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10/11  
12 JAN 1982  
N.I.O. BELFAST

PS/Lord Gormie (N&L) M  
PS/Mr Woodfield (N&L) M  
Mr Marshall M  
Mr Blallock  
Mr Wyatt  
Mr Doyné Dittmas  
Mr Angel M  
Mr Harrington M  
Mr Blatherwick  
Mr Gilliland

Mr Burton

MEETING WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE: UDA

I am circulating separately, and necessarily more widely, the note of yesterday's discussion with the Chief Constable. I have confined to this note the comments the Chief Constable was making about the UDA.

2. The Chief Constable said he had received intelligence during the course of the day about the future intentions of the UDA and of McMichael in particular. The organisation had become increasingly disillusioned because it was unable to make a political impact. It had therefore decided to adopt a more violent tactic and to seek to assassinate leading members of the PIRA. Targeting was good and there existed a list of 15 people. Although the police had already taken certain preventive measures they might not be wholly successful especially because of the difficulty of exposing the source of the information. It would be extremely unfortunate if at a time when the PIRA was under pressure from the security forces there was a series of UDA/UFF murders which might well provoke a reaction.

3. As best I was able to understand, the Chief Constable appeared to ascribe the sense of disillusion which had prompted the development of this new tactic largely if not wholly to the Government's failure to recognise the UDA as a legitimate political organisation. He pointed out that Ministers did not meet McMichael although they did, for example, meet Seamus Lynch, a former leader of the Official IRA. He believed it was unfortunate to increase the UDA's sense of isolation. For his part he would like to see them brought into the political fold although he was at pains to emphasise that a decision on this point was none of his business. The healthy cultivation of...