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NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
17 - 1 DEC 1993
SIL DIVISION

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LJW/3/12

FROM: D J WATKINS
US CENT SEC
DATE: 1 DECEMBER 1993

MS

FRAMEWORK Doc.

- CC: PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (DENI, B&L) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Wood (B&L) - B
- Mr Brooker - B
- Mr Quinn - B
- Mr Dodds - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Morrow - B
- Mr Rodell - B
- Mr Beeton - B
- Mr Archer, RID - B
- HMA, Dublin - B
- Mr Caine - B

*Beeton's copy
Destroyed
[Signature]*

Mr Cooke - B

THE IRISH LEAKED DOCUMENT : COMMENTARY ON TEXTUAL HIGHLIGHTS

1. I have seen PS/Michael Ancram's minute of 25 November to you, in which he urges consideration of how we might salvage something of the leaked Irish document's value for negotiation purposes and the possible promotion of convergence. His note and mine of 23 November both, of course, preceded Monday's statement which may materially change the landscape; and so might conceivably Friday's summit. So it is not feasible in my view to take a settled position on this (or any other!) question for some days yet.

2. That said, however, it is safe to say that there is unlikely to be anything which can be elicited from the Irish (or others) before Friday's summit. However, thereafter it might prove possible:

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- (a) as agreed at the 22 November stocktake, to continue bilaterals with the three Northern Ireland parties aimed at, among other things, seeking their views on the leaked document. While parties will be naturally wary of displaying too much of their hand, information gained could be used to inform (b);
- (b) a Liaison Group discussion on ideas in the leaked document. Since the Irish have distanced themselves from the paper, we could not simply suggest that we discuss it in full. But might it not be possible to pick out some points of agreement and some of important disagreement which we might examine seriatim, lifted and, as it were, disembodied from the document. In that way we might influence Irish thinking on convergence for the inevitable successor to the leaked paper. We have, after all, good grounds for pressing the Irish on this, in view of the remit given to the Group at the September IGC, and the Irish failure to produce a government-endorsed document to date. However, we would need to be careful not to let our desire for a discussion prejudice our request for this document.
3. Clearly, to return to the opening theme, these ideas can be little more than displacement thinking for us at this stage; firm decisions on the way ahead cannot be made until next week at the earliest.

[Signed DJW]

D J WATKINS

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