

FORMAL RESPONSE

Given that the Secretary of State has accepted the advice which we have been tendering for some long time, we could scarcely do other than respond positively and with an encouragement to him to move quickly.

NEXT STEPS ('to discuss what the next steps might be, following acceptance of the text as a basis for talks')

- 1 Time scale. Whilst as much as possible needs to be done before the 'trigger' is pressed the whole process needs to get under way with some urgency.
- 2 Propose and timing of bilaterals. Who will be present on the teams? How many? Will the unionists operate separately or together?
- 3 If it blocks will he push?
- 4 Response of HMG to our documents of January and June 1990.
- 5 The importance of the Security situation. Has Mr Brooke met with the Chief Constable and the GOC to emphasize to them the importance of keeping the lid on during the next three months. Draw attention to the tragedy of the Atkins collapse followed by the Hunger Strike. There is no doubt that the PIRA will attack, and the security of each of those involved will be a crucial dimension.
- 6 We need to anticipate problems before they arise in order to be forearmed.