

# **Dermot Nally Papers**

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## NORTHERN IRELAND

### Notes on Developments, 1985 to 1993

#### Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985

The Anglo-Irish Agreement, 1985, was the subject of meetings between Taoiseach Garret FitzGerald and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Dublin, London, Chequers, Fontainebleau, Brussels, Milan, and other places, with innumerable other preparatory meetings between Foreign Minister Peter Barry and his opposite number on the British side, and about 40 meetings at official level. There were also meetings with President Reagan. I attended all the meetings at Presidential and Prime Ministerial level and chaired the Irish side at official meetings. In these notes I cannot hope to describe the ebb and flow of the negotiation or enter into the drafting nuances which occupied so much time and attention. I will instead concentrate on what I think were the main points.

The negotiation of the Agreement began with the visit to Dublin on 2 March, 1984, of Cabinet Secretary Robert (now Lord) Armstrong whom I had known since Sunningdale in 1973, and David (now Sir David) Goodall, then Deputy Secretary in the Cabinet Office to meet Sean Donlon and me in the Cabinet Room, Dublin. Armstrong who had phoned ~~me~~ to emphasise the confidentiality of the meeting said they would like to talk about options under three headings:

- security
- constitutional questions, and
- measures affecting the Government of Northern Ireland, human rights, identity etc.

From that set of building blocks we were to construct a formula - or an edifice - which would bring peace in Northern Ireland!

The security aspect was twofold. As Dr. FitzGerald stressed to the Prime Minister at one point when she seemed to be wavering "Prime Minister, you are putting at risk 800 years of British real politick. You have always held that Ireland should not be used as a base to



attack England. But that is happening now. And the Libyans and God knows who else are becoming involved. There must be action to give a focus to politics in Northern Ireland."

The second aspect was of more immediate concern. As soon as the March meeting was over, I raced upstairs to the Taoiseach's office on the first floor to tell him of the British proposal for a border zone where the police forces of the two countries could move without formality. The proposal was quickly put to rest when I phoned Armstrong to knock it on the head on the urgent direction of the Taoiseach. As also was the suggestion - though this did not appear with quite the same despatch - for army to army contact. Police to police co-operation was, on all reports we were receiving, good. There were technicalities on extradition, and as far as the criminal law was concerned, Irish legislation against terrorism was at least as draconian as any in Europe, including the U.K. After all, we in the South were conscious that the IRA did not recognise the Irish State and had its disruption as an objective (*State (Lynch) v. Cooney*, 1982). We were not going to be lax on security. The initial discussions did not end dialogue on these and other security issues which came up again and again over the next year.

Could the Court system in Ireland as a whole be improved by the addition of Southern judges to the Northern Courts - where three judge Courts might be required for certain offences - while Northern judges would sit reciprocally on Southern Courts? The question was discussed but again came to nothing, largely, because of strong legal opposition on the British side.

As the dialogue progressed, two major questions crystallised. What changes in the governance of Northern Ireland would be sufficient to enable the Irish Government to win a referendum on articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution with their Court enjoined imperative that the Irish State was continually to seek Irish unity. On all experience of referenda in Ireland, the Government would need the support of the main opposition parties to win. And for that reason the profile of any compensating proposal would obviously have to be high. A



superficial change in governmental arrangements simply would not win support: and certainly would not end the violence. But too high a profile would enrage the Unionists. Balance was essential. "We are walking on eggshells, Garret" said Mrs. Thatcher.

This was the core of the issue between having a body or executive or authority or commission or council or conference - the official negotiating teams went through 24 different titles\* for what eventually became the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference - with executive authority or a body with a purely consultative function. That simply would not do. We could "consult" on Northern Ireland - and so could the British - any time we wanted. There was no need for an international Agreement to authorize "consultation".

