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51/023

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PS/Michael Ancram L,B
PS/PUS

PS/Sir David Fell

Mr Thomas

Mr Steele

Mr Ray

Mr Bell

Mr Leach

Mr Watkins

Mr Stephens

Mr Hill

Mr Perry

Mr Maccabe

Mr Beeton

Mr Lavery

Ms Mapstone

Mr Campbell-Saveman

From: John Holmes
To: Robert Crawford
Subject: Home/Adams Initiative
Date: 2.11/95

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

25 November 1996

From the Private Secretary

I am copying this to William Ewart (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Joe Policy (Cabinet Office), Sir John Kerr (Washington) and Veronica Sutherland (Dublin).

Dear Robert,

HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE

John Hume rang me this afternoon from Brussels. His main purpose was to enquire whether we had let it be known that he had received a new text from us. He was being pursued by journalists who claimed to know this. I said that we had said nothing publicly ourselves, but it was possible that David Trimble, who was aware of the position in general, might have made this claim.

This led Hume to ask whether the reports in the weekend press about a deal with Trimble were true. I said that there was absolutely no truth in them whatsoever.

Hume then said that he had given our new text to Adams. He had not been negative in discussing its content with Adams. But he could see that the area which would cause trouble was the "process" we had suggested. The key question was how long such a process would last. If we had in mind another 18 months, that would be disastrous. However, if the first few stages in the process could be completed before Christmas, and the plenary could take place once the negotiation had reopened after the Christmas recess, that might be different.

I said we had carefully avoided setting any time frame, as he would have noticed. We had made clear that some time would be needed to assess the position after a new ceasefire. The length of that time entirely depended on what the IRA and Sinn Fein said and did. So the answer to the question was in their hands.

Hume noted this without further comment of substance. He concluded with his oft-repeated fears that, if the present exercise did not work, the violence could be far worse than it had ever been.

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FROM: QUENTIN THOMAS
POLITICAL DIRECTOR
25 NOVEMBER 1996

Comment

Hume seemed in reasonably buoyant mood. He made no explicit criticism himself of our text or the Prime Minister's letter. We agreed to stay in touch.

I am copying this to William Ehrman (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Jan Polley (Cabinet Office), Sir John Kerr (Washington) and Veronica Sutherland (Dublin).

PS/PUR (LAB)
PS/Sir David Fell

Mr Leach
Mr Watkins
Mr Stephens
Mr Hill (LAB)
Mr Barry

Mr Adams
Mr Williams (LAB)
Mr Lowry

Ms Mapstone
JMA Dublin
Mr Lavery
Mr Buckle
Mr Holt
Mr Wood (LAB)

Yours etc
John

JOHN HOLMES

HUME/ADAMS: BRIEFING DAVID TRIBBLE

Michael Adams briefed David Tribble at lunch time today about the Hume/Adams text. He gave the text to Mr Tribble for him to read, but not retain.

Robert Crawford Esq
Northern Ireland Office

Mr Tribble, rising anger, was that the text was "significantly different" from the briefing the Prime Minister had given him.

He focussed on two points. First he said that the Prime Minister had given him an assurance that there would be an explicit reference to the texts set out in paragraph 8 of the Ground Rules. Michael Adams replied that there was an explicit reference to the need to meet the requirements of paragraphs 8 and 9 of the Ground Rules. Mr Tribble said that was inadequate and in any case claimed that it contradicted the earlier statement that "the British and Irish Governments agree that, beyond the unequivocal

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