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MEETING WITH DAVID TRIMBLE, KEN MAGINNIS AND MARTIN SMITH

The meeting lasted one hour, commencing at 4.15pm. Sir Patrick Mayhew and Michael Ancram accompanied the Prime Minister. This is one of a series of such meetings - the loyalists yesterday, maybe others next week.

The discussions covered the present situation in the talks in Belfast and our belief that new efforts were needed to move the talks forward and find a way through the issue of decommissioning. This is a common objective.

There was also discussion of the contact there had been between the British Government and different parties, including John Hume, about the way forward, including the prospect for a new IRA ceasefire.

It was emphasised again that there are no backdoor dealings with Sinn Fein. It was for the IRA to declare any ceasefire, having broken the previous one, and to demonstrate, if they did so, that any new ceasefire was genuine and intended to last.

If asked about a Parliamentary statement next week:

No plans. We remain in contact with all the parties to the talks.

JEH/SK

21.11.96