Discussions started on high profile options - including the three options recommended by the New Ireland Forum, a united Ireland, Federation/Confederation or Joint Authority. These were formally put to the British at an official meeting in the ~~Summer~~ of 1984 and just as formally rejected. The point was made strongly that the uncertainty on the status of Northern Ireland was contributing to the instability there. The options were finally put to rest in Chequers in November 1984, between the Taoiseach and Prime Minister - the famous "out, out, out" meeting. Mrs. Thatcher was in great form then. I can still remember vividly her joking question to David Goodall - *"ah, Goodall - tell me, do you people from the Foreign Office need a visa, to enter the United Kingdom?"* 9c

She regretted the damage she had done by the stridency of her "out, out, out" statement and said to the Taoiseach at the European Council in Dublin shortly afterwards, *"I am doing the best I can, Garret. I have been going about smiling all day here!"* Her commitment did not stop there. I think that the balance of the Agreement finally

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\*Council, Conference, Authority, Board, Lodge, Convention, Congregation, Convocation, Organisation, Chamber, Bureau, Centre, Meeting, Commission, Committee, Agency, Body, Syndicate, Group, Synod, Panel, Structure, Session, Congress, Tribunal, Symposium.



reached - in favour of Ireland - owes a great deal to her wish to make good the Chequers damage to the Taoiseach.

What emerged in the Agreement - a Conference chaired jointly by the Minister for Foreign Affairs from the South and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to "*put forward views and proposals on matters relating to Northern Ireland*" on which "*determined efforts*" were to be made "*to resolve any differences*" was the final solution to this side of the problem. The extraordinarily wide range of the Conference's functions is obvious.

The diminished option - after all it was not Federation/Confederation or joint authority - was not judged at the time to be sufficient to carry a referendum on articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution against the virtual certainty of strong opposition. But there had to be some balance to provide against both Court and political challenge. The Agreement used the exact words of the communiqué from the meeting in May, 1980, between the Taoiseach Charles Haughey and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher - that any change in the status of Northern Ireland "*would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland*". The word was not "*could*" which would have been unconstitutional, but "*would*" - a recognition of the practical reality that unity would only come about by consent. That phrasing is pivotal. About it hung the whole structure of the Agreement.

The second major issue was how to win the support of the unionists. The Irish side argued quite strongly for their involvement, some way, in the talks. But this did not happen at the time on the grounds that their negativity was too absolute and too uncompromising. Nothing would happen if they took part. Anyway, Mrs. Thatcher needed no prompting on the subject of British sovereignty and the integrity of the United Kingdom.

Perhaps the Agreement could tempt unionist participation in a shared administration in Northern Ireland by the clear recognition in an international Treaty registered with the United Nations - as distinct



from the Constitution ratified in the South only - of the need for consent of a majority in Northern Ireland to Irish unity.

The provision that if unionists did take part in a power sharing executive, exercising particular functions, then these functions would cease to be the concern of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference was intended as a further inducement. A power sharing Executive in Northern Ireland could displace the Conference, which the completely *Unionists hated.*

The Agreement also provided for the establishment of an Anglo-Irish Parliamentary body so that not only would relations between Dublin and London on an intergovernmental level, be closer but the Parliaments of both countries would become more closely involved in considering Northern issues. Unionists could participate, if they wished, in the same way as representatives of the two countries.

On North/South co-operation, emphasis was more on practical work than on a high profile Council of Ireland which had helped to destroy Sunningdale. The International Fund for Ireland was established under article 10, with most generous financial support from the United States, Canada, New Zealand and the European Community. The Fund had by 1989 already committed over £stg50 million to projects in Northern Ireland and the border counties in the South. Its commitments have totalled well over £stg100 million over the years.

### Consequences of Agreement of 1985

The Agreement of 1985 was repealed by the Belfast Agreement, which incorporated many of its main features. But it is not in the specifics that the main importance of the Agreement lies. It is on the effect the Agreement had on the warring factions in the North.

For the unionists, there was the obvious fact that ~~in the interests of~~ ~~peace~~ the British Government was willing to deal on matters of fundamental importance to the government of Northern Ireland directly with the Irish Government. It was willing to set up institutions and to admit the South into a formal role in part of the



United Kingdom. That was a role never conceded before in any part of the United Kingdom in all its long history.

The shock reverberated on both sides in the North with more than 100,000 Loyalist protesters on the streets and a high level of IRA and Loyalist violence - but still the Agreement and its workings held. And the Prime Minister stood firmly by the accord she had signed though she did say that the Taoiseach had all the glory: she was being accused of treachery. The Conference continued to meet; and in the communiqués issued after every meeting between the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister in the years after 1985 the phrase appeared ritually that the two Governments would continue to work the Agreement.

