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FROM: P N BELL, AUS(L)  
7 January 1994

Mr Thomas o/r

cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B)  
PS/Michael Ancram (L&B)  
PS/PUS (L&B)  
PS/Mr Fell  
Mr Williams  
Mr Deverell  
Mr Watkins  
Mr Brooker  
Mr Daniell  
Mr Maccabe  
Mr Rickard  
Mr Rodell  
Mr Caine  
HMA Dublin  
Mr Archer RID

LETTER FROM THE TANAISTE

As the progenitor of the letter which the Secretary of State wrote on 5 January to the Tánaiste, you will wish to focus fairly soon after your return on the Tánaiste's reply. It is not that I, at any rate, can see anything in principle to take exception to in what Mr Spring has written - only that he seems to regard our desire to build up a head of steam on the Talks Process as in some way inimical to our objective of keeping up the pressure on the Provisionals to respond positively. Quite the reverse, I believe, to be true for the reasons set out most succinctly in the ante penultimate paragraph of Mr Stephens' letter of 6 January, passing on a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to the Taoiseach's own letter of 30 December - which was also drafted with a view to reinforcing the Secretary of State's own message to the Tánaiste.

2. If we believe that our analysis is correct, then - along with Mr Archer, with whom I have discussed the subject - I believe it may be too long to wait for a discussion of these issues at the 28 January meeting of the IGC. I have not produced a draft reply, although I shall be happy to do so, in case you wanted first to talk the issues through with Mr O hUiginn - perhaps as a preliminary to a phone call from the Secretary of State to Mr Spring early next week. (We surely want to avoid too formal, and long-winded exchange of correspondence.)

(Signed PNB)

P N BELL  
OAB 6469

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