



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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Report of the discussions at the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference  
London, 25 March 1988

A meeting of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference took place in the Old Admiralty Building, London, on 25 March 1988. In attendance on the Irish side were the Joint Chairman, Mr. Brian Lenihan T.D. (Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs), Mr. Gerard Collins T.D. (Minister for Justice), Mr. Noel Dorr, Mr. Des Matthews, Ambassador Andrew O'Rourke, Mr. Dermot Gallagher, Mr. Joe Brosnan, Mr. D. O'Donovan and, from the Secretariat, Mr. Sean O hUiginn, Mr. Noel Ryan and Mr. Padraic Collins. On the British side were the Joint Chairman, Mr. Tom King M.P. (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland), Mr. John Stanley M.P. (Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office), Sir John Blemloch, Sir Kenneth Bloomfield, Mr. Ian Burns, Mr. Tony Stephens, Ambassador Nicholas Fenn and, from the Secretariat, Mr. Oliver Myles, Mr. Robin Masefield and Ms. Valerie Steele. The Commissioner of the Garda Síochána and the Chief Constable of the RUC attended for discussion on security issues.

The meeting commenced with a brief tete-a-tete between the two Joint Chairmen and between Minister Collins and Minister Stanley which commenced at approximately 10.20 a.m. and ended at 10.30 a.m. The four Ministers then met from 10.35 a.m. approximately to 11.25 a.m. approximately. A restricted session between the Ministers, the Chief Constable, Commissioner of the Garda Síochána, Mr. Noel Ryan, Mr. Des Matthews, Mr. Robin Masefield and Mr. Tony Stephens then took place. This restricted session ended at 12.55 p.m. approximately. The plenary then commenced and finished at 2 p.m. approximately after which the Ministers and officials had lunch. A joint statement (copy attached) was issued after the meeting. The following account of the meeting is in the form of direct speech and is based on detailed notes taken during the meeting. It does not, however, purport to be a verbatim account of the discussion.

Mr. King: Can I welcome you all.

Tánaiste: Tom, would you care to launch off first? We have dealt with security matters at our previous sessions.

Mr. King: OK. I have got down here relations between the security forces, which is Item Number 2 on the Agenda. Is it OK if I go on to deal with that ....

Tanaiste: That depends.....We don't want an operation involving mechanisms only. What I think is that there is a vacuum situation out there. People in the North and in the South, and here as well, see a vacuum. It is a two island problem. There is a high degree of frustration on the ground. We spend much time discussing security policy and social economic issues at Conferences. But there is an impression among people that we are foundering, or rather floundering around, at the Conference meetings. Apart from the mechanical issues of security, we really must look positively at some kind of political confidence building measures. We really do need to do something to re-build political confidence.

Mr. King: You talk about confidence building in Northern Ireland and that is necessary. But there is a need for Anglo-Irish confidence building measures .....

Tanaiste: We need to build confidence throughout the whole area. We have problems at every level. There is the media people's attitude. These horrible events of the past two weeks have brought the situation to a new plane. This Intergovernmental Conference is seen as dealing only with mechanisms. We need to emphasise that it is not only about mechanisms. We need to rebuild the confidence which has been damaged. There is a huge amount of frustration among people out there. At our restricted security meeting, Tom, you and I went through a number of the issues which have led people to be concerned. We went through, for example, Stalker/Sampson, the issue of the accompaniment of the UDR by the RUC and the issue of harassment. We need to expedite action in all these areas. I know you have said there is a need to expedite sanctioning the safeguards on extradition. There is the whole question of officials getting down to study the action needed in these areas.

There is also the question of the Administration of Justice. This has been dormant for some months now. We need to discuss the whole future political aspect. We need to consider where we are going with particular emphasis on

the political side. Perhaps you can illuminate us as to where we are going on the political side. Then there is the whole socio-economic side. It is necessary to take action here. We need to look at the Fair Employment legislation. We had a meeting on this and you will have a White Paper to be published in June. We need legislation with real teeth. In that sense, we need a special meeting to discuss the basic hard details. There is criticism out there about some aspects of the proposals and we need to meet that criticism. We don't want a Commission, for example, which has no teeth. We don't want, either, to run away from any pressure group in relation to fair employment issues.

