

D325A
4526

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: S J LEACH
ASSOCIATE POLITICAL DIRECTOR (L)
7 June 1996

Mr McKervill - B

cc PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Hill (L&B) - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Lavery - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Currie - B
Mr Perry - B
Ms Harrison - B
Ms Checksfield - B
Mr Whysall (L&B) ✓ B

REACHING SUFFICIENT CONSENSUS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS

Many thanks for your minutes of 2 and 3 June on this subject.

2. When officials briefly discussed these with the Secretary of State and Michael Ancram, it was thought that it might be unwise to bracket Alliance clearly as a Unionist party. While they are of course in favour of the Union, they might well repudiate any formal "Unionist" label, since this could damage their cross-sectarian base of support. It may well indeed be necessary in the negotiations (and the Forum?) to find a mechanism to allow parties to define themselves rather than having a label imposed on them - whether by the Independent Chairman or by the Government.

3. One inference from the table in paragraph 1 of your 3 June minute is that, if neither the DUP nor the Alliance went along with a particular proposition, then the UUP would need the support of two of the remaining three parties (UKU, PUP, UDP) to achieve "sufficient consensus". In some circumstances, this might be a difficult test to meet. Flowing from the Alliance point above, I wonder if you might re-do the calculation for the Unionist side excluding Alliance. This might for example mean that the UUP and, say, the UKU or the PUP could constitute a Unionist majority. I should be interested to see your further comments on this.

(Signed SJL)

S J LEACH
APD(L)
OAB 6469

CONFIDENTIAL

SMJ/APDL/50602