

S E C R E T

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FROM: PUS  
20 JUNE 1991

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*F* *for Movement*  
*Provos*

cc. Mr Deverell [2]

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE [1]

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH: THE PROVISIONALS

I have consulted Sir Robin Butler about whether the Prime Minister should be offered either background briefing or a steering brief on the Provisionals against the unlikely prospect that the Taoiseach might spring a surprise suggestion of a joint message or declaration aimed at securing a ceasefire or a cessation of violence.

2. We agreed that he should not. There is no basis in the Butler/Nally (or our own) conversations for supposing this may be raised; if by any chance it were the Prime Minister would no doubt prefer to take counsel rather than respond at the time; and both the Secretary of State and Sir Robin Butler are fully aware of the principal elements of HMG's position:

- (i) terrorism is crime;
- (ii) we do not negotiate with, or have (direct) contacts with, terrorists;
- (iii) the Provisionals know they must abandon violence if they are ever to be accepted into the constitutional democratic political process.

J A CHILCOT

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