We need also to address urgently the problem of West Belfast and other deprived areas. The only way to tackle this is with substantial money. The EEC is on record as being willing to help in this area. I know you had difficulties in relation to the EEC contribution to the Fund. I understand that there is now a favourable attitude from the Foreign Office. We need to consider how best we could look at the means of getting EEC assistance for West Belfast. We need to consider this at a future meeting and to consider the general problem of ghettoisation. Finally, I should like to emphasise that the Conference needs to be seen as an ongoing process. We should have another full meeting soon on socio-economic matters. We need to re-establish this Conference as the forum for dialogue. A dangerous vacuum exists at present and we need to do something about it.

Mr. King: That is certainly a very comprehensive statement. I would like to say that in relation to a meeting on Fair Employment that I am not sure that we will be ready for a meeting on particular issues for a little while yet. I am just not sure that we will be ready that soon. We are trying to get this out and going as soon as we can.

Seriously, I know that in recent times we have had so many problems. I realise that many people in Ireland think there is a British conspiracy. I know that they think there is somebody in London who is trying to cause embarrassment in every quarter. The fact is that there are a number of problems. The truth is that a number of them lie on our door. One or two originated on your side, however. I accept that all of these have caused difficulties for Anglo-Irish relations. We wish these events hadn't happened. They cause us problems in areas we care about. There is, I know,

an inter-relationship between all these problems. We are very conscious that such an inter-relationship exists. Both Ambassadors, I am sure, know this very well. I would like to say, however, that I have warned all my colleagues in Cabinet about the necessity to be conscious about the Anglo-Irish aspect. All Departments, you know, have some responsibility for Northern Ireland. I have been racking my brains to think of some Department that doesn't. You might think that Peter Walker (Secretary of State for Wales) does not have any Anglo-Irish responsibility but in fact there is the Swansea-Cork problem and the Fishguard problem. [Note: The Secretary of State was referring here to problems with cross-channel ferries and seeking to reinforce his point that every Government Department in Britain has an Anglo-Irish aspect.] This situation does indicate that balls will be dropped - if that is not an insensitive remark in the wake of Twickenham. What I hope is that we can, through the Secretariat, if problems do arise, sort them out.

I know that in relation to recent problems, one of the common themes and complaints that you have had is the lack of consultation and advance notice. We have tried to address this problem. The most recent illustration was on Wednesday last when I rang you about the issue of the RUC seeking the BBC and ITV tapes and the possibility that they would also seek RTE tapes. The fact is that there will be continuing problems. However, I know that we need to take action right across the range of Government. My colleagues are very conscious of the necessity to provide advance notice of issues and problems arising. My hope would be that overall these problems can be sorted out. Our concern is to avoid any repetition. On another general point, I think it is fair to say that we have got stuck in a few ruts in the Conference. We realised this and stood back and took a long hard look. I, for example, was shocked to discover that on the Administration of Justice the group of officials have not met for seven months. This is staggering. It is an own goal we have provided for those who want to say the Conference is not making progress. I have to accept that we got bogged down.

We need to take a fresh look at things. The original Agreement and the Hillsborough Communique highlighted some areas. These were, so to speak, the "top of the pops" at the time. Three-judge courts is one subject that has been identified. I don't want to re-open that since we will not be able to agree on that. There is the question of whether that is an issue of really major concern to people outside. I do accept that people should stop now and

really look at where we are going. We are not in these issues for their own sake. In relation to other aspects, John and I are willing to commission some research on things and find out the issues that really do undermine people's confidence. I would like to say that it seems to me that this area of relations between the security forces and the community and confidence in the Administration of Justice are areas which overlap. Is, for example, arrest/charging an issue of confidence in the Administration of Justice or one in relation to confidence between the police and community, or is it an artificial distinction we are making here. We have had all these codes under 7(c) but are they issues that affect confidence? One of the things, it seems to me, that does affect it is, in fact, Article 6 [Note: Article 6 relates to nominations by the Irish Government to public bodies and the role of such bodies]. It seems to me that this is quite an important area. We have the Police Complaints Commission. What affects the functioning of such a body? Is it the calibre of people, is it fairness, is it structures etc.? This is very important.

You refer to Stalker/Sampson. I have announced in the House that the Police Authority for Northern Ireland will carry out the disciplinary hearings in relation to the rank of Chief Superintendent and above. You may well have views on how well they do that job. But I have to say that one of the cracks in the system is the lack of nominations to public bodies on your side and to the Police Authority in particular. I say that without wishing to cause offence and I realise that the absence of nominations on your side is not due to bureaucratic bungling and negligence. I know there is a real political and security problem there. There was the case of Michael Murphy, who was a member of the Police Authority and who was threatened by the IRA and who resigned. I believe that you were about to put forward nominations at that stage and I can understand the difficulty you faced.

