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Press

FROM: JONATHAN STEPHENS  
Associate Political Director (L)  
8 July 1997

file - already received by fax.

PAB 9/7

cc: PS/Mr Murphy (L&B)  
PS/PUS (L&B)  
PS/Sir David Fell  
Mr Steele  
Mr Bell  
Mr Ray  
Mr Watkins  
Mr Beeton  
Mr Brooker  
Mr Hill  
Mr Maccabe  
Mr Warner  
Mr Budd, Cabinet Office  
Mr Holmes, No 10  
Mr Taylor, Home Office  
Mr Tebbitt, FCO  
HMA Dublin  
HMA Washington

PS/Secretary of State (L&B)

**RESPONSE TO McGUINNESS: IRISH COMMENTS**

I attach a revised draft response to McGuinness, which reflects the Irish comments received earlier today.

2. The Irish comments are helpful. From the NIO's point of view we can accept the substance of all of them, with a few minor drafting changes reflected in the attached draft.
3. The suggestions on prisoners are for the Home Office. Their view is that they can largely be accepted, subject to some drafting changes and a proviso suggested by the Home Secretary about the need for evidence that prisoners have abandoned escape attempts. These changes are incorporated in the attached draft.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 1 -

APDL/105

NO. 041 P.2

9 JUL 1997 9:31

9. JUL. 1997 9:24

NO. 039 P.2

**CONFIDENTIAL**

4. It is in our interest to incorporate as many Irish amendments as we can live with - both because they have merit in their own right and because they bind the Irish Government in to continued support for our approach (at what is, on other fronts, a rather difficult time in the Anglo-Irish relations).

5. We stand ready to issue the response as soon as it is cleared.

*(Signed: Jonathan Stephens)*

**JONATHAN STEPHENS**  
11 Millbank  
Ext 6469

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- 2 -

APDL/105