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Dear Stephen

POLITICAL MOVEMENT: PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH

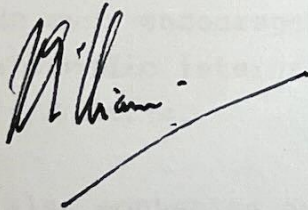
We understand, from Irish officials, that Mr Reynolds is indeed likely at his meeting with the Prime Minister on 26 February to revert to the issue which Mr Haughey raised on 4 December: namely Mr Hume's proposals for a Joint Declaration by the two Governments as part of an understanding which would lead the Provisional movement to renounce violence.

Since then, as you know, Sir Robin Butler has met Mr Nally three times for discussion of this issue. We have also been shown the text of two draft statements: the first ("Draft 2") given to us by Mr Nally, and second ("Draft 3") given to us by Mr Hume - who stressed that the Provisional movement had given it to him on the basis that he would at that stage show it only to the Irish Government - though the Irish side know that we have it, and we know that Mr Hume intends to give it to them, probably before next week's meeting.

Given that knowledge of these exchanges is restricted to a very small group of Ministers and officials, I attach briefing on this issue separate from the other briefing which will be coming to you for the meeting as a whole. For convenience this briefing has attached to it copies of both Draft 2 and Draft 3. It is assumed that the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister would deal with this issue in their tete-à-tete.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Richard Gozney (FCO) and to Sir Robin Butler.

Yours



W R FITTALL