I think we want to instruct officials to sit down and start again. We would fund from our side a study which sought to identify the problems that affect confidence. We need to look at what are the issues that affect the confidence of the minority. I give you three-judge courts as an example. I have just had a meeting with SACHR and Tom Hadden said to me 'you are on the wrong track in relation to three-judge courts'. He asked if I had thought of the problem that the same judge who would decide on admissibility of evidence would be the judge who tried the case. And we hadn't thought of that. I mean no

disrespect, but we need to be jolly careful in putting forward the views of the minority community. We can be concentrating not on issues of greatest concern but what people think are the issues of greatest concern. I see your particular problem. I know you have your SDLP contacts and other contacts. I can say that, on our side, we are not sure that we really know what the issues are which cause this alienation or lack of confidence.

You said there was need for a new momentum. But we need to seek the right grounds. We need to have work directed to areas about which people are genuinely concerned. We have to have a review of the workings of the Conference by November. One of the issues I would see that should be part of a review relates to Article 6. As you know, you can put forward names for not just the bodies which are mentioned in Article 6. [Note: Article 6 gives the Irish Government the right to put forward views and proposals on the composition and role of bodies appointed by the Secretary of State. It names a number of bodies, but the Irish Government's right to put forward views and proposals is not confined to these bodies. The bodies named are, The Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights, The Fair Employment Agency, The Equal Opportunities Commission, The Police Authority for Northern Ireland and the Police Complaints Board.) I think, if I am right, there are more than 3,500 involved.

Sir K. Bloomfield: Oh yes - insofar as the number of people to be appointed is concerned.

Mr. King: There is another problem that we have had. We don't appoint politicians to many of these bodies. We have had a few problems with SDLP nominations made by you. We are looking for nationalists but not overt politicians. We can never have enough people. What I would like to say is that this is an area we would very much like to see working. As I said, I would like to take the two areas of relations between the security forces and the community and that of the Administration of Justice and to identify what issues are of real concern to people. We are willing to fund a co-study - I haven't discussed it yet with officials - but it is something we would be willing to do.

Tanaiste: What we need to see flowing from this Conference is a new momentum - a kind of Joint Committee to make progress.

Mr. King: Yes. We could say in the Communique that the Conference felt there was a loss of impetus and a need to engage in reappraisal. We could say that there is urgent work in hand to reappraise where we are going. The officials can meet and draft along these lines.

Tanaiste: There is another aspect that I would like to raise. There is a perception among many people - perhaps wrongly, but it is there nevertheless - that the Stalker/Sampson issue is going on and on. We need to have some kind of deadline in dealing with that issue.

Mr. King: Well, I don't know. I'll tell you what I can tell you. It's not an issue over which I have direct control. As I said in the House, the issue is now a disciplinary matter. This was a difficult issue for the Chief Constable and a sensitive one. In different circumstances this disciplinary issue would be dealt with by the RUC or, in your case, by the Garda. However, because of the complications involved here, there had to be an outside body. That is why Mr. Kelly was appointed. What I can say is that there are (turning to officials) how many - eight people - from the Staffordshire Police working on it?

Mr. Stephens: There are two liaison officers from the RUC.

Mr. King: Well, anyway, there are eight people working flat out on it. As I said, it is not under my control. Mr. Kelly has to carry out his task. In relation to your request for a deadline, I can't give that answer. We are desperate to finish is what I can tell you. If the issue is bad for you, you can imagine that it is ten times worse for us and the RUC. I can tell you that it is quite well advanced. The difficulty I have is if I give you my best guess somebody will write it down and there is a danger that it will get out and into the media.

Tanaiste: You used the phrase 'quite well advanced". Could we not use some phrase like that?

Mr. King: Well - reporting on the Kelly thing (turning to officials), is it for me to say?



Mr. Stephens: You could say something like you understand that it was well advanced.

Mr. King: I don't know. Maybe we could say it was believed that it was fairly well advanced. That is the score, isn't it?

Tanaiste: That is without prejudice to our position.

Mr. King: Right.

Tanaiste: There is another important point I would like to raise and it relates to a point made by you at our previous meeting in restricted session. It is the issue and the whole question of the young prisoners who are detained, as the phrase has it, at your pleasure. We need to have a discussion. There is clear evidence that these people do not emerge again as paramilitary activists.

