

Dermot Nally Papers

UCDA P254/20

Note for Information onlyStructuresLonger-Term

In the longer term, a Fianna Fáil Government would regard the establishment of a unitary State with a Single Government and Parliament as the best solution.

A variation on this would be the existence of a local Administration and Assembly, which would maintain, to a degree at least, separate laws and administrative systems for the area of Northern Ireland.

A full federal system or an interim confederal system could be considered. Forms of joint sovereignty are also considered in the New Ireland Forum Report.

In any of these scenarios, some form of British-Irish Council to discuss matters of mutual interest and to manage transitional arrangements, and (perhaps) to guarantee the rights of any minority could be part of any overall settlement.

Short to medium-term

The Northern talks have been suspended, but are likely to resume after Cr

Within Northern Ireland an assembly is likely to be established, and a Committee formed consisting of Committee Chairmen (or Ministers

There is a possibility that at least three Commissioners would be established that would have an overall supervisory role in relation to the work of the Executive and act as a court of appeal, where difficulties occurred.

A Joint North-South Executive Council with delegated powers could take decisions on a consensus basis, and take over and administer jointly specific areas of responsibility.

On an East-West basis a system of regular at least twice yearly meetings between the two Prime Ministers will remain in place, as will the Joint British-Irish Parliamentary Body. An Intergovernmental Body, that might be enlarged to include representatives of any local Administration established in Northern Ireland, will continue in existence to deal with areas where there are reserved powers and to provide political impetus.

Steps Envisaged

1. Statement to be agreed with the two priests.
2. Discussions on statement between the two PMs.
3. Finalize statement in consultation with all sides and agree a date for it to be announced and become operational for all sides.
4. Engage in procedural discussions with a view to establishing the Convention within 3 months along the parameters set out in the Statement.
5. Since Convention, unlike the New Ireland Forum, would be a standing body, it would meet in plenary one or two days a month, except August, on the model of the European Parliament, but committees could meet in the interim between sessions. It would be complementary to any other institutions either already in existence or to be established.
6. Section 31 would be lifted simultaneously with the announcement at 3 coming into operation for all sides.
7. Once public confidence in peace had been established, every effort would be made to deal expeditiously with issues outstanding -prisoners (except in cases of serious violence, particularly against the person) and arms and equipment, so that the legacy of the past 20 years (and the costs) could be put behind us as quickly as possible.

Possible Timetable

- A. Adoption of Joint Declaration. Simultaneous permanent cessation of violence.
- B. Working Party to be established within six weeks to agree arrangements and terms of reference for Convention within the parameters set out in the Declaration, subject to confirmation at the highest level.
- C. Establishment of Convention within three months of A. Intensive session to be held at an early stage. Thereafter meetings to be scheduled at regular intervals.
- D. Following cessation of violence, there would be no reason to maintain restrictions under the Broadcasting Act.

Slippage from the 19th April text

The 19th April text contained seven distinct elements set out in seven paragraphs: the first two of these referred to the Secretary of State's role; the sixth dealt with the Secretariat and the seventh indicated that Mr. Brooke would seek the agreement of the political parties to the various arrangements. The third, fourth and fifth elements provided for the active involvement of the Irish Government in the talks process. The subsequent slippage in relation to each of these three elements is indicated below.

Issue	Agreement of 19th April	Present Suggestion
Timetable for talks	Three sets of talks to begin immediately and in unison. North-South talks to begin a day or two after the commencement of internal talks.	No fixed starting date for North-South talks. To depend on progress being made in internal talks.
Format for North-South talks	North-South talks to be <u>between</u> the Irish Government and the political parties. To be without pre-conditions. Assumed that NIO would also be a party.	Discussions to <u>involve</u> the N.I. parties, and the Irish Government. Increasingly prominent role being suggested for the Secretary of State. (Precondition of prior progress in the internal talks also being introduced).
Official Liaison group	Liaison Group would cover the three sets of talks. Dublin to use the group for its input to the internal talks. Two heads of the Secretariat to service N/S and E/W talks. Membership of group would be open to NI political parties.	Group to have no public existence. Membership not open to the NI political parties. Joint Secretaries to have no formal role in servicing talks. In practice Liaison Group to amount to no more than existing liaison arrangements in the Secretariat.