

S E C R E T &amp; P E R S O N A L



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1. JEH  
2. File

13 January 1997

Dear Robin,

JOHN HUME

Recalling our conversation the other day about possible press stories regarding John Hume's private life, you and Alex Allan to whom I am copying this letter may like to know of something John Hume said to me today (13 January), unprompted.

In the course of a conversation on his discussions with Adams, John Hume mentioned that on at least two occasions over recent months he had been told of stories circulating among journalists to his discredit regarding his private life, specifically in terms of his conducting an affair or affairs in London and elsewhere. He said that following the article by Bruce Anderson a few weeks ago which did not name him but clearly pointed in that way, he had spoken directly to the Political Editor of the News of the World. He had been told that stories were indeed circulating, but that the News of the World had no evidence to support them and did not intend to print anything in consequence. For his part, John Hume said that he and his wife Pat would both dismiss such stories out of hand, and if anything appeared in print he would expect to become the richer in consequence. He said that the extreme form of the stories were that the IRA were blackmailing him: he said that that was the most absurd nonsense and anyway recent disputes, very public, with Sinn Fein on electoral matters gave it the obvious lie.

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To put the remarks in context, they were a response to my polite enquiry about his physical health (there had been stories about his being badly overworked and overstressed) rather than in the context of a discussion on political affairs.

Y  
Laurie over,  
John

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cc: Alex Allan  
No 10

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