Mr. King: John (addressing Mr. Stanley) - you might want to say something on this. I think there is evidence that these people don't actually tend to get reinvolved. I think that's the case. I am going to give you some figures on reinvolverment. [Note: At this stage there were interruptions and conversation between the Secretary of State and his officials in an attempt to locate the figures. These were eventually located and copies distributed.]

Mr. Stanley: Yes. As Tom has said, there is a clear difference between, on the one hand, those serving indeterminate sentences and what are known as SOSPs and, on the other hand, those serving life sentences and those serving determinate sentences. The figures show that there is a fair rate of reinvolverment for those serving determinate sentences. We are glad that this is not the case for those serving interminate sentences. There is very little evidence that that is the case. In relation to what is the length of sentence.....

Mr. King: What have we got here? My copy has gone off at the edge [because of the fact that the figures were not clear, there was some inconclusive discussion on the figures].

Tanaiste: But if there is a low level of reinvolvement this means that you can do something. You can take humanitarian action. Implicit in what you are saying is that the practical and the humanitarian coincide in this case.

Mr. Stanley: Well. We will look at Annex A and B ....

Mr. King: This is hopeless. The figures are gone off the edge of the sheet.

Mr. Dorr: I am afraid all the copies are the same.

Mr. King: There is just one point I would like to make. There has been talk about a change of policy and a slowing down of releases. John [indicating Minister Stanley] has taken a lot of flack on this. It is simply not true that this is the case. The fact is that in those cases where people were not released - everyone of those who have not been released were looked at by Nick Scott and he came to the same decision. The problem we have is that those released represent the easy cases. The easy ones were done first. The fact is that although we can say that reinvolvement is low, we must also take into account that the people already released represent the easier cases, the non-hardened terrorist. The problem now is that the people we have to deal with are the harder guys. These are hardened also in the sense that many of them have become tough through contact with paramilitaries inside the prison. I brought this point out recently in a statement I made.

Mr. Collins: But if you look at the sheet there in front of you about SOSPs, you will see that there are three who have served between 14 and 15 years. That is a hell of a long spell.

Mr. Stanley: Yes .....

Mr. King: Well. All these cases are looked at. How many times are they looked at? [A question addressed to his officials.]

Mr. Stanley: They are looked at five or six times .....

Mr. Blelloch: Yes. There is also the fact that the Life Sentence Review Board sets dates for cases to be looked at again. The cases come forward as

the performance of the prisoner improves. In other words, prisoners are not forgotten about. They keep coming forward for review.

Mr. Stanley: I would like to make the point that there has been no change of policy. What has happened in the last year or so is the same as has been happening previously. There has been no change either in relation to the practice of the Life Sentence Review Board. Equally, there has been no change for those in custody in relation to Compassionate and Christmas home leave. Gerry [turning to Minister Collins], you will understand the problem we have here. One does face a difficulty. Take, for example, the case of somebody with a close relative who dies. There is the problem of attendance at the funeral. The problem is that people released for such events go on an unescorted basis. It has to be this way since there is a security dimension otherwise. A very difficult judgement has to be made. Security advice cannot be ignored. I would also like to stress that this year has seen the largest number of people released on Christmas parole at any time in the 1980s. I would like to stress again that there has been absolutely no change in policy. There is a much more lenient policy in Northern Ireland than in the U.K.

Mr. King: Can I truncate this. As I said in the House, there has been a very substantial reduction. The number of SOSPs has declined between 1982 and 1986 from 62 to 34. The fact is that we have made progress. We will consider if there are grounds for further action. However, I have to say that I don't want to raise your hopes here.

Mr. Stanley: I would like to point out that there are only 26 Secretary of State Pleasure Prisoners in custody who have not got a release date, or have not been considered for release.

Mr. King: Well ... there is Gerry's point [referring to a remark made earlier by Minister Collins]. He would like to see more, and I would like to see more, released.

Mr. Collins: The question arises of the three people who have served 14 or 15 years. How long more are they going to have to serve?

Mr. King: There has to be a procedure. We must take each case as it comes and examine it.

Mr. Collins: Question withdrawn.