In 1987, Messrs. Molyneaux and Paisley jointly submitted a document to the Prime Minister urging as an alternative to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, arrangements for a direct proportionality as between the two communities in running the North with proportionality also in responsibilities. In other words - back to Stormont. I think it is fair to say that the proposals got nowhere.

Republicans disliked the Agreement just as much. The emphasis in the South had gone from ending partition - though that was still an aspiration - to ending the alienation of nationalists in the North from its administration. All the parties in the Dáil supported the Agreement - after March, 1987. The level of co-operation between the sovereign State in the South and the British Government was obvious. The emphasis had changed from jurisdictional claims to practical intergovernmental co-operation. On all the evidence, this co-operation was likely to continue and all that 20 years of violence had achieved was this closer co-operation - and a gloss on articles 2 and 3 which could not be to their liking.

In November, 1986, Sinn Féin decided at their Ard-Fheis, by a large majority, to abandon their policy of abstentionism from Parliamentary activity. Earlier in the same year, they published their "Scenario For Peace" whose fate was the same as that of the Paisley/Molyneaux

document. In 1990, the more moderate "*Towards a Lasting Peace*" appeared.

All this time the two Governments through their Foreign and other Ministers meeting in the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference were working together on issues facing Northern Ireland and on North/South issues. Southern Ministers and civil servants were gaining experience on matters of day to day administrations, forming acquaintances and friendships and seeing the real problem of government in the North. The two Governments and even more significantly the peoples of the two countries were moving closer together in the struggle against terrorism. This was perhaps one of the most important fall-outs from the Agreement. In May, 1989, the *Review of the Working of the Conference* was published, committing the two Governments again to working the Agreement and the Conference together.

In 1990 the Northern Ireland Office published "*Developments Since the Signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement*" which listed a long series of changes and improvements in Northern Ireland on the rights and identities of the two traditions, human rights and the prevention of discrimination. The document dealt with security policy, legal matters including the administration of justice and the operation of the International Fund.

### Three Stranded Talks

On 26 March, 1991, the Northern Secretary, Sir Peter Brooke, after a year or so of preparatory consultations, announced in the Commons his proposals for a "new beginning for relationships within Northern Ireland, relationships within the island of Ireland and between the peoples of these islands". The talks made some progress on their first Strand but never really got beyond some preliminary skirmishing on Strands 2 and 3. Long before 1992 had advanced very far it was clear that the talks were going nowhere - they were, in fact, authoritatively described as an exercise in political sterility, with both Unionist and Nationalist positions in a cul-de-sac.



### **The Policy Deficit**

In short, on the surface, there was plenty of activity but little progress. Violence was as devastating as ever - ~~now coming from both sides~~ in an increasingly bloody conflict. Between 1985 and 1992, Loughall, Enniskillen, Gibraltar, Teebane Cross, the Shankhill Fishshop bombing, Downing Street itself where an IRA mortar exploded on 2 February, 1991, the Royal Marine School of Music in Kent, the Baltic Exchange bombing of 10 April, 1992, the Ormeau Road Bookmaker shop atrocity and many more horrific killings, murders and maimings occurred. And there was, as far as the eye could see, no real solution. Devolution or the formation of an executive or administration in Northern Ireland, in which the communities could work together for the common good as the 1985 Agreement sought had not happened. In addition, Mrs. Thatcher, who had expected great things on the security front, did not see them. Her autobiography makes her disappointment quite plain. There was no sign of a settlement; and the weary struggle was continuing with violence coming now with increasing intensity from both sides.

### **Downing Street Declaration: Genesis**

At another level things were happening. From April to September, 1988, we understood that talks had been taking place, in secret, between John Hume and Gerry Adams. These came to nothing, but the contacts continued in private and eventually in 1991 a preliminary draft document was produced by John Hume which in its refined form was handed over to the Taoiseach Albert Reynolds in April, 1993. The document was worked over in the Taoiseach's Office and given, in a much revised form, by the Taoiseach to the Prime Minister John Major in June, 1993. John Major says in his autobiography that in or about the same time another document was given to him from Sinn Féin/IRA.

