

Office of the Independent Chairmen

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NEG 15/96

received 1/8
30 July 1996

Mr Sean O'hUiginn
Second Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs
Iveagh House
76- 78 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin 2

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

Dear

Mr O'hUiginn,

At the meeting of the Plenary Committee last night I sought guidance from participants as to the circulation of the various Participant proposals invited by Senator Mitchell on the Comprehensive Agenda, and any Participant proposals for the agenda for the remainder of the Opening Plenary Session in light of the ongoing discussion concerning the latter. The discussion on distribution of these proposals was not conclusive last night and the purpose of this letter is to provide clarification and to suggest courses of action.

Agenda for the Opening Plenary.

While proposals for an agenda for the remainder of the Opening Plenary were not sought, some Participants had proposed new agenda in an attempt to broker agreement on this subject. That being the case all Participants were invited to propose agenda (notwithstanding that proposals had already been circulated on 29 July in side-by-side format including those made by the British and Irish Governments, the Ulster Democratic Party, the Democratic Unionist Party and the UK Unionist Party).

Some Participants have now submitted proposed agenda but not all have agreed to have their proposals circulated unless there is agreement to circulate all the proposals. There is no such agreement. Accordingly only the proposals of those Participants who have asked to have them circulated are included with this letter. As of this date, that includes the proposals of the British and Irish Governments and the Women's Coalition. Those who intend to submit proposed agenda for the remainder of the Opening Plenary, but who have not yet done so, are invited to address them to me in care of the Talks Administration Unit at the Stormont Castle Buildings.

All agenda submitted will be reviewed once the Plenary Committee resumes its session on Monday 9 September and nothing prevents individual participants exchanging their proposed agenda on their own before then should they so wish.

Comprehensive Agenda

Senator Mitchell invited Participants to submit proposals for the Comprehensive

Agenda, and to have these submissions made by 6:00 p.m. on 29 July. The purpose of this request was in anticipation of discussion on this subject later in the week as the Plenary Committee worked through its Opening Agenda. As you are aware, the Plenary Committee adjourned before discussing this subject, therefore there is not the urgency originally envisaged for proposed agenda submissions. That being the case, it is not intended to circulate proposed agenda submissions before 9 September. Nonetheless, Participants who still wish to propose agenda for the Comprehensive Agenda are requested to address such submissions to me in care of the Talks Administration Unit before Monday 9 September.

While submissions will not be circulated before 9 September it is appropriate to draw Participants' attention to the 25 July British and Irish Governments' proposals for the Comprehensive Agenda, and to information concerning the Strand One agenda which the British Government has asked that I pass on to you. The information is as follows:

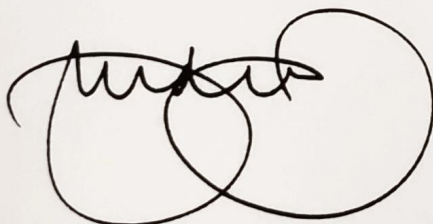
"On 25 July the British and Irish Governments circulated to all delegations proposals regarding the agenda for each of the three strands (the proposals in respect of strand one issues coming from the British Government alone).

In light of discussions on the rules of procedure and on the comprehensive agenda the British Government delegation can see advantage in developing agendas which contain relatively broad headings and has already indicated, for example, that it would be content for "constitutional issues" to be substituted for the first indent under item 3 of the proposed agenda for strand one issues".

As a convenience excerpts from the 25 July combined British and Irish Government paper is attached. As with the proposals for the Agenda of the Opening Plenary, participants are free to exchange their proposals as and when they wish.

I hope that the above information will clarify the situation regarding these two subjects and I invite participants to respond to the points raised in this letter as they see fit.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John de Chastelain', enclosed within a large, loopy circular flourish.

John de Chastelain
Chairman, Business Committee

Enclosures: 3