

PRIME'S MEETING WITH DUP, 24 NOVEMBER: POINTS TO MAKE

Reassure you again there is **no danger to your vital interests in the present process. I would not be involved if there were.**

Sinn Fein will be **put to the test of whether they wish to follow a constitutional course.** The fact that they are having internal problems with more extreme factions suggest the leadership is sincere in wanting to make the transition. **Nothing is lost in seeking to bring them into constitutional dialogue; much might be gained.**

Believe that **we are on course for a settlement by next May. It would be a better settlement for your full contribution.**

Believe **you should be in the Talks, but I know your reservations. We want to hear your views, on political issues as on others. It is difficult to involve you as fully as we would wish if you are campaigning against the process,** but the **Secretary of State is ready to keep in touch with you.**

Very happy now to take receipt of your views on elements of a settlement. Obviously this is taking place entirely outside the Castle Buildings process.

- **Constitutional Questions.** All parties but Sinn Fein acknowledge the consent principle, and there are signs that even they are moving to it implicitly. Any settlement must reflect it. Irish are clearly ready to change their constitution, though they will want to find ways in which Nationalists can be assured that their rights and identity are respected. Your views on reflection of consent principle in constitutional legislation, protection of the Nationalist identity?
- **Internal Structures.** We may end up not too far from the 1992 model: local institutions with substantial executive, and probably legislative, powers. Your views on the shape of an Assembly, its powers, the Cabinet versus Committee models of executive responsibility, a panel and other checks and balances?
- **North-South Structures:** We see any North/South structures as needing to have significant purposes and powers, but with a clear foundation in practical utility, and accountable to the institutions of Government in Northern Ireland. They would need within those parameters to respond to the Nationalist need for symbolism, but it goes without saying we are not looking for, and could not get agreement to, anything that looked like

an all-Ireland Government in prototype. Your views on the nature of North-South co-operative activity?

- **East-West Structures:** such as to permit contacts between the Government and involving the Northern Ireland administration; and with representatives of other devolved administrations in the UK. Your views?
- **Rights and Justice:** Matters have moved on as respects rights protection, with the incorporation of the ECHR. Obviously we will look carefully at any agreed proposals for addressing concerns about equality, and justice issues. Your views?

[*Defensive:* **Minutes:** DUP do not receive minutes of the Talks, since they are not taking part: a grievance] essentially a matter for Chairmen and participants as a whole, though we find it understandable that they should be reluctant to distribute minutes to people not taking part in the process.