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*Handwritten signature*

POSSIBLE LEAK OF OFFICIAL PAPERS

In the absence of Philip Woodfield on leave I am writing to you about a possible leak of an official document. On 6 September the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) held a press conference in Belfast at which they claimed to have knowledge of a document outlining preparations being made for an Anglo/Irish summit in November. Characteristically Mr Paisley interpreted it as evidence of Government intentions to 'sell out' to the Republic.

It is possible that the document referred to is an Annex to a confidential minute issued by a member of my staff on 11 August asking Permanent Secretaries in Northern Ireland Departments to set in hand briefing for a meeting of the Anglo Irish Official Co-ordinating Committee. The Annex listed matters within the remit of Northern Ireland Departments which were identified for future action in the Joint Studies and gave the names of Whitehall contacts. Nothing has been said which would suggest that the DUP also have the covering minute which accompanied the schedule of briefing requirements, but it seems likely that if they have the Annex they also have the minute.

Although there is nothing intrinsically embarrassing in the document DUP will no doubt make as much mischief as they can with it, and it is difficult to assess the consequences of the leak immediately. I will write to you again when I have better information on the number of authorised copies circulated within NI Departments and the Northern Ireland Office and have reached a view on whether a formal investigation would be justified.

No 10 Press Office have been kept informed on our public relations handling of the matter and a text of the statement issued immediately after the DUP Press Conference is attached. This was cleared in advance with the Press Office at No 10 who will, of course be kept informed of any further action in the PR field should it become necessary.

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I am copying this letter to Robin Butler at No 10, to the Legal Secretary to the Attorney General, and to the Director General of the Security Service.

*Yours sincerely,*

*Edward*

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