



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/100/4

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**AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA**

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**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

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**Secure Fax**

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**To:** Mr. Paddy Tcahon  
**From:** Secretary Dermot Gallagher  
**Date:** 20 February 1998  
**Pages:** 1 + 1

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-- Phone call from Gary McMichael, UDP

-- *Redraft of Statement  
on Conclusions of Governments -*



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PSM; PSMs; PSSG;  
Messrs. Murray, Teahon,  
Mansergh & Dalton;  
Ambassadors London &  
Washington; Joint Secretary;  
Counsellors A-1

### Phone Call from Gary McMichael, UDP, 20 February 1998

McMichael phoned me at 10 am this morning in some excitement. He asked if it were true that the Governments had decided that Sinn Féin were to be expelled for a fixed period of three weeks. I replied that I was not in a position to comment on the terms of the determination.

He said that, if these suggestions were true, it would put his party in an impossible position. The messages that would be sent to loyalists were that the Governments were bowing to pressure from republicans; that Protestant lives were of less importance than those of Catholics; and that those who admitted responsibility were punished more severely than those who practised deceit.

He said that if the Governments were to proceed as suggested, the UDP might refuse to return to the negotiations and, if this were the case, they would call on other unionist parties to withdraw. He mentioned that, in any case, they had received no word on their readmission, next Monday. I suggested that they should hear something very soon. He repeated that they may not be able to return, even if invited.

Mc Michael did not specifically refer to any consequences for the UFF ceasefire, but I sensed that he was concerned on this point.

I rejected McMichael's interpretation of the reasoning behind any likely decision by the Governments to offer Sinn Féin a fixed term of expulsion, saying that any such decision, if taken, would be presented in the context of the approach of the endgame of the negotiations and the desire of the Governments to involve as many parties as possible in the final weeks. I said that there was no intention to seek to represent Sinn Féin as being somehow guilty of a lesser charge than the UDP.

McMichael replied that the logic of our position was that if the UFF went out and shot someone next week, the UDP would only serve two weeks. I said that the Governments did not envisage any further readmissions to the talks in the time available.

I undertook to take a note of what McMichael had told me. He asked that I ensure that his comments were passed on to political level, repeating that the Governments' likely determination would give rise to serious difficulties for his party.



David Cooney  
Department of Foreign Affairs

20 February 1998

**Draft**

**Statement on Conclusions of the Governments on the Position of Sinn Fein in the Talks**

The Governments have now finalised their conclusions in regard to the position of Sinn Fein in the Talks. The document setting out their conclusions will be circulated to the parties today and, once this has been done, will be made public.

Great care has been taken by the Governments in arriving at their conclusions. Against the background of the three-day session of the Talks in Dublin Castle this week, which allowed all parties, including Sinn Fein, the opportunity to state their views in full, the Governments wished to ensure that due process was done and seen to be done.

In the case of the UDP, and now in the case of Sinn Fein, the Governments have been prepared, in the interests of inclusivity and rapid progress in the Talks, to envisage a return to the Talks at an early stage. However, it will be clear that this approach could not be maintained in the event of further violence by organisations linked to parties in the Talks. The credibility of the process could not withstand such a further challenge. All parties should have no doubt about the two Governments' resolve in such circumstances.

In view of the nature of the procedures under which the Governments have made their determination on the case of Sinn Fein, they do not propose to comment further on its detail or outcome.



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DUBLIN 2**Secure Fax**

**To:** Mr. Paddy Teahon

**From:** Secretary Dermot Gallagher

**Date:** 20 February 1998

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-- To see the attached just received from Belfast

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**Secure Fax: 192****20 February 1998****No of pages including this one: 4****To: HQ  
For: Secretary Gallagher****From: Belfast  
From: Joint Secretary****Subj: Invitation to UDP to rejoin talks**

1. The British side have just supplied the attached draft of a letter from the two Governments to the UDP inviting them to rejoin the talks next Monday. The Secretary of State is anxious that this letter issue today.
2. We have also received the attached draft joint press statement.

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Mr Gary McMichael  
Leader of the Ulster Democratic Party  
36 Castle Street  
Lisburn  
County Antrim  
BT27 4XE

We are pleased, on behalf of both our Governments to invite the Ulster Democratic Party to rejoin the all-party negotiations.

On rejoining the negotiations, it will be necessary to re-affirm your party's total and absolute commitment to the Mitchell principles of democracy and non-violence. We would expect this to take place at the commencement of business on Monday 23 February; and will invite the Independent Chairmen to convene a plenary meeting for this purpose.

Yours sincerely

Dr Mo Mowlam MP  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

David Andrews  
Minister for Foreign Affairs

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**DRAFT JOINT PRESS STATEMENT**

The two Governments have always made it clear that we want to see a fully inclusive talks process. Equally all the parties must be around the table on the same basis - sharing a commitment to exclusively peaceful means and the democratic process.

In the light of information in their possession, confirmed by the UFF's statement admitting involvement in sectarian murders, the Governments sought the views of the other parties at Lancaster House on 26 January on the question of whether the UDP should be excluded from the negotiations. Later that day they determined that the UDP's commitment to the Mitchell Principles had been demonstrably dishonoured and that the UDP was therefore no longer entitled to participate in the negotiations.

The determination stated that, "If over a period of weeks a complete, unequivocal and unqualified UFF ceasefire were demonstrated, and established through words and deeds to have been fully and continually observed, the Governments would consider the possibility of the UDP rejoining the negotiations".

Paul Murphy MP held a meeting with a UDP delegation on 12 February to discuss their rejoining the process. In an interview after that meeting Gary McMichael stated that, "The UFF statement of 23 January was an unequivocal restoration of its ceasefire". Paul Murphy indicated following that meeting that the UDP could rejoin the process by the end of February if the evidence continued to be consistent with a complete, unequivocal and unqualified ceasefire by the UFF.

The two Governments are now satisfied that the existence of such a ceasefire has been demonstrated.

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Accordingly, they have therefore decided that, subject to events on the ground, the UDP should be invited to rejoin the talks process from Monday 23 February.

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