

SECRET and PERSONAL

PUS/99
- 3 SEP 1991
N.I.O. LONDON

FROM: Q J THOMAS, DUS(L)
3 September 1991
DUSL/MR/24833

cc PS/PUS(L&B) [Copy No.2&3]
Mr Ledlie [Copy No.4]
Mr Deverell/Mr Petch [Copy No.5]
Mr Bell [Copy No.6]
Mr McNeill/Mr Marsh [Copy No.7]
Mr Cooke o.r. [Copy No.8]
File Copy [Copy No.9 of 9 copies]

To prearrange a vcr for Mr Deverell to see

POLITICAL MOVEMENT AND THE PROVISIONALS

Thank you for your minute of 30 August about this. I welcome PUS's decision that we should look again at our position on political movement after the holidays. As far as I know it is some time since we have discussed this collectively as officials, or with the Secretary of State, and I imagine PUS has in mind convening a meeting for this purpose.

2. One important outcome will be a decision on our public posture, as you say, with implications for the proposed speech at Enniskillen.

3. It may be that PUS has already discussed preparations for this meeting (if indeed there is to be a meeting). Subject to that I wonder if Mr Deverell would agree that it would be helpful for liaison staff to prepare a paper giving a current assessment of the state of thinking in the Provisional movement on the dilemma between political and military activity. (I am conscious that there are various bits of paper about shedding some light on this, but I am not sure when we last saw a considered assessment.)

SECRET and PERSONAL

4. I agree that it would be helpful for us, perhaps at the meeting, to consider the need for ~~four~~ further work of the kind you identify in paragraph 7: in particular on handling any future ceasefire and on other possible ways of initiating a process of de-escalation. It is an important question whether both sides would wish to signal to each other that de-escalation was possible; but if that were unanswered in the affirmative, it would obviously be helpful for us to have fairly clear ideas about what steps might be taken. My recollection from the work which Mr Marsh, in particular, undertook, I think last year, is that it is in practice not easy to identify steps in this hypothetical minuet.

SIGNED

Q J THOMAS
3 September 1991
OAB 6447

- 2 -

SECRET and PERSONAL