

PST; PSS; Ministers Owen,  
de Rossa & Taylor; Attorney  
General; Minister of State  
Coveney; Messrs. Teahon,  
Donlon & Dalton; Amb.  
London and Washington; Joint  
Secretary; Counsellors A-I.

### Summary Report (4 July 1996)

1. Despite a rather inauspicious beginning to the day, some progress was made in bilateral meetings which gives rise to cautious hope that the wrangle over procedural rules can be resolved in a manner which will attract at least sufficient consensus among the participants. In addition, the participants unanimously agreed a timetable for work up until the beginning of September. Round-table discussions will resume at 1pm on Tuesday 9 July, following further bilateral meetings in the morning.
2. Round-table discussions took place from 10am to 11am and from 2pm to 3pm. The meeting was adjourned between these two sessions to allow for a round of trilateral and bilateral meetings.
3. The first round-table session was taken up with a sterile and unproductive discussion between the DUP and the UKUP on the one hand, and the SDLP on the other, regarding the latter's refusal to meet with a joint delegation from the other two parties. Mallon said that he was quite willing to meet either party separately, but saw no reason why the SDLP should assist the DUP and the UKUP in their attempts to isolate the UUP.
4. McCrea, who has led the DUP delegation for the last two days attempted to come across as sweet reason, claiming that the DUP was anxious for dialogue and that the only reason they wanted to meet other parties with the UKUP was because they wished to discuss their joint amendments. (McCrea conveniently ignored the fact that both the DUP and the UKUP have resolutely resisted the offer of meetings with the Irish Government delegation and have been more than ready to discuss the proposals tabled by the two Governments with the British Government alone.)
5. Neither the SDLP nor the DUP/UKUP were willing to budge from their position during the course of the day, despite the urging of a number of other parties around the table and a direct appeal from the Chairman.
6. The only two points of real interest to emerge during this first session were: first, confirmation by Trimble that the UUP feel that work on the procedures is nearing the stage that, in their view, it should be "parked" while work is resumed on the agenda for the opening plenary; and secondly, a clear statement from Alderdice that, while the Alliance Party, was not a unionist party, it considered itself to be "pro-union".
7. The first session was brought to conclusion, by the Chairman availing, for the first time, of the opportunity of formally inviting certain parties to meet with him and his colleagues. No objections were raised. The Independent Chairmen subsequently had meetings with the UUP, the SDLP, the DUP/UKUP, and the Alliance Party.
8. Senator Mitchell then met with the two Governments. He informed us that Trimble had told him that he wanted to do a deal with the SDLP on procedures, but would not be able to do so until after the Twelfth weekend. Mitchell felt that, in the meantime,

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Trimble would be happy to work towards defining the parameters of a possible agreement, without committing himself to any fixed outcome. He pointed out that Trimble also regarded the procedural aspects of the opening agenda as being linked to the rules of procedure, although the DUP/UKUP insisted that they wanted agreement on the rules of procedure before moving on to the opening agenda.

9. The Chairman concluded by indicating that in his view the only way out of the current impasse on the rules of procedure would be for him to invoke the rules on sufficient consensus provisionally agreed by the participants. He saw no prospect of the DUP/UKUP agreeing any composite text acceptable to the other participants. In his mind, the main question was when Trimble would be ready to deal. Both Governments concurred with this assessment.
10. During the course of a subsequent bilateral meeting with the SDLP, Mallon confirmed the UUP's position as relayed to them in an earlier bilateral meeting. Trimble was obviously nervous, but willing to push ahead, working in confidence with the SDLP. They had agreed between them that, without prejudice to the need for confidentiality, the UUP would liaise with the British Government and the SDLP with us.
11. Mallon reported that some degree of progress had been made with the UUP as regards an agreed text. The UUP said that they could live with the British Government's text on new paragraphs 1 and 1A and, at a pinch, the two Governments proposed revision to paragraph 7 ("will be governed" etc.) Both parties have agreed that the order of paragraphs 15 and 15A should be reversed, with the final sentence of 15A proposed by the DUP/UKUP being dropped. Work will continue in an effort to find agreed language for the second and third sentences of paragraph 15. On 17A, Trimble is to reflect and consult the British Government on the SDLP's proposal that the word "substance" should be replaced by "outcome" in the second sentence. As regards the UUP proposal to incorporate Ground Rule 17 into the rules of procedure, the UUP recognise that this rule needs to be given procedural effect and wish to consult further with the British Government on its proposal.
12. The concluding round-table session focussed on the schedule tabled yesterday by the Chairmen, to which, following consultation with the parties, the Chairman proposed a number of amendments. He suggested that the negotiations should not meet on the last three days of July; that for the last week of July and throughout August, Castle Buildings would be available for bilateral meetings two days a week and that round-table negotiations would resume on Tuesday 3 September. He also asked for the views of delegates as to whether negotiations should take place next Monday.
13. The debate which followed demonstrated the complete diversity of views among the parties on when, and whether, the negotiations should be suspended. The DUP wanted to break before the Twelfth until September; the UKUP from 22 July until September. The loyalists and the Women's Coalition argued strongly that the negotiations should break for the Twelfth fortnight, but continue throughout August. Others were broadly able to live with the Chairman's proposal, although Mallon asked that there be no negotiations on 25 July.

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14. When the Chairman sought to conclude that the negotiations should proceed according to the schedule he had proposed, McCartney pointed out that this was impossible for his party, since none of its elected representatives would be available from 23 to 28 July. He explained that he would be on holiday as from Tuesday 23, and that Cedric Wilson would not be available until Monday 29. No mention was made of the whereabouts of Dr O'Brien. In deference to the predicament of the UKUP and, at the insistence of Empey, on the understanding that no precedent was being set, the Chairman obtained the agreement of the participants that, during the week beginning 22 July, the negotiations would meet on 22, 23 and 24 July on the understanding that no plenary sessions would be called for 23 and 24 July, and that if a plenary session was required it would take place on 29 July, with the possibility of carrying over into 30 July.
15. The only other point of issue to arise was whether negotiations should meet next Monday, even though the Forum's Business Committee had suggested that it should meet on that day because the following Friday was the Twelfth of July. A debate began on whether the Forum was entitled to meet on a day penciled in for the negotiations, but was cut short by the Chairman when it was revealed that notices of a Forum meeting next Monday had already issued. A number of delegations, including the UDP, the SDLP, and the Irish Government nevertheless asserted the principle that, according to schedule two of the governing Act, meetings of the negotiations had priority over those at the Forum.

David Cooney