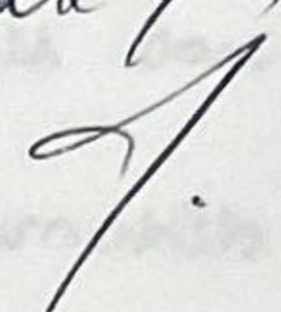


Edwards till 6^{12/6}

Thank you - but what
an effort were you
doing here at 0140?!

Good
Thank you


c. JEH
JH
MC

Prime Minister

Northern Ireland: update.

John 12/6

1. The NIO moved at 0140 with the following update.
2. They have a deal. Mitchell is in the chair. Only the DUP + McCartney walked out.

Detail.

2. After hours most of coming and going this evening, all sides but the DUP and UKUP signed up to the following:
 - Mitchell to chair the plenary 'on his own experience'. No

procedural rules for the moment

- Mitchell also to chair "procedural committee" - which all parties will attend - to design new rules of procedure. This will meet in parallel with the plenary.

4. On this basis, Mitchell took the chair at 0100. Paisley + Co + McCartney walked out.

5. Mitchell promptly got all the parties remaining - UUP, SDLP, PUP (not the loyalists) etc - to sign up to the Mitchell principles. There was then published. The statement noted that the DUP (+ SF) had been 'absent',

So leaving open the door for them to return later, if they choose.

10 DOWNING STREET

6. Paddy Mayhew (and the party leaders) have all done a round of press interviews for today's papers. Most journalists pretty positive (not to say surprised).

7. The proceedings start again at 1100, when the parties meet together under Mitchell's chairmanship - formally as the procedural committee - to start drafting new rules. In practice this will involve everyone.

8. A good time to get Mayhew/Annam is between 10.30 and 1100, if we need to.

9. I passed on your warm congratulations to the NIO team. This is

pretty impressive progress, given what we were told this afternoon. Fortunately,

the parties seem to have rallied, Paisley apart, how great would

be the price for Unionism if walking away.

10. One fence at a time - and one more fence surmounted. We inch forward.

forward
12/6