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

**Confidential****Multi-Party Talks****Daily Report - 18 September 1996**

1. In summary, the Alliance complaints against the UUP and the DUP were the subject of a brief Plenary session this morning and the Plenary is to meet again next Monday to hear the two Governments' decision in this matter. The trilateral meeting between the two Governments and the UUP took place this afternoon. It reinforced doubts about the UUP's commitment to early progress in the political track in response to the two Governments' demonstration of good faith in relation to the draft legislation.
2. The Government were represented today by the Tánaiste, the Minister for Justice and the Attorney General.
3. With Senator Mitchell back in the chair, the Plenary met for half an hour this morning to debate the Alliance representations against the UUP, the DUP, the UDP and the PUP. Confirming his acceptance of the two Governments' view that the representations against the Loyalist parties were covered by last week's decision, John Alderdice elaborated on his party's indictment of the two Unionist parties over their conduct during the Drumcree crisis. Quoting a number of remarks by UUP and Orange Order representatives over this period, he suggested that the failure of the UUP and the DUP to oppose what happened was tantamount to a breach of the Mitchell principles, as was William McCrea's failure to dissociate himself from Billy Wright's known views.
4. Both the UUP and the DUP declined to respond, claiming that they had no case to answer. Peter Robinson scored one or two points against Alderdice, including an admission from the latter that he had not sought the full text of McCrea's remarks at Portadown. In the absence of other interventions, however, the debate fizzled out rapidly and the Chairman adjourned the Plenary at 10.45am.
5. Alderdice disappointed private hopes on the part of the British Government that he could be persuaded not to insist on the two Governments issuing a determination in this matter. The terms of the determination are now under consideration.
6. The main event of the day was the trilateral meeting between the two Governments and the UUP. This was preceded by bilateral contacts between Ken Maginnis and the Minister for Justice and between David Trimble and the Secretary of State.
7. At a preparatory meeting between the two Governments, the Secretary of State highlighted a UUP concern, relayed to him by Trimble (and also by Maginnis to the Minister for Justice), about the ability of the proposed sub-committee to do any useful business without access to expert advice. Sir Patrick suggested that, to meet this



concern, General De Chastelain might be designated Chairman of the International Commission and added to the membership of the sub-committee.

8. The Tánaiste replied by underlining the need for a clear UUP response on the political side of the equation, absent so far, and the dangers of the present vacuum (with the SDLP becoming increasingly restive, as emerged in various contacts with them today). The Irish side also emphasised that decommissioning could not be the subject of a peremptory approach but could only be achieved through negotiation and on a voluntary basis. It was essential to establish whether the Unionists were simply looking for political cover to help them into the three-stranded negotiations or whether, as the Secretary of State himself recognised as a possibility, they were deliberately "ratcheting up the ante". While we could explore how the sub-committee might be furnished with technical advice (as envisaged in the Mitchell Report), we had difficulties on various grounds with the proposal in relation to General De Chastelain.
9. A detailed note follows on the trilateral meeting with the UUP, which took place from 4.15 - 5.45pm. A further meeting has been arranged for next Monday.
10. The trilateral was delayed initially by difficulties relating to the DUP. The latter requested a meeting with the Secretary of State today to discuss decommissioning. When it took place over lunchtime, they professed shock and horror at the British Government's retreat from Washington Three and subsequently went to the UUP to vent their indignation. This tactic had its intended intimidatory effect on Trimble, who requested urgent clarification of the Secretary of State's remarks. The trilateral was delayed by fifteen minutes while Sir Patrick spoke to Trimble and the latter went back to cover his flank with the DUP. Ian Paisley later issued a press release to step up further the pressure on the UUP in this area.

*David Donoghue*

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