

SUBMISSION TO AGENDA SETTING MEETING  
FOR STRAND 2 ON BEHALF OF THE ULSTER  
UNIONIST PARTY

Ken Maginnis, MP  
Dr Christopher McGimpsey  
Councillor Reg Empey

19 June, 1992

Sir Ninian,

My colleagues and I, on behalf of the Ulster Unionist Party, welcome you to the Chair of this preparatory session for Strand 2. We also welcome the opportunity to speak, as equals, with other participating groups who are attending here today.

We do not, as representatives of the Ulster Unionist Party, under-estimate the difficulties that will face us in trying to establish a meaningful working relationship with Northern Ireland's neighbours in the Irish Republic, but I can assure you that we will not miss any opportunity to try to do so.

We believe success in our endeavours will require a whole-hearted effort from everyone around this table if we are to create TRUST where for over 70 years there has been distrust.

There will have to be a WILLINGNESS to be unambiguous, forthright and consistent in what we say to each other, so that unnecessary misunderstanding does not bedevil our deliberations, and there will have to be evidence of good-neighbourliness if words are to be turned into REALITY.

It is around 70 years since there have been generally accepted tri-partite discussions between London, Dublin and Belfast. This delegation hopes that the two governments will give both adequate time for, and commitment to, the process upon which we are now embarking. We have all, and especially Northern Ireland, much to gain from success; everyone will lose if we fail.....

#### CHAIRMANSHIP

Sir Ninian,

Within what became known as the Brooke Talks we established a fairly clear definition of the role of the Independent Chairman for Strand 2. Notwithstanding the fact that you have agreed to undertake that position at the invitation of the two sovereign governments we understand:-

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- (a) that during the process, no group at this table will have precedence over any other participant. Can we be assured that this means that you will have no role in briefing either Government during Strand 2 unless this is approved by the other Delegations and that both Governments will be subject to your rulings on the same terms as the Northern Ireland Delegations?
- (b) that you will preside over ALL meetings of Strand 2 and that the Business Committee will consist of yourself and one member of each participating delegation.
- (c) that, after consultation with the Delegations to establish that it would be regarded as helpful, you may bring forward specific suggestions.
- (d) that you will consult with the Delegations in the exercise of your responsibilities.



- (e) that you will strictly confine your consultations to the participating Delegations.
- (f) that you will only make public statements with the consent of the Delegations.

We further understand:-

- (g) that you will have a personal Private Office staff as distinct from a high-powered Secretariat, for the purpose of writing papers on the substance of these Talks.
- (h) that there will be a small team responsible for taking a record of Strand 2 meetings which will be selected by you from nominations put forward by the two Governments. It will work exclusively under your direction and that you will be able to seek advice from the Business Committee on the exercise of this, and any other, of your responsibilities. I should point out that it has been accepted and agreed that no one who has served or is serving at Maryfield can be involved here.
- (i) that plenary sessions and more limited meetings involving all Delegations will be minuted. Private meetings with one or more Delegations can be minuted if required. In the second instance Delegations can decide whether the notetaker should be from the note-taking team or from your Private Office.

This Delegation has one further explicit assurance to seek, at this stage, in relation to the confidentiality of position papers which may be submitted to you. That is, that the

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submission of one Delegation will not be released without its agreement, until such times as the submissions of all other Delegations are available for distribution.

The Ulster Unionist Party Delegation expects your Private Office staff to report exclusively to you and would consider any breach of this procedure as gravely detrimental to the process.

Finally, on your role, Sir Ninian, can we assume that Delegations will each have the right of direct appeal to you where it is felt that any decision has disadvantaged them?

Sir Ninian,

I would now wish to address a number of issues which will be important in terms of the dialogue that will ensue between Unionists and the Delegation from the Irish Republic.

#### NOMENCLATURE

Under what I will call NOMENCLATURE I envisage some difficulty. Without wishing to become embroiled in a semantic debate, I wish to make a number of points of which I feel you should be aware.

I can best illustrate the matter by referring to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. A copy of this document bought in HMSO in Belfast will be entitled "An Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the

Government of the Republic of Ireland", whereas one purchased at the Government Publication Office in Dublin bears the title of "An Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Ireland".

Enshrined within Articles 2 & 3 of the Constitution of the Irish Republic there is a harsh, aggressive and irredentist territorial claim to Northern Ireland which appears to preclude any official use of the actual name "Northern Ireland". While that constitutional claim is a matter which will be debated within Strand 3 of these Talks it is important to this Delegation that we clarify the basis on which we are here.

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We will, therefore, require that all official minutes during this stage should properly refer to "Northern Ireland" and that such terms as "the Six Counties" or "the North of Ireland" should have no official standing.

We would also wish to make clear that neither must the use of the terms "Ireland" and the "Republic of Ireland", as descriptive of the political entity which this Delegation would normally refer to as the "Irish Republic", be deemed to imply any denial of the legitimacy and permanency of Northern Ireland or to its de jure position within the United Kingdom.

We cannot allow ourselves to be party to any semantic subterfuge during Stand 2.

#### TERRORISM

The scourge of TERRORISM has, with over 3,000 dead in Northern Ireland during the past 20 years, been a source of fear, distrust and hostility between the two political entities in Ireland.

I am anxious, at the outset, not to be too controversial in an area which provokes much sadness and bitterness.

Nonetheless, many of us feel that the primary concern of the Irish Republic has too often appeared to be with the rights and interests of the wrongdoer, whereas the rights of terrorist victims and their families have excited less immediate concern.

Where the Irish Republic has declared an exclusive interest in the well-being of Northern Ireland's Roman Catholic community, and it is entitled to hold that exclusive interest if it so wishes, there is always a suspicion that extends to 8 latent sympathy for the Provisional IRA.

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There is a shared political aspiration, seen by Unionists as the reason for ineffective and limited co-operation on issues like extradition and cross-frontier security



to enhance the basis on which a Northern Ireland/Irish Republic relationship could be established.

We would wish to see, in summary, the following areas explored during Strand 2:-

- a. Terrorism and the Rule of Law.
- b. Self-determination.
- c. The Irish Constitution (an historical and political analysis).
- d. The European Dimension.
- e. Comparative Studies (eg policing, socio-political and socio-economic trends).
- f. Facilities for Agreement.
- g. Areas for Joint Action.

We do not consider that this is necessarily an exclusive list but believe that within the scope of these headings we will be able to discover more about each other which will, hopefully, provide a basis for progress. Such specific areas as Technology, Tourism, Agriculture, the Environment etc. can be slotted in where most appropriate.

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#### CONCLUSION

This Delegation from the Ulster Unionist Party has come here today with an open mind. While we believe that there are certain realities which are important, they are largely self-evident and so we have not felt it necessary to over-emphasize them. We hope that you, Sir, will note that we have tried not to set any preconditions.

I believe that if we all try not to venture outside the scope of Strand 2 we will assist you in your task, but we will all recognise that there will be times when we may have to allude to topics which fall without our bailiwick. We will be relying on you, Sir Ninian, to ensure that we do not stray too far.