



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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AN RÚNAÍOCHT ANGLA-ÉIREANNACH

BÉAL FEIRSTE

ANGLO-IRISH SECRETARIAT

BELFAST

Mr. Gillin  
21.10.95  
Mr. Hare  
Mr. M4  
10/95

28

**FOR:** MARY BROWNE/EMBASSY, LONDON

**FROM:** M. Tierney

**DATE:** 23 October 1995

**PAGES:** 2

CC :

PST, PSS, S. Ó Huigian,  
Counsellors A.J.,  
F. Murray & T. Dalton.

Ambassador  
Washington

**David Trimble M.P. and Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party  
and Dick Spring Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs**

**Doorstep comments, UUP Headquarters, Glengall Street**

**Trimble** We've had a very useful meeting and we have undertaken to keep in touch.

**Spring** I think that is a very fair presentation. I was very glad of the opportunity of having this meeting with David Trimble. We did discuss, I think, all of the issues which we both wanted to discuss. A useful meeting and I hope it is the first of many meetings because there is a lot of work to be done between us.

**Interviewer** Have you narrowed the gap though gentlemen between you on the crucial issue of decommissioning?

**Trimble** If we had managed to solve that issue then I think we would have hot footed it over to other places to bring the good news and this is obviously the point in which there has been a disagreement between not just ourselves but also between the British and Irish Government and other parties and it is obviously not a matter that can be resolved that easily.

**Spring** It think it is fair to say that today was our first meeting, we had an opportunity of stating positions in relation to many issues.

**Interviewer** Are your views on the Irish Government's stance on decommissioning, are they anyway mollified by what Mr. Spring has said?

Trimble Do bear in mind that I have had meetings prior to this with other members of the Irish Government, with the Taoiseach Mr. Bruton, Mr. deRossa and also with Bertie Ahern. So that I think I would have regarded myself as fairly well informed as to the Irish Government's position. Mr. Spring and I have had a useful exchange of views and we have gone over each others position on that issue and on other issues because we have got to consider what form any future any inter-party talks would take if and when they arise. There were matters where there was a useful exchange on those matters.

Interviewer Tánaiste do you still believe that Mr. Trimble's views are over the top?

Spring We had an opportunity of discussing what was said and different things were said at different times, so I think what is most important is our first meeting, I must say was a very good meeting.

## Meeting between the Tánaiste and David Trimble, 23 October 1995

### Summary

The atmosphere was business like - neither warm, nor hostile. Discussion took the form of an exchange of views and was largely forward looking. The following is a brief summary of the main points put forward by the UUP side at the meeting. The Tánaiste's presentation in relation to these points reflected Government policy. A full report will follow.

#### *Twin Track proposals*

Serious problems. Will not accept a fudge on decommissioning. Unionists will make their own decisions.

Difficult to explain to supporters difference between preliminary and substantive talks. No time for twin-track to succeed because expect British General election to take place in October '96, and British politics to move into pre-electoral mode as from next spring. No possibility exists of serious talks before election.

#### *Assembly Proposals (as set out by Trimble)*

Assembly not an alternative to substantive negotiations and will not avoid question of decommissioning. It will simply allow for engagement while question of arms was being resolved.

Assembly will have to be based on 1982 Assembly Act, otherwise it will require months to establish. Assembly would not be an internal solution. It would not take on all the powers which could be devolved to it under the '82 Act. It would not be a negotiating convention - "a talking shop" - as proposed by the DUP. It would be debate and investigate. It could, for instance, set up an enquiry on possibilities for North-South cooperation. It could call witnesses and committees could carry out visits.

Advantage would be that DUP would come on board and UDP and PUP would have an opportunity to obtain a mandate.

Believe that there is some interest in SF, and that John Hume reacted in haste, believing that idea was an old one. Accept down side that elections might entrench positions, but better to know if there has been a shift in electorate.

(Maginnis admitted that he had doubts about the Assembly idea, but accepted "that's the way we're going".)

#### *Decommissioning (as addressed by Maginnis)*

No question of seeking surrender of IRA. Question is one of morality and principle. Haven't seen any move from SF since 31/8/95.

Want to see agreement with paramilitaries on decommissioning which covers: i) principle, ii) amounts of arms held, iii) modalities and iv) a schedule for decommissioning. (Maginnis hinted that, without committing Trimble, such an agreement might give some encouragement that the necessary commitment to peaceful means existed).

*Basis for a political settlement*

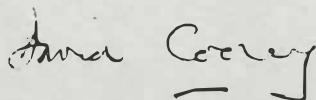
Maginnis said that nationalists could not regard concessions made by unionists in '92 as "banked". He also complained that Dublin sees Strands 2 and 3 as overriding Strand 1.

Trimble said that there would have to be a new groundwork for future substantive talks. Strands were taken in wrong order, last time. Not willing to negotiate in future on the basis that nothing agreed until everything is agreed.

*Anglo-Irish Secretariat*

Maginnis urged that the replacement of this "irritant" by some sort of direct relationship.

Responding to the Tánaiste's argument that this would not be acceptable to nationalists, Trimble said suggested that discussions aimed at a political settlement should not take place within Anglo Irish Intergovernmental Conference, but in some other format. He also demanded full consultation of unionists.



David Cooney

24 October 1995

cc PST, PSS, Second Secretary,  
Counsellors A-I, Section,  
Messrs Teahon, Murray, Donlon, Dalton,  
Ambassadors, Washington and London,  
Joint Secretary, Belfast.