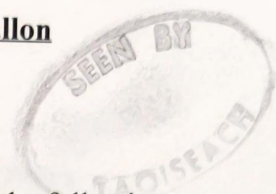


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Meeting between PM Major and J Hume/S Mallon
on Tuesday 30 January 1996



John Holmes phoned me from Number 10 last evening to give the following account:

- . the opening part of the meeting was very difficult with a number of heated exchanges based on recent actions and statements by both sides
- . the PM said they needed to move the situation on. He proposed a mechanism whereby those elected would nominate negotiators to all party negotiations (he stressed negotiations rather than talks). The interval between the result of elections and the opening of all party negotiations would be soon (days not weeks)
- . Hume/Mallon asked what basis there was for believing that what the PM proposed would happen, it was not what the Unionists were saying now
- . the PM took this point and said that he, as PM, was prepared to advance the proposal and his judgement was that the Unionists would be prepared to accept it
- . the PM said he would be speaking to I. Paisley on Wednesday and D. Trimble on Thursday. He would come back to the SDLP with a clear proposal at that stage
- . John Holmes said that the PM would be replying to the Taoiseach's last letter on Wednesday or Thursday.

P. Teahon
31 January 1996.