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FROM: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE
             27 JUNE 1991

                    cc: PS/Secretary of State (L&B)   - B
                        PS/Minister of State (L&B)   - B
                        PS/PUS (L&B)   - B
                        PS/Mr Fell   - B
                        Mr Pilling   - B
                        Mr Alston   - B
                        Mr Thomas   - B
                        Mr McNeill   - B
                        Mr Cooke   - B
                        Mr Pope   - B

MR D J R HILL - B

MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND MR HUME: 24 JUNE 1991

Mr Hume came to see the Secretary of State at 5.30 pm on Monday
24 June 1991. Dr Mawhinney, Mr Fell, Mr Pilling and I were also
present.

2.   The <u>Secretary of State</u> explained that when he had seen the
Unionist leaders half an hour earlier, they had made it clear that
they had nothing to say in respect of the resumption of talks
after 16 July: the Secretary of State was already aware of their
position. He had, however, set out his own position, which was
that as part of the deal with the Irish Government to accommodate
the Unionist pre-conditions, HMG had agreed to pre-specified IGC
dates. He had given an assurance to the Irish Government on this,
and HMG had stood by the 16 July date for the next IGC. He had
explained to the Unionist leaders that he could not abrogate the
commitment he had given as part of that deal. The Unionists had
explained why seven weeks of the gap had been lost; in his view
all concerned except the Alliance had to take some
responsibility. The Unionist leaders had gone on to make it clear
that the talks would have to finish before 16 July to enable the
Maryfield Secretariat to make the necessary arrangements for the
IGC on that date. Thus the talks would have to close some time in
the week 8-12 July.

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3.   Continuing, the <u>Secretary of State</u> said that on a different
issue, he had made it clear to the Unionists that despite all that
had appeared in the media about the Irish Government and HMG
conspiring to bring Sinn Fein into the talks, HMG had no intention
of doing this. Neither had there been any direct contact between
British officials and the IRA. He had therefore told the
Unionists that there was no basis for their allegations.

4.   <u>Mr Hume</u> asked what the implications were for the talks of the
latest Unionist position. The <u>Secretary of State</u> replied that
Dr Mawhinney would be chairing a meeting of the Business Committee
to see whether it was possible to intensify the talks over the
next fortnight. <u>Mr Hume</u> expressed his concern about the Unionist
position. It was bad for the process that certain parties had
referred to him in public as "a poodle". The Unionists always
appeared to create an issue which then created difficulties for
others through having to get them out of a position which was of
their own making in the first place. All concerned had known
about the proposed meeting on 16 July. The <u>Secretary of State</u>
responded that to be totally fair to the Unionists, they had said
that if the talks were close to agreement, they could not
understand why the two Governments could not delay the IGC.

5.   <u>Mr Hume</u> said that if the Unionists had accepted one gap, he
saw no reason why they should not accept a second. The fact was
that the Unionists had not been ready for the talks. The SDLP
view was that the problems were unlikely to be sorted out in one
relatively short session of talks. Once the serious negotiating
began, it might be preferable to have a more permanent
conference. The SDLP had a timing problem in that they had
assumed that the Unionists would not want to talk on the Twelfth
fortnight, and had therefore all booked holidays to start on
8 July. The Unionists did not want to talk from 11-14 July simply
to suit their own holidays. So far as intensification was
concerned, he would be prepared to go along with evening sessions
although in his view it was not helpful to put the participants

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under pressure. The <u>Secretary of State and Dr Mawhinney</u> both agreed with Mr Hume that intensification alone would not solve the problem.

6.   <u>Mr Hume</u> said that the Unionists wanted to know the SDLP's proposals for devolution. Once these were on the table they would then "pull the plug" when it suited them. Journalists had told him that it was the Secretary of the UUP who had released the SDLP's position paper "in an orange file". If the SDLP's proposal was discussed, the SDLP would be "up sh*t creek without a paddle" when the talks ended prior to 16 July. In his view the way ahead would be to continue talking, with some intensification the following week, but not reaching final positions before 16 July. It was up to the two Governments to facilitate further dialogue, such as agreeing to another IGC meeting on 30 September. If the Unionists had accepted one gap, they could accept another. Moreover, he was not convinced that the Unionists were serious. They appeared to create an issue every week. They continued to talk publicly about their position, and leaders appeared to talk tougher than some of their own "head-bangers".

7.   <u>Mr Hume</u> had told his representative on the Business Committee to agree to some intensification, but working six days a week from 8 am to 11 pm would not work. The <u>Secretary of State</u> agreed that that would not be a good way of doing business. <u>Dr Mawhinney</u> stressed that in effect there was only a fortnight or so left for the talks. <u>Mr Hume</u> did not believe that the issues could be solved in that time. The <u>Secretary of State</u> commented that the circumstances in which they found themselves had been totally predictable after a month, following Mr Hume's quite proper decision not to be prepared to start until the various issues had been sorted out. <u>Mr Hume</u> commented that not much movement had occurred that day, given that there were in practice only about two weeks remaining available. The <u>Secretary of State</u> admitted that this was the case, but pointed out that the cross-examination had led to more compatible language being used. <u>Dr Mawhinney</u>

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described compatible language as the first step towards understanding, just as it was a necessary pre-requisite to enable two computers to talk to each other.

8.   The meeting ended at 5.50 pm.

Signed.

A J D PAWSON
PS/Secretary of State
OAB Extn 6462
27 June 1991

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