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From: JOHN HOLMES  
Date: 4 November 1996

PRIME MINISTER

HUME/ADAMS INITIATIVE

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Meanwhile, we are approaching the crunch on the initiative itself. Hume rang me late this afternoon to say that he had seen Adams again. Adams had been upset by the weekend leak, which had made things more difficult, but was determined to press on. He had repeated that, if you would make the statement in the latest text Hume had given us, the IRA would announce an unequivocal ceasefire.

On the issue of "permanence", Adams had not given Hume a written text, but had said that he was "taking to the IRA" a passage for their statement along the lines that: "They believe that the Prime Minister's statement provides a basis for an ending of the conflict and lasting peace". But this was on the assumption that the text of your statement was as last given to us by Hume.

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I told Hume that we were bound to make changes to the text to make it reflect our existing policy. Hume asked that we send him our revised text as soon as possible. Otherwise there was a risk of accusations that we were acting in bad faith. I said that we would reflect on the wording he had given us and the question of the text, and go back to him soon.

I have passed this to the NIO. The Mayhew/Ancram view, which I share, is that the new Adams wording is not worth much. Their advice is therefore that we should bring this to a conclusion as soon as we can. They recommend that I send our revised text to Teahon tomorrow morning (Tuesday) and they discuss it with Spring tomorrow afternoon. Thereafter we would send the text to Hume as soon as possible, perhaps even tomorrow evening, together with the planned covering letter from you.

... I agree with this approach. I attach the draft letter and statement in their latest forms. You will see that the NIO have left in the statement a couple of sentences we asked them to take out - I have highlighted them in green (!) - in the second paragraph. I still think they give the text a more Anglo-Irish tinge than is desirable, although they are themselves hallowed language from previous texts, and would help sell the text to the nationalist side. How strongly do you feel about them?

I have also suggested in manuscript a minor change in the first paragraph of the draft and indicated how the text would look if you took out the two highlighted sentences.

The Irish will no doubt not like the text of the draft statement, particularly the new paragraph (although it is better than the previous version, from their point of view). They will want to negotiate with us about it. Bruton will certainly

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want to talk to you. I do not think we can honestly refuse this, even if we intend to give no ground on the substance. The Irish argument that, if the ceasefire initiative fails, they may suffer for it as much as we do (from Loyalist violence) is hard to counter.

I suggest I make clear to Teahon that the text is our bottom line, but still be prepared to listen to his comments. I fear you may then have to talk to Bruton. This would delay release of the letter and text to Hume, but not by much if you spoke to him on Wednesday morning.

When we met last Tuesday, I said I would let you have a response to the

**Content** for me to send the text of the draft statement to Teahon tomorrow morning with a covering explanation on the above lines?

Throughout the time we have discussed these matters, I have had two

concerns. First, the IRA's murderous actions on the ground, and what we know of their future plans, are wholly incompatible with what you tell me is Mr Adams' readiness to guarantee a permanent ceasefire immediately following a Government statement which, as you know, can only repeat existing policy

Secondly, I am determined that the peace process should be based on what the people of Northern Ireland want and deserve. So Sinn Féin can still join the negotiations if there is a genuinely unequivocal

of the IRA ceasefire, but each atrocity the IRA commits means the credibility gap to be bridged is that much wider.

As I have repeatedly made clear, I will not negotiate Government policy in exchange for a ceasefire - that would be to appease violence. All along, I have said I will stick strictly to what is existing Government policy as set out on the public record. The text you gave me on 10 October departs from existing Government policy in places, so I cannot accept it as it stands. The text attached does reflect Government policy. It represents what we are prepared to

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