I had retired in January, 1993, and so was not personally privy to these documents though we had known what was going on. Dr. Martin Mansergh deals with the subject in his illuminating address to the International Committee of the RIA on 22 May, 1995; and the work and papers exchanged are described in The Fight for Peace by



Eamonn Maillie and David McKittrick - who, incidentally, seem to have had a nearly miraculous access to sources.

I was recalled to the negotiation by the Taoiseach Albert Reynolds in June, 1993, and from then until 15 December, 1993, was part of the three man team which negotiated the Downing Street Declaration with Cabinet Secretary Sir Robin Butler, Northern Ireland Permanent Secretary, Sir John Chilcot, Quentin Thomas of the Northern Ireland Office, and Dublin Ambassador David Blatherwick. I was accompanied at the face to face negotiations in London and Dublin by Sean O'hUiginn, Head of the Anglo-Irish Section in the Department of Foreign Affairs, with Dr. Mansergh ~~guiding us from his Dublin Office.~~ *remaining in*

On 7 November, 1990, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Sir Peter Brooke, had said in a speech in Coleraine that Britain had no "*selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland*"; and that Britain would support the wishes of the majority there for the status quo or Irish unity. This had been stated British policy since as far back as Sunningdale, but the doctrine had never been said before so memorably or so succinctly.

The words gave the Hume/Adams talks considerable impetus. Remember that in 1989/90, Eastern Europe was in ferment, with the destruction of the Berlin Wall, the break-up of the USSR, revolution in Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, Hungary etc. In the first six months of 1990, Ireland held, for the fourth time, the Presidency of the European Community, which was seen as a zone of stability in a rapidly changing continent. Terrorism - with drugs and immigration - were seen by the community as major threats. And at one international meeting at the time, Ireland, not just Northern Ireland, was described by a delegate as "*The country with the longest history of terrorism in Europe*".

Against this background, with an obvious need for progress, for the sake both of Ireland and the U.K., the opinion that Brooke's words could be built on was raised by the Taoiseach, Charles Haughey, at

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his first meeting in December, 1991, with the new Prime Minister John Major. The Taoiseach also raised the question of an Irish Convention with wider representation than the Brooke three-stranded talks.

? { Taoiseach, Charles Haughey, resigned from office early in February, 1992. The Brooke comment and viewpoint was taken up again and with the vigour of a Taoiseach newly come to power by Albert Reynolds at his first meeting as Prime Minister on 27 February, 1992, in Downing Street with John Major. This meeting was, in fact, the genesis of the Downing Street Declaration. Taoiseach Reynolds met John Major again at the Rio Summit on the Environment on 11 June, 1992, and again more substantively, in London on 25 September, 1992 - where the pressing concerns of both men were with the break-up of the European Monetary System. The Taoiseach was also enmeshed in the domestic abortion debate. Nevertheless, both men looked to developments based on the need for new political institutions in Northern Ireland, permanent North/South institutions building on the 1985 Agreement, with "rights of consultation" (as the British liked to put it) for Dublin, and an unambiguous consensus on constitutional issues.

### **Downing Street Declaration - Negotiation**

The negotiating teams which had been set up by the two Prime Ministers on the Declaration met frequently between July and December, 1993. There were also numerous and intense contacts between the Taoiseach and Prime Minister Major. While the relationships between the interlocutors at the official talks were excellent, both having the aim of progress by consensus, the detailed policy and procedural differences were wide and quite divisive at times. Things were not made any easier by the Prime Minister's narrow majority in the Commons, where he could be dependent on the Unionist vote for the survival of his Government.

The problems were coming, as usual, from all sides. There was, first, the insistence from Sinn Féin that a limit be put on the time for Irish unity. The Irish side resisted this on the principle that you could not



talk about consent and at the same time say that if the consent was not forthcoming within a certain time, no matter how far in the future, there would be unity anyway. That would be a logical absurdity.

Another Sinn Fein requirement was that the British should become "persuaders" for Irish unity. Again the argument prevailed that if a majority in Northern Ireland wanted to pursue a certain course in relation to Irish unity that was up to them. Britain had "no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland": and that was it. The Irish people themselves, and this obviously included Sinn Fein, could act as their own "persuaders": and violence was not a productive argument. Persuasion must be exercised through the development of an attractive society in the South, both culturally and economically. Democracy must be allowed to work.

