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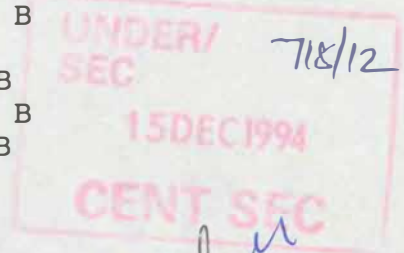
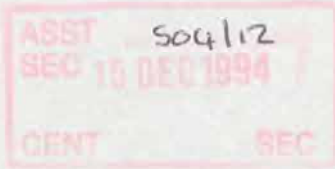
91/93.

AMENDED VERSION

FROM: PS/MICHAEL ANCRAM
14 December 1994



cc PS/Michael Ancram (DENI, B&L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Leach - B
Mr Brooker - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Beeton - B
Mr Caine - B



in hand
Mrs. [unclear]

PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B

THE RT HONOURABLE JAMES MOLYNEAUX MP

Michael Ancram has seen Mr Lyne's letter of 13 December to Mr Howard and has commented that the Advisory Council is not a new idea. It reflects on a larger scale something which the Minister was looking at for education last year, but which fell by the way side! The Minister would not rule it out specifically, but would suggest that this is something we would like to explore. If the SDLP saw it within the context of a progressive Talks process on a temporary and constructive basis they might just bite.

(Signed)

KEITH JAGELMAN
PS/Michael Ancram

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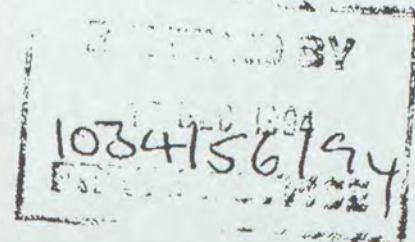
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ASST
SEC
15 DEC 1994
CENT

SOS/12

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10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

cc PS SofS L+B

13 December 1994

PS M. Anson L, B + DENT

PS PUS L+B

PS Mr Fell

Mr Thomas

Mr Williams

Mr Leach

* Mr Brooker

Mr Stephens

Mr Maccabe

Mr Beeton

742/12 Mr Cairne

* For advice and
briefing by 1600 on
Friday 16 December.

RT HON JAMES MOLYNEAUX MP

I mentioned on the telephone that Jim Molyneaux had asked for a general chat with the Prime Minister before the Christmas break, if time permitted. They have not met for some weeks.

We are proposing to Molyneaux that the meeting should take place next Tuesday, 20 December, at 1130. I think we shall do it in the informal mode, with just the two principals and me as a note-taker, unless you see fundamental objection to this.

Molyneaux mentioned one specific point, on which I would be grateful for briefing. He assumed that we were unlikely to be able to get a Northern Ireland Assembly up and running during 1995 (i.e. following a successful conclusion of the talks process plus a referendum: he must surely be right). However, in the intervening period quite a lot of decisions would need to be taken on economic projects and the like. His latest thought on a way of easing Northern Ireland back towards local democracy was that we might set up an Economic Council to advise the Secretary of State. It would be an informal body composed of Northern Ireland MPs, modelled roughly on the Select Committee. We might regard those MPs who were not on the Select Committee as prime candidates for the Economic Council. As a minor detail, Molyneaux suggested that the Council might first meet at the invitation of the Prime Minister.

I confined myself to asking one or two questions. I wondered whether the SDLP would play ball; and whether we would not invite a deal of trouble from Sinn Fein, who would see themselves cunningly excluded from the process

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of shaping Northern Ireland's future. Molyneaux's answer was that Sinn Fein could not properly grumble because they had not managed to elect any MPs.

I am copying this letter to Paul Lever and Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Yours truly,

Roderic

RODERIC LYNE

Martin Howard Esq
Northern Ireland Office

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