

Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)

TALKS BULLETIN

2 JULY 1996 5pm

Today's session began with a discussion of an amendment of in the name of the DUP which seeks to give the Ground Rules document of April 1996 no governing status once the Rules of Procedure are agreed. The UUP is, in principle, in agreement with this amendment.

Senator Mitchell proposed that a debate on the memorandum he issued last week be conducted once the Rules of Procedure are agreed. This was agreed and discussion of the DUP's amendment was remitted until then. The SDLP's position is still that in any conflict between the Rules of Procedure and Ground Rules, the latter should be seen as the authoritative text.

Discussion then followed on an Ulster Unionist Party amendment which seeks to make provision for action to be taken in the event of a Party which is a participant to the negotiations falling outside of the 6 Mitchell Principles which they would have had to sign up to in order to take part initially.

The British Government published an amendment to our own amendment which gave the power to exclude to the two Governments in consultation with the parties. We believe that this is outside the spirit of the Act which gives the power to exclude to the Secretary of State. We further believe that the decision to exclude is a very serious matter in which the parties must have a significant determining role.

DAVID TRIMBLE