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PA Talks -  
Minutes

FROM: ALLEN McVEIGH  
Talks Secretariat  
9 October 1996

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B  
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B  
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B  
PS/Malcolm Moss (DHSS, DOE&L) - B  
PS/Baroness Denton (DED, DANI&L) - B  
PS/PUS (b&l) - B  
PS/Sir David Fell - B  
Mr Thomas - B  
Mr Steele - B  
Mr Bell - B  
Mr Leach (B&L) - B  
Mr Watkins - B  
Mr Wood (B&L) - B  
Mr Beeton - B  
Mr Priestly - B  
Mr Hill - B  
Mr Lavery - B  
Mr Maccabe - B  
Mr Perry - B  
Mr Stephens - B  
Ms Bharucha - B  
Ms Mapstone - B  
Mr Whysall (B&L) - B  
Ms Collins, Cab Off (via IPL) - B  
Mr Dickinson, TAU - B  
Mr Lamont, RID FCO - B  
HMA Dublin - B  
Mr Westmacott (via RID) - B  
Mr Campbell-Bannerman - B  
Mrs McNally (B&L) - B  
Mr Holmes, No.10 - B

1. J. ~~McVeigh~~ <sup>10/10</sup> increasing due
2. Anna (072)

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

WEDNESDAY 9 OCTOBER: BILATERAL WITH THE UDP

Summary

A quiet day (so only one note will issue) with most of the main participants absent, however, agreement reached between the SDLP and UUP, ad referendum to the leaderships, on the draft agenda for the remainder of the opening plenary, possibly to be tabled on Monday. The UDP would gratefully welcome opportunity to get into substantive negotiations, suitably ringfenced against Sinn Fein, with some Loyalist prisoners released as the icing on the cake, to demonstrate that they are not irrelevant.

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Detail

2. The Irish Side passed to Mr Thomas a copy of a draft agenda for the remainder of the opening plenary (Annex A), apparently agreed earlier today between the SDLP and UUP negotiating groups, led by Sean Farren and Jeffrey Donaldson respectively, ad referendum to their leaderships. This was circulated (not to all) by Mr Whysall. The Irish indicated it was acceptable and it should find overwhelming favour if, as likely, it is tabled at plenary on Monday for approval.

Bilateral with UDP

3. A UDP delegation, led by Gary McMichael, came to see Mr Thomas, who was accompanied by Mr Hill, in mid-afternoon. After establishing that they too were up to speed on the SDLP/UUP agreement, Mr Thomas invited them to look ahead, albeit in a hypothetical fashion. Mr McMichael confirmed that they needed to be able to demonstrate to their constituents that there was a tangible benefit to them remaining within the negotiating process, preferably at least at another level up to the present one. He made no bones about wishing to get in and out of the decommissioning debate as soon as possible and for early movement without holding back on Sinn Fein.

4. Regarding Sinn Fein's entry, Mr McMichael advocated that it was up to HMG to strengthen their entry requirements, arguing that was an easier solution than leaving it in the hands of the parties. Mr Thomas reminded him that the invitation to participate in negotiations came from the Secretary of State but asked if the UDP had any ideas? Not much was offered: he remarked that both the Prime Minister and Bruce Morrison had mentioned 'dependable' and suggested that the legislation terminology needed weight.

5. He confirmed, following a prompt from Mr Thomas, that timing was of the essence. He also indicated that Loyalists would not be put 'through the wringer' on decommissioning, nor be humiliated by

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Sinn Fein. It shouldn't be forgotten that some would always prefer the easy option, which was to go back to what they knew and done best!

6. Mr Thomas, keeping in hypothetical mode, again had Mr McMichael confirm that with the Loyalist ceasefire still being maintained and the negotiations ringfenced against Sinn Fein, that the UDP would regard their involvement at that point as progress. Significant and beneficial, giving an opportunity to indicate to others that they had a not insignificant part to play was his reply, which was a lot more than could be said by them at the moment. This would also send out a helpful message into the community that progress was at last underway. He also took the chance, duly noted, to bid again for a release of Loyalist prisoners at the close.

7. In conclusion it was agreed by officials that not much more could now be expected before Monday.

(Signed)

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## Draft Agenda for Remainder of Opening Plenary

1. Circulation and Introduction of proposals regarding the Comprehensive Agenda.
2. Consideration of the International Body's proposals on decommissioning:
  - (a) discussion of proposals;
  - (b) participants' commitment to work constructively to implement agreements on decommissioning;
  - (c) consideration of, and agreement on mechanisms necessary to enable further progress to be made on decommissioning alongside negotiations in three strands.
3. Adoption of Comprehensive Agenda.
4. Launch of three-stranded negotiations and establishment of agreed mechanisms on decommissioning.
5. Concluding remarks by Independent Chairman.

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