

FROM: D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
11 JUNE 1996

cc	PS/Secretary of State(L+B)	-B
	PS/Sir John Wheeler(L,B+DFP)	-B
	PS/Michael Ancram(L,B+DENI)	-B
	PS/Malcolm Moss(L,DOE+DHSS)	-B
	PS/Baroness Denton(L,DED+DANI)	-B
	PS/PUS(L+B)	-B
	PS/Sir David Fell	-B
	Mr Thomas(L+B)	-B
	Mr Bell	-B
	Mr Legge	-B
	Mr Leach	-B
	Mr Steele	-B
	Mr Watkins	-B
	Mr Beeton	-B
	Mr Hill	
	Mr Lavery	-B
	Mr Perry	-B
	Mr Stephens	-B
	Ms Checksfield	-B
	Miss Harrison	
	Ms Mapstone	-B
	Mr Whysall	
	Mr Lamont, RID	-B
	HMA Dublin	-B
	Mrs McNally	

File Note

TALKS, 10 JUNE - LATE AFTERNOON

Summary

After the "plenary" broke at about 5.30pm the Secretary of State and Michael Ancram had a series of meetings to discuss the situation which had been reached and to identify a possible way of moving forward to the acceptance of the Independent Chairmen's appointment and the substantive business on the proposed agenda, including the securing of commitments to the Mitchell principles.

2. Although the positions revealed were not compatible the conversations suggested that it might be possible, given further time for reflection and informal consultation, to find a way through by the following morning. Accordingly, the Secretary of State eventually proposed that the meeting should adjourn until 9am on

11 June to allow time for the Government to hold further informal consultations; he undertook to present the outcome at 9am, on the basis that the meeting would then break again for further informal exchanges before resuming at 11am.

Detail

3. The Secretary of State and Michael Ancram met the following:

5.35pm	Senator Mitchell
5.40pm	Mr Trimble and Mr Empey
5.50pm	Mr Spring and Mrs Owen
6.05pm	Senator Mitchell (to report on his meeting with Mr Trimble)
6.10pm	"Plenary" to propose a further 20 minute adjournment
6.15pm	Mr Trimble and Mr Empey
6.20pm	Dr Paisley and Mr McCartney
6.25pm	Mr Hume
6.30pm	Mr Spring and Mrs Owen
6.40pm	"Plenary" to secure an adjournment until the following morning

4. Senator Mitchell made clear to the Secretary of State, Mr Trimble and the Irish that he was ready to concur in a revision of the arrangements which would give him less formal autonomy. He clearly felt confident of his ability to manage proceedings without such explicit powers of initiative and independent judgement.

5. Mr Trimble candidly confirmed that he would not be able to concur in Senator Mitchell's appointment before the following day at the earliest as he had to be seen to have fought a good fight. He also urged the need to secure changes in the powers of the Independent Chairmen as set out in the Scenario of the Opening Plenary Session and the Procedural Guidelines; the identity of the

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Independent Chairmen would then be less contentious and Dr Paisley and Mr McCartney would be on weaker ground. He favoured remitting the issues to a smaller group for detailed consideration.

6. The Irish were shell-shocked and gloomy. They pressed the case for agreeing the Chairmanship arrangements and securing commitment to the Mitchell principles that night, but that soon became obviously impractical. There was some belligerent muttering about falling back on full-blown joint Chairmanship but Nora Owen and Paddy Teahon argued for proceeding to appoint the Chairmen on the understanding that the powers and agenda etc would be remitted to the Business Committee for consideration. A subsequent refinement was that the Business Committee should meet at 8am the next morning to begin considering the issues, on the understanding that the Plenary would commence at 10am with Senator Mitchell in the Chair.

7. Dr Paisley and Mr McCartney were relaxed and cheerful, but restrained. They praised the Secretary of State's handling of the "Plenary" for drawing much of the venom. They seemed genuinely keen to find a way forward into substantive exchanges, albeit on their own terms.

8. Mr Hume argued that it had been a terrible waste of a day which would encourage the IRA hardliners to break even the de facto ceasefire in Northern Ireland. The media presentation would be awful. The Governments should simply assert their original decision on Chairmanships.

(Signed)

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