

18/2/92 -

POL 35/591(1)

We have no wish to appear discourteous: nor to question the good faith of those seeking a constructive exchange.

2. No-one acting as an intermediary, no matter how helpful he wishes to be, can be expected to carry the full burden of arguing the case for both sides in any dialogue. We appreciate the difficulties intermediaries face. For that reason we see that there is, in principle, no fully adequate substitute for a direct exchange between authorised representatives.

3. However, our position on the circumstances necessary for this exchange is well understood, and we do not foresee any change in them. Unfortunately, these circumstances do not exist at present, nor (despite certain statements) do we detect in action on the ground any signs that they are yet evolving. Therefore, our own ability to contemplate preparatory steps is inhibited.

4. Against this background, we shall continue to make our views known publicly. It will remain open to those in direct dialogue with us to pass on to others their impressions of our views. A good test to whether these impressions truly reflect our views is to compare them with our publicly stated positions. The two should be consistent.

Tuesday 1-30. Well. 18 Feb. 1992.
c7 to J.T.

Who are C7 and
JT? PA35/591(3)

Ans = C7 = Colin
Ferguson.

JT = Gerry Adams.

Reply to Adams who was
pressing for direct dialogue
with Brits + not thru' an
intermediary.