

FROM:

THE RT. HON. LORD HAILSHAM OF ST. MARYLEBONE, C.H., F.R.S., D.C.L.

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HOUSE OF LORDS,  
LONDON SW1A 0PW

SECRET

*Prime Minister*

Prime Minister

*MF*

*CDP 6/6*

Joint Irish Court

1. I have now seen Douglas Hurd's minute to you of 31st May 1985 commenting on my earlier minute to you of 24th May enclosing correspondence I had received from Lord Lowry.
2. As you know I see no future whatsoever in the proposal for Joint Courts under present conditions and I am glad to note that OD(I) has taken a firm line about this.
3. Douglas is quite right in what he says about Lord Lowry; he should not be encouraged to regard himself as a party to or monitor on our discussions with the Irish Government and I have been most careful not to do so.
4. I am copying this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Attorney General and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*H: of S: M.*

5th June, 1985

SECRET

IRELAND; Situation; Pc 20.

HOUSE OF LORDS  
LONDON SW1P 3PW



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9-6 JUN 1985



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Prime Minister <sup>(2)</sup>

BT 3.15

JOINT IRISH COURT

I was interested to see Lord Lowry's letter which the Lord Chancellor has sent you with his minute of 24 May. *attached*

2. Lord Lowry seems still to be under some misapprehension about the position of the Northern Ireland Office in relation to the idea of mixed courts. Ever since the idea was first mooted in the Anglo-Irish talks my representatives have made plain their scepticism about both its practicability and desirability; and, as you know, I fully support the firm line which OD(I) has taken about this. Lord Lowry's comments on the suggestion in the Irish Times that we are considering the possibility of a Southern observer in the Northern Ireland courts are misplaced. Whatever the Irish Times may have said, this is not a suggestion which has been put forward by the Irish side or entertained by us. In parts of his letter the Lord Chief Justice strays beyond his judicial role. He is a shrewd observer of the political scene, which interests him deeply, and I will always be glad to hear his private opinions on the Irish elections or anything else; but we should not in my view encourage him to regard himself as a party to or monitor of our discussions with the Irish Government.

3. I am copying this minute to the Lord Chancellor and the Attorney General and also, with a copy of the Lord Chancellor's minute and its enclosure, to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*N. Howard*  
*(Private Secretary)*  
for

DH

(Dictated by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence from London)

31 May 1985

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31 MAY 1985