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FROM: D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
25 NOVEMBER 1996

cc: PS/Secretary of State(L&B) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler(L&B) - B
PS/PUS(L&B) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas (L&B) - B
Mr Steele - B
Mr Ray - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Leach - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Wood (L&B) - B
Mr Perry - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Beeton - B
Mr Whysall(L&B) - B
Mr Lavery - B
Ms Mapstone - B
HMA Dublin - B
Mr Lamont, RID - B
Mr Budd Cabinet Office
Mr Holmes No 10

a-1

PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B

HUME/ADAMS: BRIEFING DAVID TRIMBLE - A POSTSCRIPT

About 3pm this afternoon Ken Maginnis came up to see Michael Ancram to explore a number of points arising from Michael Ancram's earlier "confidential" briefing of David Trimble on the Hume/Adams text. He gave the impression of wanting to get his own cross bearing on some of the concerns expressed by his leader, and seemed generally reassured by what he heard.

2. He first wanted to establish that the text which had gone to the Irish Government and John Hume (the latter, on his account bringing John Hume clearly into the British policy-making process - a point which Michael Ancram refuted) was not going to be subject to any amendment. Michael Ancram explained that there could be textual adjustments to the references to the "two Governments" if the Irish

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Government ultimately decided it could not go along with the draft, but that no other changes were "envisaged".

3. The two points which Ken Maginnis then raised on the text were:
- (a) the proposal to hold meetings with Sinn Fein after any ceasefire to explore "confidence building measures". He clearly did not share Mr Trimble's instinctive assumption that "confidence building measures" necessarily meant further concessions to Sinn Fein of the type which have been widely canvassed in the Northern Ireland press over the weekend, eg on prisoners. He accepted Michael Ancram's explanation that the reference was to things which Sinn Fein/the IRA could do to establish our confidence and the confidence of other talks participants. He commented that he had himself spoken in similar terms;
 - (b) HMG's alleged readiness to adopt "Sinn Fein's indicative timetable". Michael Ancram explained that HMG simply could not deliver a timetable: although it could propose and/or support one, it was a matter for the talks participants as whole to decide, and that reality was reflected in the text. Ken Maginnis seemed content with that: "that's what I've always understood".

4. His final, typically opaque, remarks implied that Mr Trimble and his party colleagues would be making known their reservations about the text in no uncertain terms, presumably publicly. He also commented that he did not like HMG acting as "referee" but whether this was in terms of trying to hold the ring between Unionists and nationalists or in deciding when Sinn Fein should join the process after a ceasefire was impossible to be sure.

(signed)

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