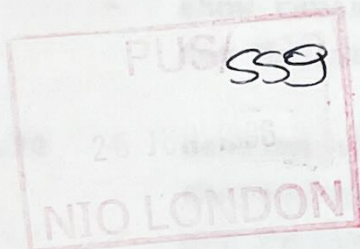


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P Talks

FROM: D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
21 JUNE 1996



cc	PS/PUS(L+B)	-B
	PS/Sir David Fell	-B
	Mr Thomas	-B
	Mr Leach	-B
	Mr Bell	-B
	Mr Watkins	-B
	Mr Maccabe	-B
	Mr Lavery	-B
	Mr Stephens	-B
	Miss Harrison	
	Mr Whysall	
	Mr Campbell-Bannerman	-B
	Mr Lamont, RID	-B
	HMA Dublin	-B
	Ms Collins, Cabinet Office	

PS/Michael Ancram(L+B) -B

PS/Secretary of State(L+B) -B

TALKS: 24 JUNE - HANDLING RULES OF PROCEDURE

The proposed text I circulated at 20.05 on 20 June was cleared by Irish officials and seemed to be acceptable to the UUP (Reg Empey and Ken Maginnis).

2. Michael Ancram subsequently agreed that we should slightly adapt the text of paragraph 17A (new text attached) to address the UUP concern that they should have a convincing political response to Robert McCartney et al's claim that the negotiations would be taking place within the "straightjacket" of the Ground Rules and the "parameters" set by the Framework Documents.

3. To complement the relevant rules of procedure, we have indicated to the Irish that we would be prepared adopt the position set out in the attached speaking note so far as the status of Ground Rules is concerned. (The Irish have an earlier version.) It is drafted for delivery when the rules of procedure are formally adopted, but it may be necessary to make the necessary points as the draft rules are being considered.

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Gameplan for 24 June

- 4.1ch ? 8.30 - pre-brief with Secretary of State
- plenary comm - show revised text of 17A to the UUP (Reg Empey or Ken Maginnis)
- (Signs) 9.30 - session with Mr Holkeri and the Irish, to discuss choreography
- D J R WILL - put revised text of 17A to the Irish
POLITICAL OFFICE
EXT CH 1111
- [I will ensure that David Angel has a note of the other changes to the 10 June 19.15 text which he has]
- 10.00 - Mr Holkeri to open discussion, say he's received reports on the bilaterals from [both Government's?]
- and that a number of positive proposals for further adjustments to the rules of procedure seemed to have emerged; and suggest an adjournment to allow these to be incorporated
- ? noon - Independent Chairmen's staff to circulate draft rules of procedure with proposed additions
- after - ? paragraph by paragraph discussion of the new text.
lunch

5. Mr Leach will be minuting separately on the agenda for the rest of the opening plenary session. It may be that there could be further bilaterals on that or even a discussion in the "Committee" during the morning.

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6. Our objective for the week should be to get to the point, by Wednesday (when Senator Mitchell will be back from Los Angeles), at which the rules of procedure and agenda can be adopted and the plenary commence substantive discussions.

(Signed)

D J R HILL
POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM
EXT CB 22317

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17A. Any participant in the format in question will be free to raise any aspect of the three relationships, including constitutional issues and any other matter which it considers relevant. No outcome is either pre-determined or excluded in advance or limited by anything other than the need for agreement. Participation in negotiations is without prejudice to any participant's commitment to the achievement by exclusively peaceful and democratic means of its own preferred options. It is common ground that any agreement, if it is to command widespread support, will need to give adequate expression to the totality of all three relationships.

various papers tabled by delegations last Friday and, as I indicated previously, we were entirely content to withdraw the Procedural Guidelines circulated by the two Governments on 6 June and work instead on the composite draft circulated by the Independent Chairmen on 18 June.

We have now between us developed the rules of procedure to the point where all delegations are satisfied that they constitute a full, complete and self-contained statement and that the proceedings can now be taken forward on that basis[without reference to any other document]. The British Government welcomes that.

For our part, we continue to regard the Ground Rules as a key part of the foundations on which these negotiations rest. They also form the legal basis to the extent that that is necessary as a consequence of the references to the Ground Rules in the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations etc) Act. Equally we continue to hold to the view which (as Mr Peter Robinson reminded us last week) I expressed in the House of Commons during the debates on the Entry

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(Draft of 21 June: some minor changes from the draft shown to the Irish on 20 June)

POSSIBLE STATEMENT ON THE STATUS OF THE GROUND RULES

The British Government welcomes agreement on rules of procedure for these negotiations which constitute a single source of reference for the conduct of our proceedings.

We welcome the convergence demonstrated during discussion of the various papers tabled by delegations last Friday and, as I indicated previously, we were entirely content to withdraw the Procedural Guidelines circulated by the two Governments on 6 June and work instead on the composite draft circulated by the Independent Chairmen on 18 June.

We have now between us developed the rules of procedure to the point where all delegations are satisfied that they constitute a full, complete and self-contained statement and that the proceedings can now be taken forward on that basis[without reference to any other document]. The British Government welcomes that.

For our part, we continue to regard the Ground Rules as a key part of the foundations on which these negotiations rest. They also form the legal basis to the extent that that is necessary as a consequence of the references to the Ground Rules in the Northern Ireland (Entry to Negotiations etc) Act. Equally we continue to hold to the view which (as Mr Peter Robinson reminded us last week) I expressed in the House of Commons during the debates on the Entry

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to Negotiations Act that the conduct of the negotiations is, as the Ground Rules themselves acknowledge, "exclusively a matter for those involved in the negotiations".

We are all now, as I understand it, ready to proceed to conduct negotiations of the character referred to in the Ground Rules on the basis of the Rules of Procedure now before us. That is a necessary, important and positive achievement. I acknowledge the constructive role which all delegations have played in bringing that about, and the role of Senator Mitchell in leading the discussions which have produced this result. The British Government delegation looks forward to real engagement on the substance of the important issues which now fall to be addressed.

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