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M. Hyster
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Hume/Molyneaux Meeting

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In a recent conversation, John Hume informed me that, at Jim Molyneaux's request, he had met the Leader of the Unionist Party for a private discussion in Westminster last week. The atmosphere of the meeting was very friendly.

At the meeting, Molyneaux had two proposals to make:

- (a) that responsibility for planning and roads be devolved to Local Government; and
- (b) that the Order in Council procedure at Westminster be examined urgently with a view to seeing how it might be improved or replaced by a more satisfactory and consultative system.


Hume, in response, said that, while he would naturally be prepared to consider the Molyneaux proposals and discuss them with his colleagues, he would like to put forward two proposals of his own for consideration by the Unionist Party. These were that:

- (a) the two parties would give consideration to how they might organise themselves to work together on economic (including investment) issues at both Local and Parliamentary level. In this regard, both party leaders agreed that they had been very encouraged by the recent united approach to the British Government on Harland and Wolff's and Shorts'; and
- (b) that the Unionists should consider responding at an early date to the SDLP proposal for dialogue on the political way forward.

Molyneaux replied by saying that, while he agreed with Hume on the value and importance of working together on economic issues, he would prefer not to be drawn into wider political talks at this stage. However, once worthwhile talks on non-contentious issues were underway, he felt that they would quickly succeed in building up a climate of trust and, in due course, this could enable him to consider responding positively to Hume's proposals for wider talks. However, this possibility was still some considerable way ahead.

On internal Unionist politics, Molyneaux was very critical of Ian Paisley's leadership and seemed to indicate that the OUP/DUP pact was no longer very meaningful.

Finally, Molyneaux made it clear that he valued the "atmosphere" which he believed existed between Unionists and the Government in Dublin and added that "you know that the man in Dublin and I are not at loggerheads".



Dermot Gallagher,
11 July, 1989.

cc: P. S. Taoiseach
PSM; Mr. Nally; PSM
Mr. Mathews; Mr. Brosnan
(3) Counsellors A-I
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