

B.F.

FROM: D A LAVERY
1 JULY 1996

POLITICAL AFFAIR
DIVISION
01 JUL 1996
N.I.O. BELFAST

Mr Thomas (B&L)		B
Mr Leach (L)	J. McKEVILL ✓	B
Mr Bell		B
Mr Stephens	P. SMITH	B
Mr Hill (B&L)		B
Mr Maccabe	J. CLACK	B
Mr Beeton		B
Mr Jagelman	A. McVEIGH	

Mr Watkins - o/r - B

TALKS: BRIEFING FOR NI MINISTERS AND NI PERMANENT SECRETARIES

1. This is to let you know how we propose to provide occasional briefing on the Talks for those members of the NI Ministerial team who are not directly involved.

2. You will recall that the background to this was a request from Baroness Denton's office for regular briefing on the Talks to be provided for NI Ministers. In my reply of 13 June I explained Central Secretariat's role in acting as the contact point with the NI Departments on matters relating to the Talks.

3. Baroness Denton's office have pressed the matter further and would like some more structured arrangement for regular briefing. While this appears to be a matter of particular interest to Baroness Denton, I imagine that the other NI Ministers would also welcome occasional briefings.

4. I raised the matter at Friday morning's (28 June) political stocktake. It was agreed that IPL Division would consider preparing a reporting minute for NI Committee to up-date them on progress in the Talks. Mr Thomas suggested that the reporting minute could also be copied to the NI Ministerial team.

5. It is likely that IPL will wish to put forward a reporting minute to NI by the summer break in the Talks. Further reporting minutes will be prepared along similar lines as the Talks progress.

6. I have informed Baroness Denton's office that something will be forthcoming shortly. It remains to be seen, however, whether Baroness Denton will wish to press for further briefing specifically tailored to the requirements of the NI Ministers and Departments.

[Signed DAL]

D A LAVERY
SC 28196

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