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FROM: S J LEACH
ASSOCIATE POLITICAL DIRECTOR (L)
13 September 1996

DESK IMMEDIATE

Mr Fisher - B

cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler (L&B) - B
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas o/r - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Steele - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Wood (L&B) - B
Mr Beeton - B
Mr Hill - B
Mr Lavery - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Perry - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Priestly - B
Mr Whysall - B
Ms Mapstone - B
Ms Bharucha - B
Mr Campbell Bannerman - B
Mr Nissan, HOLAB
Mr Lamont, RID - B
HMA, Dublin - B
Ms Collins, Cabinet Office*

*via IPL

GETTING ON THE FAST TRACK: NEXT STEPS

Further to my submission of yesterday with this title, Mr Lindsay's note of today indicated that the Secretary of State was content that the draft papers I had attached should be put to the Irish, subject to Michael Ancram's views. I have accordingly spoken to the Minister of State, who is also content that the papers should be passed to the Irish this afternoon, subject to some drafting amendments.

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2. I therefore now attach revised drafts of the papers in the form in which they should be transmitted to the Irish (you have kindly placed a member of the Irish Secretariat team on stand-by to receive them). I also attach a note of points to make for you to deploy in handing the papers over. Given that the Irish official may not be immediately familiar with the issues, you may also wish (unusually) to hand over this note also, after you have spoken to it, to ensure that the message is correctly transmitted to Dublin.

3. Many thanks.

(Signed SJL)

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The deployment of the Bills is intended to demonstrate the Governments' good faith on the decommissioning issue. But there will be a parallel test of the UUP's commitment to move the process forward. In return for the opportunity to see and discuss the draft Bills, and understandings about dates of publication, timescales for enactment, etc, we would look to secure from the UUP a commitment to supporting an exit strategy from the opening Plenary which would include

- a joint proposal by the two Governments to establish a mechanism on decommissioning to operate alongside the three strands, for approval by the opening Plenary; and
- a time-limited agenda for the remainder of the Plenary to bring about an early start to the substantive negotiations.

The two Governments should clearly aim to agree such texts before they are put to the UUP and SDLP. We accordingly attach drafts of both prepared by the British side (which drew substantially on the joint "Scenario" paper published on 4 June). The British side would welcome the opportunity to discuss these also with the Irish side on Monday.

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