

SECRET AND PERSONAL

PAB/7102/DGMcN/RG

FROM: D G McNEILL, PAB

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N.I.O. LONDON

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

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- cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) [1&2]
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- Mr Deverell [5]
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PROVISIONAL MOVEMENT AND PIRA: THE REVERENDS MURPHY

1. I had a phone call on 12.4.91 from the RC Chaplain at Maze, John Murphy. The C of I Chaplain Will Murphy was listening at the other end of the phone.
2. He phoned me to see, in his words, if anything was moving on their proposition which they had put to us ie that someone from Government should talk to the PAC contacts. I asked him if there had been any further contact at his end. He said that there had not been any since they last met me.
3. I said that there was nothing further that I could tell them at my end. I referred to the developments on the Political Development front and told him that in my view I could envisage nothing happening in relation to their proposition in the foreseeable future.
4. They repeated their belief that we were missing an opportunity. He then asked me if I wanted them to close down their channel. I said that it rather seemed to me that the channel was probably closed anyway given that there was no movement up or down it. However, I did ask him if he felt duty bound to go to their contacts and tell them that they were coming up against a stone wall. Father Murphy said they did not feel duty bound to do so though it was frustrating that they were unable to do anything

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else. He did say that they had been toying with the idea of making further contact if there was anything more positive which they could tell their contact. I said that quite clearly the import of the message I was giving them was that there was nothing additional that I could say. He said that in those circumstances he saw no point in asking for a further meeting though he repeated that he did not feel duty bound to go to his contacts and tell them that they were closing the channel down.

5. We closed the conversation by me saying to them that although I did not expect that I would have anything new to say to them within the foreseeable future they could if they wanted make contact with me at any time should the need arise.

1. I called briefly with Peter Robinson MP today on a matter

6. In essence although I left a chink of light I would regard this channel as effectively closed for the foreseeable future.

2. When I was there the fact that Dr Paisley had challenged me (SIGNED) information which he had to the effect that I had engaged in talks with Sinn Fein/PIRA came up. The atmosphere in which the talk place was friendly and relaxed but had some of the characteristics of a sports club locker room; that is they were probing and searching even though we were all laughing and joking.

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3. They said that Ian Paisley had not discussed this with them beforehand but had mentioned it afterwards. Peter Robinson said Ian Paisley had thought that the information he had was accurate. I repeated what I had said to Paisley - that I had not been talking to anyone in Sinn Fein or PIRA and then asked if Ian Paisley now accepted that. Robinson did not answer directly but countered by saying "but you have written a paper (perhaps he said papers) on the prospects of PIRA ceasing violence and turning political". I did not deny this but said that I wrote papers on many issues of political significance, including papers on the DUP which sometimes were written without direct consultation with the DUP but were

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