



From: G R Archer
Republic of Ireland Dept

Date: 10 January 1994

cc: PS/SOSNI B
 PS/Michael Ancram B
 PS/PUS B
 PS/Mr Fell B
 Mr Bell B
 Mr Williams B
 Mr Watkins B
 Mr Daniell B
 Mrs Collins B
 Mr Brooker B
 Mr Maccabe B
 Mr Rickard B
 HMA, Dublin B
 Chancery, Washington

Mr Thomas - B

NORTHERN IRELAND: TALKS PROCESS

1. You will have seen Mr Blatherwick's minute to me of 10 January supplementing his earlier account of his conversation with Dr Mansergh on 7 January.
2. It is interesting that Dr Mansergh took the line that the Declaration said everything necessary and that it would be pointless to try to adapt the wording. You will recall that in my minute to you of 21 December I suggested that we should consider whether we could use the Joint Declaration itself to find a new way forward in political talks. Dr Mansergh's comments appear to confirm my view that it will be very difficult to get Irish agreement for an alternative "framework" (at the best they are likely to stonewall and to continue to leave the running to us) and that it might be to our advantage to try to get them to agree that we have said all that is necessary from their point of view in the Declaration.
3. Whether or not we could get away with this must depend on demands from the Unionists and on what the Irish demand on Strand 2. I believe that Michael Ancram proposes to touch on this in his meeting with UUP representatives later this week.
4. Irish reluctance to move forward on political talks appears to be in part concern that we might be under pressure to agree to an internal settlement. The sooner we can remove doubts about this from Irish minds the better if we are to get their co-operation. Would there not be a good case for pressing the Irish for an early meeting between officials to discuss:

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- The relevance of the Declaration to the talks process.
- How to take forward ideas on Strand 2.
- Preparation for dealing with the talks process at the next IGC.
- To report on Michael Ancram's further discussions (I accept that considerations of confidentiality may in the event limit what we would wish to say but we shall need to offer to say something).

5. This approach seems to me to have the merit of being likely to interest the Irish and it might be the best way of persuading them to stop trying to fend off further official discussions until 28 January.

(signed)

G R Archer

(Signed)
D E S Blatherwick
H M Ambassador

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