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No. 5078 P. 2/2

CONFIDENTIAL & PERSONAL

FROM: POLITICAL DIRECTOR
12 MAY 1997

cc: PS/Mr Murphy (L&B) - O
PS/PUS (L&B) - O
PS/Sir David Fell - O
Mr Steele - O
Mr Stephens - O
Mr Wood (L&B) - O
Mr Ray - O
Mr Holmes, No 10
Mr Budd, Cabinet Office

cc: JP
PG
File
jm
12/5.

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) - O

A RESPONSE FROM SINN FEIN

As I reported at the time, Miss Siobhan O'Hanlon, Mr Gerry Adams' secretary, made contact on Friday evening.

2. I spoke to her at 8.00pm and she told me that she had a message for me, in response to mine of earlier in the day, from Gerry Adams. The message read as follows:

"I want to assure you of our desire to make progress. We wanted to make an early and direct approach but we appreciate the need for sensitivity. So let me reassure you that there is no intention on our part to make any of this public.

Our desire is to help create conditions in which real progress can be made. The sooner this is done the better.

We share your concern about events on the ground which are beyond our control. There are grave difficulties on our side also: not least among these is the treatment of the remand prisoner Roisin McAliskey, the delay in transferring sentenced prisoners in Britain back to Ireland and their conditions, the events surrounding the killing of the young catholic man in Portadown Robert Hamill, the actions of the RUC and the British Army and ongoing Loyalist attacks on our party and our community"

Signed

QUENTIN THOMAS
12 MAY 1997

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