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From: G R Archer
Republic of Ireland Dept

Date: 14 April 1994

cc: Mr Bell
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Mr Daniell
Mr Brooker
Mr Maccabe
Mrs Brown
~~Mr Beeton~~
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Mr Thomas

**LIAISON GROUP: ANNOTATED AGENDA OF THE TACTICAL OPTIONS FOR
DEPLOYING THE JOINT FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT**

1. Mr Brooker has kindly sent to me a copy of his minute of 13 April to you together with a copy of the draft for a paper to be tabled at a Liaison Group meeting with indicative suggestions for ways forward in the talks process.

2. As I mentioned to you yesterday I think that it may be timely to put such suggestions to the Irish. Mr Hayes of the Irish Embassy mentioned to me recently that he thought that one of the reasons for the delay on the Irish side in presenting detailed ideas for a paper to us was that they remained worried about the possible use to which this paper would be put. To make progress we may have to reassure the Irish side about this and it seems to me that we can best do this by presenting a wide range of options as Mr Brooker usefully does in his paper.

3. I think that the paper does an excellent job in identifying options and I have little to suggest at this stage. One of the problems is to present ideas to the Irish in a way which will not frighten them off. This is particularly relevant to how we present the need to work simultaneously on top down and bottom up approaches. I do not think that we

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should make heavy weather of this. It would be wrong to present it with too much prominence in a paper to be sent to Dublin but we need to be quite clear that we need to work from both ends of the problem. In my view Mr Brooker gets it about right.

4. Another problem is to decide how exactly efforts to carry talks forward should be fitted in around the various hurdles which present themselves between now and the autumn. Although I do not think that either we or the Irish would now argue talks should proceed in advance of European elections, a more difficult decision is whether we should make a determined effort to move matters forward in mid-June. There may be a political need to show that the two governments are not bereft of ideas at that time. But to launch an initiative then risks the possibility that it will begin to unravel if we do not talk through the marching season and in to the holiday period. I suggest that this point might be covered in the draft by amending paragraph 3 to refer to "...an assumption that the political climate in Northern Ireland is not at present conducive to new collective talks, such talks in advance of the European elections in June or shortly after remain an option". We may need to explore this in more detail with the Irish but I suggest that provided that it is touched on in this way in the paper, it would not be necessary to go into any more detail in the document itself.

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