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FROM: Q J THOMAS, DUS(L)
19 November 1993

Mr Watkins

- cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B)
- PS/Michael Ancram (L&B, DENI)
- PS/PUS (L&B)
- PS/Mr Fell
- Mr Wood (L&B)
- Mr Bell
- Mr Williams
- Mr Brooker
- Mr Cooke
- Mr Maccabe
- Mr Quinn
- Mr Morrow
- HMA, Dublin
- Mr Archer, RID

IRISH DRAFT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT

Many thanks for your minute of 19 November. We discussed it on the phone.

2. In the light of that we agreed that we might well need to deploy the additional point in paragraph 3(c) of your minute namely:

Although we do not propose to comment in detail on this draft, which has not been put to us, it is clear that there are elements in it which we do not believe would achieve the widespread agreement which is essential to a durable settlement.

3. I mentioned this to Mr O hUiginn, who took the trouble to telephone me to apologise and to say how unfortunate the disclosure is. I discussed the position with him generally and said that given the amount of briefing which had been going on recently there would no doubt be some who would be tempted to see this in a context of considered briefing or at least general indiscretion. He went to great pains to tell me that the Taoiseach and the Tanaiste were genuinely angry about the business and were talking about calling in the police.

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4. We discussed the implications of the leak, acknowledging that it was too early to draw any conclusions. We both observed that this premature publication would make it far more difficult to negotiate on the text or to bring it to a successful conclusion. Mr O hUiginn had himself reluctantly begun to wonder whether we might not have to have a quite different approach. He regretted this because some of the formulations in the paper had been arrived at with difficulty and if they were now compromised it would be difficult to reconstruct something which, by the nature of things, would have to deal with the same subjects again. We agreed to keep in touch.

5. More generally, as to both political and peace processes, I took the opportunity to register my general perception that there was a great deal of material in the public domain and that it was doubtful if it served the interest of either government in the run up to the summit in Dublin. I said that anyone contemplating difficult and delicate exchanges would value reassurance that matters could be handled with discretion. Mr O hUiginn said he could make no promises but he took the point. I said that I sought no promises but merely wished to register a point.

6. Concluding we agreed that it was important to maintain contact and the two governments should, as usual, work together and march in step to the greatest extent possible ...

(Signed QJT)

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