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INTERVIEW WITH DAVID TRIMBLE - 16.5.97

DAVID TRIMBLE

Well, my first impressions are favourable I like the forthright tone of the speech. I welcome very much the strong commitment to the Union, to the principle of consent, a very clear statement that he is not going to be a persuader for a United Ireland, in fact he doesn't see that anywhere on the horizon. And also his commitment for devolution in Northern Ireland on the same principles as exist in Scotland and Wales, or that he is proposing for Scotland and Wales. I think these are all positive things. I welcome obviously the call for the Irish to change their constitution and to do that as a confidence building measure in advance of a settlement, I think that gets the emphasis right. And I am also glad that he is saying clearly to Sinn Fein that they are on their last chance, that their train is leaving and if they don't get on board now it will go without them and they will not be allowed to hold it up any longer. They have held things up for far too long and that was one of our criticisms of the last Government.

INTERVIEWER

So Are you reasonably optimistic at the moment?

DAVID TRIMBLE

My first impressions, and it is a first impression, is that there is a lot of positive stuff in this. I hope it is going to give us the chance to move quickly to getting some real work done because we have been in processes and talks since 1991, six years of processes. What we want is to see a product at the end of it all and we want to see it soon.