Mr. King: I haven't covered all the points that you raised. There is the issue of extradition, there is the matter of fair employment, the issue of West Belfast and the problem of the International Fund. In general, I can say that we are very keen on continuing the process and making progress. Your remarks about the need to give the Conference impetus are fine by me. On the question of the Fund, I am not in a position to respond to you today. I note your concerns in relation to West Belfast. We share a lot of these concerns. There is a lot of work going on in relation to West Belfast. What is the position?

Mr. Bloomfield: I can't say exactly at the moment. We are talking to the specialists. We have had a meeting in the Secretariat and we will try to take on board many of the points made at that meeting. The issue needs to be further discussed.

Tánaiste: At the first meeting on Fair Employment, you mentioned that there would be a White Paper in June.

Mr. King: When would we be ready on this?

Mr. Bloomfield: At this stage it might be best to have a meeting in the Secretariat.

Mr. Gallagher: Yes. There is a need for one or two meetings of officials before we take it to Conference level.

Mr. Bloomfield: The Department of Economic Development is now working on the issue and trying to flesh out the proposals. We need to have some more substantive discussion at official level.

Mr. Lenihan: We would like to look at this fairly early. Preferably before the end of April.

Mr. Bloomfield: That might be a bit early.

Mr. King: We will do it as soon as we can and as soon as we are ready.

Mr. O hUiginn: When will you be ready to move on the International Fund?

Mr. King: I don't know. Perhaps in the next weeks. Things emerged out of Brussels which affect Northern Ireland and these have to be looked at. As you know Northern Ireland is [turning to his officials], how do they call it - an area requiring specialist treatment. Another thing I am keen on is the socio-economic area. You talked about the socio-economic issue. I would be very anxious to encourage contact between various Ministers. There has been contact between Health and Social Welfare Ministers and Agriculture and Tourism Ministers for example. It would be useful to broaden this a good deal.

Mr. Lenihan: There are certain anomalies arising ....

Mr. King: O.K. I think there is much going on in Northern Ireland that you might like to have a look at, for example, research work on Agriculture.

Mr. Collins: Your Health man was in Dublin recently.

Mr. King: Yes. That's Richard Needham. What I thought was that Michael O'Kennedy might like to come up and have a look at the research going on. He could come and have a look at a few research schools. We are doing some research on types of grass growing.

Mr. Lenihan: That raises a point. While I agree, Tom, that what you are saying is sensible, it raises the point that in many cases the follow through on lots of these things raised at the Conference is not there. Is our system of communication working?

Mr. Collins: If your office could identify three, four or five cases where an exchange would be useful, Ministers could get in contact or, if Ministers were not available, the Ministers of State could take their place. Could officials not work on that?

Mr. Burns: We can work up a programme.

Mr. Collins: They can work on it during the Easter vacation.

Mr. Lenihan: In relation to Aughnacloy, could I say that I am grateful for what has been done [in relation to contact between the two Pathologists]. However, I have to say that it raises the whole issue of harassment. There was evidence of continued harassment in the Aughnacloy case and we have lots of complaints of harassment.

Mr. King: Well if Deputy Commissioner Crowley comes up with evidence for this it can be raised in the Conference.

Mr. Lenihan: I would also like to say a word about the issue of accompaniment of the UDR by the RUC. We have a problem here in that we have no figures. However, any information we have is that the rate of accompaniment has gone backwards. We have a problem judging it without the statistics.

Mr. Stanley: We have done an exercise on this and our information is that it is working. You have to understand that it relates to sensitive areas. It relates to the RUC being available and it relates to the RUC being available in the timescale of the particular patrol in question. However, as I have said, we have done a further exercise on this ....

Mr. Collins: Could I say on this that you would need to look at the areas the Army has vacated in this new Army reorganisation on the Border.

Mr. Stanley: I can only give you such figures as I have .....

Mr. Lenihan: The fact is that it is alleged to us that the rate of accompaniment is disimproving. We have, for example, complaints about West Belfast which is surely a sensitive area. The rate of accompaniment there is diminishing.

Mr. O hUiginn: A particular area of concern is Stockman's Lane.

Mr. Stephens: But I think there are no UDR patrols in West Belfast.

Mr. Gallagher: What we are talking about here are access routes to West Belfast which are, of course, sensitive areas.

Mr. Stanley: We have done a snapshot of a particular area. I can let you have some details on that.

Mr. King: We dithered around with the issue of blanket statistics. And I'm not sure that that's useful. What we need is some system that we can have to deal with particular complaints.