And how long then would a cease-fire have to operate before Sinn Fein could take part in the political process? Time limits were discussed but again there was agreement that these should not be included in the Declaration. (Unfortunately, as it turned out - because when the Declaration was signed, Britain allowed too long a time to elapse before beginning talks. The Canary Wharf bombing with its deaths of yet more innocent men and £100 ~~of~~ millions damage was the result.)

Decommissioning of arms was raised as a subject for inclusion in the Declaration but was not pressed, on our advice, since, on all experience in the South, with its civil war in the 1920s, it would not work. The handing over of arms by the IRA would be regarded as tantamount to surrender, which simply was not on. And, finally, there could be no guarantee ever that 100% of the arms were decommissioned. Even if they were, there was little to prevent them from being replenished. Reliance had to be put on the good faith of those who were negotiating the peace. If that good faith were not there, then the whole exercise was futile anyway.

The negotiations were almost wrecked by the publication in an Irish newspaper of an internal Foreign Affairs document which set out a



more or less extreme position - as being that of the Irish Government. The document had, in fact, no authority, being no more than the thoughts at that point of an official of the Department without political input or support.

The European Council in Brussels at the end of October, 1993, which as a retiree, I did not attend, did not help matters. The communique issued after the Council said *"The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister agreed that any initiative can only be taken by the two Governments, and that there could be no question of their adopting or endorsing the report of the dialogue which was recently given to the Taoiseach and which had not been passed on to the British Government. They agreed that the two Governments must continue to work together on a framework for peace, stability and reconciliation."* The British had formed the conclusion - to mix metaphors - that the "fingerprints" of Hume/Adams on any Agreement or Declaration would be the kiss of death to the project, so far as the unionists were concerned. John Major, a day or two after the Brussels summit, told the Commons that having been informed by the Taoiseach of the Hume/Adams dialogue, he had formed the conclusion that that was "not the right way to proceed". If the Declaration was to be tolerable to the Unionists, all traces of Hume/Adams must be removed. Our argument was that the original document had been modified and redrafted so much - as it had - that it was no longer Hume/Adams. It looked as if the negotiation which had begun that Summer was dead. After much agonised debate, the British had concluded that the language of the Declaration was "too green". It looked as if the whole process was going down the chute.

Warning for  
front -  
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Vernon's'

Sir Robin Butler phoned me later in November to say that all this did not mean that we were still "not in business". The present word was not the final word. He suggested another meeting of the official negotiating teams - where, as always, relations had been good.

Again, misfortune struck. The British side, late in November, 1993, produced a draft to replace that on which we had been working. The



new draft was an attempt to get away from what the British saw as the shadow of Hume/Adams.

In this, the draft misconceived the entire purpose of the negotiation which was to bring Sinn Fein/IRA into dialogue while at the same time not alienating the Unionists to the point of despair.

The draft expressed the right to self-determination in terms of entirely separate rights, North and South. The emphasis in the working draft on ending past divisions was gone. The new draft tried to pre-empt the nature of constitutional change in the South - and so on. The Taoiseach made it quite clear that we could not work on the new document. It had to be withdrawn if the negotiation was to continue.

This was at the end of November, 1993, with the two Prime Ministers due to meet in Dublin on 3rd December. In so far as we could, through different channels and side conferences, we had kept republican, nationalist and unionist sides informed of what was going on in the official negotiation. Nationalist inputs had been considerable: and unionist interests had a concrete input in the text of the Declaration particularly in what has become paragraph 5 with its references to free political thought, freedom of expression and religion, the right to pursue democratically national and political aspirations and so on. The thought that all of this was to be thrown overboard for a new completely fresh and unbalanced text was just too much!

And then, to add to the difficulties, in a document dated 2nd December, 1993, Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein gave a detailed account of the contacts, through the "Back Channel", between the British Government and the I.R.A. This evidence of clandestine negotiations again nearly sank the Declaration. We should have known of the contacts - in fact, did have an inkling. It had all happened before with most unfortunate consequences.....

