ms Bharucha -B
Mr Campbell Bannerman
Mr Holmes, No 10
Mr Budd, Cabinet Office
HMA Dublin -B
Mr Clarke, HME Dublin -B
Mr Lamont, RID -B

F.4
pm 13/9.

Mr Hill(L+B) -B

CONVERSATION WITH MR TRIMBLE ON 7 SEPTEMBER

The Secretary of State and Michael Ancram met Mr Trimble and the Party Chairman for over an hour at the BIA Conference this afternoon. The meeting was very cordial and the following is a summary of the main points arising from it given in a debrief to PUS and myself afterwards.

The Loyalist Parties

2. Mr Trimble suggested that the course of events on Monday should be as follows:

the Chairman should circulate the written complaint about the Loyalist parties to all participants;

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- those against whom there was complaint should respond in writing and this should be circulated;
 - all the participants should come back to ask any questions and allow for explanations to be given;
 - at that stage either consensus would be reached or the Governments would take whatever action they considered necessary.
3. As a result of this action, Mr Trimble did anticipate the plenary sitting again on Monday. He hoped that the Loyalist parties would not be put out of the Talks. He agreed that previous complaints should be ignored unless re-tabled.

Agenda

4. Mr Trimble said the agenda should be agreed and the first week taken up with sub-committees setting out individual agendas for each of the strands; there would be a time-limited debate on decommissioning for half a day before a group was set up to consider decommissioning; the groups should all report back in one week. While all this was happening, opening statements could be made and, if time permitted, questions taken on them.

Decommissioning

5. It was confirmed to Mr Trimble that on the British side the legislation was well advanced and would be shown to the parties, though we were not sure about the Irish plans to do this. Mr Trimble said he needed to know that the legislation was going to happen; if they could see the legislation and know it was going to go forward, then he did not think they needed much more.

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Comment

6. The meeting was encouraging and the UUP were clearly further ahead than before the holidays. They were aware that the axis with the SDLP was important, though it has not yielded fruit as yet. The Minister and PUS agreed to further contact with Seamus Mallon and, possibly David Donahue over the weekend, to float the idea of meeting on 9 September, adjourning and returning to plenary that day; also the establishment of time-limited sub-committees and transition into three-stranded substance in approximately 10 days.

(Signed)

W K LINDSAY
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE

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