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f.s. Pmt - 15/x,
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Prime Minister

*Mr Paisley will be accompanied by
Mr Robinson.*

Dear Michael

Pmt - 13/x1

MEETINGS WITH NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICAL LEADERS

I enclose briefing material for the Prime Minister's use when she sees Dr Paisley and Mr Molyneaux tomorrow.

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The briefing is in three sections, covering (a) Security, (b) the Political Situation, and (c) the Working Paper for the Conference. The meetings have, of course, been called, following Dr Paisley's original approach, to discuss the security situation in Northern Ireland; but my Secretary of State feels that the Prime Minister will be glad of this wider briefing given that there is of course a close connexion between security and the forthcoming Conference on political development. Dr Paisley has publicly stated that he will need to be satisfied about security before he will come to the conference table; the Prime Minister's meeting with him is therefore not only an occasion to convince him that the Government is doing everything practicable to combat terrorism, but also an opportunity to ensure that he is able to come to the Conference (as he clearly wishes to do), his presence there being of critical importance given Mr Molyneaux's present stance. Similarly, the meeting with Mr Molyneaux is likely to range beyond security questions to the question of his attendance and the implications of leaving Dr Paisley's party as the representative of the Unionists.

One further point: there is a reference on p.2 of today's "Guardian" to Dr Paisley making it a condition of his attendance at the Conference that the Alliance Party should not be invited. We believe this to be out of date. At one stage the DUP did lay this down as a condition; but Dr Paisley made no reference to it when he saw Mr Atkins and discussed the Conference last Friday, so we think it can be regarded as dead and should not be raised.

*Yours sincerely
Mike Hopkins*

M W HOPKINS