

Confidential

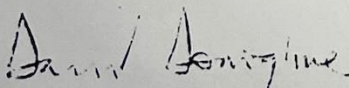
Summary Report (9 June 1996)

1. The main feature of a resumed round-table session from 1-2 pm today was an announcement by the DUP and the UKUP delegations that they were withdrawing from the talks until such time as the Drumcree crisis was resolved. The UUP had already told Senator Mitchell that it would not be fielding a team for the talks pending the resolution of this crisis.
2. The two Governments and a number of the parties held bilaterals during the afternoon. These bilaterals are to continue tomorrow and to resume next Tuesday. The next round-table session will be scheduled for next week, the precise timing to be the subject of further consultation among the participants. A press statement to this effect was issued by the Chairmen.
3. Against a background of indications that the DUP planned to grand-stand on the Drumcree issue at the round-table session which he convened last week for today, Senator Mitchell engaged in a round of informal contacts with delegations this morning to gather views on whether this session should go ahead in the changed circumstances. The two Governments had earlier signalled a preference for bilaterals only. Initial consultations suggested to the Senator that a clear majority of participants agreed with this course.
4. In the course of his contacts, however, Senator Mitchell concluded that it would be best to proceed with the session, partly because of the risk of protracted protest from the Unionists if he were to cancel it on grounds which they would represent as a premature application of the "sufficient consensus" rule.
5. The session went ahead at 1pm. The UUP, who had phoned the Senator to express a preference for bilaterals only (and to underline their clear intention of returning once the crisis was resolved), were not present. The PUP and the UDP chose to absent themselves (in order to avoid the inevitable pressure to join the DUP and the UKUP in the anticipated walk-out).
6. The Chairman invited delegations to offer views on how to proceed. Before this exercise could get underway, the DUP (McCrea) intervened to say that they were formally and officially withdrawing from the talks process until the Drumcree situation was resolved. They blamed this situation on efforts by the British Government, instigated by the Irish Government, to deny the British citizens of Northern Ireland the right to proceed down the highways of Northern Ireland.
7. John Alderdice objected to McCrea's statement on a point of order. McCrea went on to underline the unwillingness of Unionist leaders to sit at the same table as two Governments who were cooperating to deny NI citizens their democratic rights. He was followed by Cedric Wilson of the UKUP, who announced in shrill tones that he would not listen to the two Governments, that every decision made in relation to Northern Ireland was being taken by the British and Irish Governments "in a bunker known as Maryfield" and that the UKUP were withdrawing until the Drumcree



situation was resolved - and, for good measure, "until proper democracy has been restored to Northern Ireland".

8. The two delegations then withdrew. In a brief intervention, Michael Ancram said he did not intend to respond to their "fantastical assertions". He said that the British Government wished to assure the people of Northern Ireland that the Chief Constable and the RUC, supported by the Army, would do all that was necessary to maintain order and the rule of law. He asked all political leaders here to support them and to engage wholeheartedly in dialogue, around this table or in bilaterals as appropriate.
9. We endorsed these sentiments. In the subsequent exchange of views, Alderdice gave a deeply pessimistic assessment of the current impasse. Criticising the Unionists for a persistent refusal to take responsibility, he judged that the talks were now "effectively going into suspense" and "on a life support machine". He contrasted the Unionists' willingness to indulge themselves at the Forum yesterday with their refusal to do serious business at the talks today, preferring to incite mob violence outside. He noted pertinently the statutory obligation on the Secretary of State to wind up the Forum in the event of the talks coming to an end.
10. Labour (Hugh Casey) were also strongly critical of the Unionists and, describing the death of Michael McGoldrick as a consequence of Unionist intransigence, supported the Alderdice view of things. A more measured and positive contribution came from the SDLP (Sean Farren), who noted useful progress last week, hoped that the bridges in question would be definitively crossed next week and pledged continuing availability for bilateral contact over the next few days. The Chairman then concluded on the basis indicated in para 2 above.
11. Minister Taylor and the Government delegation had a series of bilaterals this afternoon with the Chairmen, the British Government, the SDLP and Ken Maginnis of the UUP.
12. Michael Ancram, who was not sighted on the outcome of today's meetings in Downing Street, indicated that Trimble had refused to accompany McCartney (a point contradicted in a subsequent media report) and that there had, accordingly, been two separate meetings with the Prime Minister (DUP/UKUP and UUP). The British emphasised their wish to see the Drumcree problem solved at local level, though they were pessimistic about the scope for mediation.
13. The SDLP, consistent with their intervention in the round-table session, pressed for a clear public signal that work is ongoing at the talks. They also hoped that the UUP could arrange to be represented for the purpose of bilaterals over the next few days.
14. A separate note on the meeting with Ken Maginnis is in preparation.



David Donoghue  
9 July 1996