

Dermot Nally Papers

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Suggested Government line after meeting John Hume

The Taoiseach, Mr. Albert Reynolds, T.D., and the Tánaiste, Mr. Dick Spring, T.D., this morning received from the leader of the SDLP, Mr. John Hume a verbal as well as a written report on the progress of his discussions with the leader of Sinn Féin, Mr. Gerry Adams.

The Taoiseach and the Tánaiste took the opportunity to express their deep appreciation of the work done by John Hume over the years in the cause of peace.

The Taoiseach and the Tánaiste believe that the highest political priority must be given to establishing a basis for a just and lasting peace and a permanent cessation of all violence. They will accordingly evaluate carefully this report, and consult with the Government, with a view to ensuring that it can make a very important contribution towards building a consensus for peace. It would be their intention to take full account of the report, and decide how best to continue their efforts in their discussions with the British Government for the achievement of the objective of peace on this island.

By definition, this work will require much patient effort and preparation, some of which must necessarily be carried out in confidence. The Government will not be elaborating in further detail for the moment. A period of reflection, assessment and discussion is now necessary, and the Government believe that in the interests of peace the need for confidentiality should be respected.

The ultimate goal of all parties committed to a peaceful approach must be to reach a lasting political settlement, which can only be achieved on the basis of the widest political dialogue and participation, with the consent of the people living in Ireland, both North and South.