

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: QUENTIN THOMAS
POLITICAL DIRECTOR (L)
20 June 1996
QT/MR/67823

3062
POLITICAL AFFAIR
DIVISION
20 JUN 1996
N.I.O. BELFAST

MR BELL

cc Mr Leach(L&B)
Mr Watkins
Mr Beeton
Mrs Brown
Mr DJR Hill(L&B)
Mr Maccabe
Mr Stephens
Mr Whysall
Mr Lamont RID/FCO
HMA Dublin

CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES PAPER: DRAFT

Thank you for your minute of 18 June.

2. I do not think I suggested that the distinction between a "territorial claim of right to Northern Ireland" and a "territorial claim of right to jurisdiction over Northern Ireland" was vacuous. I simply recalled that the position reached in the Framework Documents was reached by Ministers with full consideration, as part of a policy process in which as I recall you were yourself centrally involved (including, dare I recall as a member of the Chilcot/Dalton Group), if dissenting!

3. Of course, as I believe Mr Stephens has noted, it will be for the Irish side to convince the Unionists of what they propose. If they run the argument that, despite being ready to withdraw a "territorial claim of right to jurisdiction", they wish to retain a "territorial claim of right", I would expect them to receive an adverse reaction, in which HMG might join.

[SIGNED]

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