The "new" draft and the detailed account of British/IRA liaisons since 1990 - and before that - certainly did not make for an amicable



summit in Dublin Castle on 3rd December. The meeting was among the stormiest of the many I have attended - not aided by the presence on each side, at some of the sessions, of numerous officials which, I think, exacerbated things by leading to some grandstanding on both sides. At one point, John Major, in the intensity of his frustration, snapped a pencil. Both Butler and I were called on for support but fortunately we both stayed amicably silent. Fortunately, in the end, calm was restored and the two Prime Ministers agreed that work should continue on the original working draft. The official negotiating teams had one further meeting in London which left only minor drafting issues outstanding - but with nerves strung out on both sides. I was questioned at one point as to why I had suggested substituting a semi-colon for a full stop at a particular point in the draft - the drafting was continued by phone most of the time between London and Dublin right up to about 7 o'clock on the evening of the day before the meeting to sign the Declaration in Downing Street on 15 December, 1993. Only at that point, late in the evening of 14 December did the two Prime Ministers agree the draft to be signed in London the following day.

What was really central to the text were paragraphs 4 and 10. Paragraph 4 contains the statement that *"The British Government agree that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, fully and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish."*

This statement is the core of the Declaration. It clarified Irish and British policy more than any other declaration before or since. It is incorporated verbatim in the Good Friday Agreement. The drafters of the 1993 Declaration sweated blood in getting its balance and its context right. Truly we were *"walking on eggshells"*.

Paragraph 10 says the two Governments accept that *"democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which show that they abide by the democratic*



*process” would be “free to participate fully in democratic politics and to join in dialogue in due course between the Governments and the political parties on the way ahead.”* The omission from the Declaration of time limits or criteria for measuring how a political party could be judged to have abided by the political process had the unfortunate result, because of delay, that I have mentioned.

Finally, British reservations on the Convention of all interested parties which the Taoiseach had in mind were met. The Declaration mentions the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation established later in place of the Convention.

The Downing Street Declaration was signed by the two Prime Ministers on 15 December, 1993, 8 years after the Anglo-Irish Agreement, 13 years after the Dublin Summit of December, 1980 and 20 years after Sunningdale. The long process was not yet complete but its essential elements were becoming clearer. The British Government had no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland. The Irish Government while under a constitutionally mandated imperative to seek Irish unity would - **not “could”** - do so only on the basis of consent. That consent must be both North and South concurrently. And the two sovereign Governments would work together, if possible, with the people of Northern Ireland, but if that was not possible, then again and again, in co-operation, until a solution was found. The two Governments had come closer together than ever before in their approach to the problem. And the burden of the argument had now shifted even more decisively to the South to make its society culturally and economically attractive, to become opener and more tolerant and to think of persuasion rather than compulsion if we wanted unity.

### **Good Friday Agreement, 1998**

In August, 1994 the Provisional IRA announced its ceasefire. The way was clear for a further step along the road to peace.

The Good Friday Agreement of April, 1998, was that step. The Agreement directly involving the conflicting sides built on what had



gone before, adapting the institutions, principles and structures of the previous attempts and modifying and adding to them, in the hope of achieving peace and stability in Northern Ireland.

Peace of a sort is there now and needs nurturing. But differences remain - on policing, on prisoners and on decommissioning. Reconciliation and a normal civil society in Northern Ireland are still some way off: but at least the vista is becoming clearer.

I cannot finish without a tribute to those on both sides with whom I had the privilege to work between 1985 and 1993. On the Irish side, Dr. Mansergh needs no commendation from me. Sean Donlon, Noel Dorr, Michael Lillis and Sean O'hUiginn from Foreign Affairs, Wally Kirwan from my own Department, Andy Ward from Justice and Declan Quigley from the Attorney General's Office each in his own way, contributed immensely. On the British side, I remember, with respect and affection, Robert (now Lord) Armstrong, Sir Robin Butler, Sir David Goodall, John Chilcot, Quentin Thomas and Ambassadors Blatherwick and Goodison.

In the negotiation, both of the 1985 and 1993 accords, both sides worked with the common objective of developing communal understanding in a troubled part of our island and between our two countries. And I think that spirit continues.

At the end of the negotiation of the 1985 Agreement, Lord Armstrong said, with emotion *"This is the greatest project I have ever worked on. Now my work is finished. It is with a certain sadness that I recognise that it is for others to implement what we have agreed."* My reply was to the effect that, on our side, the work was only beginning!

October, 2000