Mr. Gallagher: The system may be working well. We just don't know, however, unless we have a statistical base. We are being told that the rate of accompaniment is decreasing. The problem is that we have difficulty in telling if this is the pattern because we can only raise particular cases. Unless we have overall statistics, we are operating on the basis of anecdote and can't get a picture of the pattern.

Mr. Stanley: I presume the complaints all receive proper consideration. The issue is whether you are satisfied that the complaints are duly considered and dealt with.

Mr. O hUiginn: The pattern we see may not be representative. However, the problem we have is that many of the people most directly affected won't come to us, because they don't have confidence in the system.

Mr. Lenihan: Subject to what has been said, I think we gave this fairly comprehensive coverage this morning. We discussed the issue with the security chiefs and we covered the ground fairly extensively.

Mr. King: Right. What we need to do now is to get the show back on the road. In a number of areas I accept that things have slowed down. It is a fact also that there shouldn't be perpetual problems. In relation to extradition I would like to be able to cross that out of the Agenda at an early date. We have dealt with issues in a number of areas. We have dealt with the issue of Flags and Emblems and the Police Complaints Commission has now been dealt with. The question is what other areas need attention so that confidence can be restored. We need some ingenious and admirable Communique writing.

Mr. Lenihan: There is one issue, Tom, before we finish. That relates to the Birmingham Six, which I understand is now in the House of Lords ....

Mr. King: It is so far outside my remit that I don't know the position ....

Mr. O'Rourke: There is a preliminary hearing in May. As I understand it, however, the case may then have to fall into a queue of cases ....

Mr. King: It could fall at that hurdle ...

Mr. O'Rourke: I think not.

Mr. Gallagher: The issue in May is whether the House of Lords will hear the case ....

Mr. King: But it could fall at that hurdle ....

Mr. Gallagher: Yes ....

Mr. King: Well if there is nothing else, I will say thank you for coming. There is one problem. There is a sea of press men at the door and I am wondering what we will do. I think we will walk around to my flat. Can our officials get going on the Communique? Ministers may want to come back to it. Anyway they will be happier if Ministers don't interfere.

Mr. King: I am just wondering what we are going to do .... Let's have a look at the draft .... Are you going to have a Press Conference? [Addressing the Tanaiste]. What will you be saying?

Mr. Gallagher: We will be saying that we are still in the game ...

Mr. Lenihan: We will be having a press conference at the Embassy for the political correspondents.

Mr. Gallagher: It is not a general press conference.

Mr. King: What about television?



Mr. Gallagher: Irish T.V. will be there.

Mr. King: Well, we'll have a press conference. We heard that you were going to have one and we decided that we should have one as well.

Mr. Lenihan: Can we have a look at the draft of the Communique?

Mr. King: Where's our draft?

Mr. Lenihan: Perhaps we should let the officials at it.

Mr. O hUiginn: We have a draft here which has been shown to the officials on your side.

[A reading of the draft of the Communique then began around the table.]

Mr. King: [Mr. King, having read the draft communique, essentially the Irish draft, seemed puzzled at this stage.] I think we will have to do a lot of work on this. I think we are a long way apart on these drafts. We will really have to do a lot of work on this.

Mr. Burns: I think we should let officials look at it over lunch. Some things have been said over the table - and at the restricted meetings - which are not taken account of in this draft.

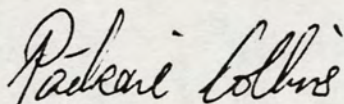
Mr. King: O.K. We should try and get back here at 2.45 p.m. There is a lot of work that has to be done on this.

I would like to say one last word. You need to consider the issue of perception in the U.K. There is a funeral taking place today. There are certain expectations from this Conference. I have the problem that I announced this Conference in the House of Commons after the deaths of the two soldiers. You need to understand the sensitivity in the U.K. This issue of sensitivity is a two-way street. A rendition of old grievances - the Birmingham Six, Stalker/Sampson - could blow a very big hole in the expectations that exist here from this Conference. The reality is against

that background. I need to be able to stress that we looked at the importance of defeating violence. I can't have satisfaction with security arrangements above the condemnation of violence. There are strong feelings on this issue of violence and security and I need to have that in the "pole position".

Mr. Lenihan: Fair enough. We'll have a look at the draft.

The Plenary then broke and Ministers went to lunch while officials redrafted the Communique over lunch. [Note: There was a drafting session on the Communique after lunch which has been reported on by Joint Secretary O hUiginn - copy attached.]



Padraic Collins

26 March 1988