

C O N F I D E N T I A L

PUS/ 4178

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N.I.O. BELFAST

PAB/7350/DGMcN/RG

FROM: D G McNEILL, PAB
DATE: 21 AUGUST 1991

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Minister of State (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Needham (B&L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Alston - B
Mr Cooke - B
Mr David Hill - B
Mr Petch - B
Mr Rickard - B
HMA Dublin - B

Mr McCaffrey - B

IRISH NEWS STORY: GERRY ADAMS' LETTER

1. You will have seen today's story in the Irish News stating that Gerry Adams has written to the British and Irish Governments and others saying that he is prepared to engage in open ended discussions on the conflict in Northern Ireland and the development of a peace process.

2. We have not yet seen his letter but when we do we will arrange for it to be answered.

3. In the meantime if there are media enquiries our line should be

[We have not yet seen] [We have just received] his letter.

The Government's position is clear. Sinn Fein claims it wants peace. The Provisionals continue to engage in organised violence with Sinn Fein support. Therefore Government cannot engage in dialogue with Sinn Fein as if it were a normal political party.

4. This line is similar to the line which was approved for recent briefings.

(SIGNED)

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