

~~SECRET~~

(1) Sir Ewart 3/9/10

Handed to NI (2) Pol.  
Perm Secs.

Mr Brennan - MUFAX

Mr Bourn

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) M  
PS/Ministers (B&L) M  
Under Secretaries M  
Assistant Secretaries M  
PS/PUS (L) M  
Sir Ewart Bell M

Sir Ewart Bell and I discussed with the Secretary of State today the handling of approaches, if we get any, from Sinn Fein members of the Assembly. Any such approach in the initial stages at any rate would be of considerable political significance and the handling of it cannot be adequately covered by a general direction. The following has therefore been agreed.

2. The Secretary of State will have a word with all of his Ministers and ask that any request by a Sinn Fein Assembly Member to see a Minister should be referred promptly to him so that he can decide how it should be handled.

3. Sir Ewart Bell will speak to all Northern Ireland Permanent Secretaries tomorrow and ask them to ensure that any such approach for a meeting at official level eg to discuss a local problem should be referred upwards within the Department and thence to the Central Secretariat where Sir Ewart Bell and I will decide how it should be handled, consulting S of S as necessary - and I expect that it will be necessary in all such cases to begin with.

4. I would be grateful if there are any approaches to officials in NIO to be informed as soon as possible.

Pw.

P J WOODFIELD