

SECRET

From: Quentin Thomas
(NIO)
Date: 12 December 1993

PRIME MINISTER

cc John Sawers (FCO)
Jonathan Stephens (NIO)
Melanie Leech (CO)

JDI

cc: PS/M. Anderson (L)
PS/PUS (L)

Mr Bull
Mr Cooke

1 Since dictating my earlier note I have spoken to my Secretary of State. *that exchanges breaks off with the relevant sentence being in this form:*

2 He discussed the relevant sentence yesterday with the Attorney General. In the light of that he strongly agrees that we should not break on this sentence. *agreed independent structures for the island as a whole."*

3 He suggests that if you do want to try alternatives to "as of right" the words "properly" or "legitimately" would do. As I told him, I myself doubt if these would take the trick theologically. *word was either unnecessary (if it meant a united Ireland) or unacceptable (if it referred to autonomous all-Ireland*

4 If all else fails my Secretary of State suggests we should accept the sentence in the form it emerged from the Butler/Nally group that is: *But the next sentence makes clear our willingness to contemplate that, as does the opening* "They accept that such agreement may, as of right, take the form of agreed structures for the island as a whole, including a sovereign united Ireland." *When the sentence could easily be read as allowing for independent all-Ireland structures now while Northern Ireland is in the UK.*

(We might get out "sovereign" which now occurs at the beginning of the paragraph, but that is a small point.) *gh the Irish side last year appeared to envisage such possibilities, this year, after more thought, they have realised they would like this as little as we would. They do not want autonomous*

institutions which would probably be incompatible with the Constitution and stability of the Dail.

S Macleod
PP QUENTIN THOMAS

fJDI.sm

SECRET