

DICK SPRING DOORSTEPPED AT RE-START OF MULTI-PARTY TALKS - 9
SEPTEMBER 1996

Just let me say that we are very glad to be arriving back in talks starting at 10 o'clock and that there have been some signs of optimism to begin that we can make progress and that the Irish Government's point of view is that we will attempt to make progress starting at 10 o'clock this morning.

What's your reaction to the Irish Times poll

Well my main reaction is that 57% of the people in that poll want to see political progress and they want to see the political parties and the two Governments negotiating and from our point of view that's what I intend to do.

Can I ask you whether its a fair decision on whether the Mitchell principles have been breached by either of the Unionists involved?

Well there are procedures here this morning if there are complaints lodged so there is a procedure for dealing with things and I would like to deal with this as quickly as possible.

Mr Paisley said a decision should be made by the next day, is that realistic deadline?

Well I believe in making decisions and if we have the opportunity of firstly hearing complaints to be lodged there is a due process complaints have to be dealt with and we believe that those who have been attacked should be allowed to defend themselves and lets see what timescale is necessary but obviously we can get on with it and make the decision.

Mr Spring Dr Paisley also said that he would be seeking an adjournment until this matter was sorted out, would that be your opinion, all other business would be set aside?

Well let us all go in there and see what is necessary to make progress. I haven't seen the formal complaints, I don't know if

they have been lodged to the Chairman as yet but I think what is most important is that the due process is actually adhered to and that those against whom complaints were made have an opportunity to defend themselves in lodging their defence and then the Governments will have an opportunity to consider that as well.

Did your Government offer a meeting with Billy Wright last year as he is claimed?

I am not aware of anything either offers or meeting with Mr Wright. Thank you.