

1. We had a series of bilateral exchanges with the British throughout the day on the wording of the draft "exit scenario" into substantive negotiations which, as had been agreed at the last trilateral, would be put to the UUP.
2. Minister Coveney stressed the strict limits set out earlier by the Minister for Justice.
3. The debate rapidly concentrated on two approaches:
 - (a) Language which pointed very strongly to de Chastelain having the key role, or at least a key role on the future verification Commission. We indicated we could put this scenario to our authorities, but, to have any likelihood of acceptance, it would need to be combined with alternative arrangements for Strand 2, since combining both roles (- four hats in all for de Chastelain!) would be unacceptable in terms of the perception of his role as Strand 2 Chairman. They did not envisage a change in his Strand 2 role, and therefore they dropped this approach.
 - (b) They returned to the language of their earlier bracket on the precise role of the proposed experts. We indicated that giving the experts a future "directing" role pointed all too clearly to the experts as the embryonic Commissioners, which was not what Ministers had in mind. Various attempts to ensure continuity but to find a more neutral and "expert" role, were canvassed. We agreed to seek clearance on the attached text (key lines underlined).

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4. It was agreed that Hickey and Cooney would meet Leach and Hill tomorrow to examine more closely what the British envisaged in practice to meet the proposed wording. Subject to political clearance, it was agreed we would aim to give the UUP the text tomorrow p.m.

(Seán Ó Luiginn)

End.

...we should consider an approach under which some ... would take place during the process of ... negotiations, rather than before or after as ... the parties now urge. Such an approach represents a ... compromise. If the peace process is to move forward, the ... current impasse must be overcome. While both sides have ... been adamant in their positions, both have repeatedly ... expressed the desire to move forward. This approach ... provides them that opportunity.

In addition, it offers the parties an opportunity to use ... the process of decommissioning to build confidence one ... step at a time during negotiations. As progress is made ... on political issues, even modest initial steps on ... decommissioning could help create the atmosphere needed ... for further steps in a progressive pattern of restoring ... trust and confidence.

- * note the commitment of the two Governments to work with all other participants to implement all aspects of the Report.
- * note that as an important step towards implementation, each Government will publish at the conclusion of the opening Plenary session draft enabling legislation which will provide the basis for giving effect to the International Body's recommendations on the modalities of decommissioning. Having considered any comments which the committee referred to below may have they intend to introduce legislation in their respective Parliaments in the forthcoming session so that as progress is made on political issues the legislative framework is enacted by Christmas 1996.

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