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3-Par 2.

18/1

In: PS/Secretary of State
16 January 1990

1. Mr. *Spence* - for information
- cc PS/SofS (B&L) - B
 - PS/MofS (B&L) - B
 - PS/Mr Needham (B&L) - B
 - PS/PUS (B&L) - B
 - 2. PS/Sir K Bloomfield, o/r - B
 - Mr Burns - B
 - Mr Ledlie - B
 - Mr Fell, DED
 - Mr Semple, DFP
 - Mr Hopkins, IDB
 - Mr Thomas - B
 - Mr Wood (B&L) - B
 - Mr J McConnell - B
 - Mr Dodds - B
 - Mr Blackwell - B

UNDER/ SEC 252/1
17 JAN 1990
CENT SEC

582/1
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Mr Miles - B

IOD CONFERENCE ON 1992

1 Sir K Bloomfield had a word with the Secretary of State yesterday evening (just before going on leave) about a Conference which Mr John Gorman, the Northern Ireland Director of the Institute of Directors, is trying to organise in Belfast on 11 April 1990 on the impact of 1992 on Northern Ireland companies. While Mr Gorman apparently did not intend to invite Ministers to the Conference, he did have it in mind to ask the leaders of the NI political parties, the MEPs and also the Taoiseach, in his capacity as Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Mr Gorman claimed that the invitation to the Taoiseach would flow solely from the European nature of the topic but it was however possible that he had more grandiose ideas of the political significance of such a visit. Mr Gorman had told Mr J McConnell, and also Sir Kenneth himself, that he had already raised the possibility of such a visit with the DFA, who were quite enthusiastic. Sir Kenneth had told Mr Gorman that, while obviously the IOD were free to issue such an invitation, it would be important for careful consultation to take place before any firm decision was taken on plans for a visit, since there were major security and other factors to be considered. (Sir Kenneth commented that should the Secretary of State be involved in inter-party talks in April, which was not impossible, a visit by the Taoiseach could be most inapposite.) He would propose that we should rapidly pass a

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cautionary message to the DFA through the Secretariat stressing the need for careful consideration before any final decisions were taken by the Irish.

2 The Secretary of State said that he agreed with Sir Kenneth's views. While he would be reluctant to place an absolute veto on the Taoiseach's visit, the timing would not be helpful and in any case he could not see the rationale for the Chairman of the Council of Ministers to visit a Conference which was concerned exclusively with Northern Ireland companies. He agreed that an appropriate message should be transmitted to the Irish through the Secretariat asking for early consultation on any proposal that the Taoiseach might visit Northern Ireland for this Conference. [ACTION: I should be grateful if you could pass this message.]

3 I understand incidentally that Mr McConnell will be seeing Mr Gorman again tomorrow.

Signed

S J LEACH
Private Secretary

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