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ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Uimhir.....

NORTHERN IRELAND

Sir Robert Armstrong phoned me shortly after 1 p.m. today to say that the meeting between the Prime Minister and the Unionist Leaders had not gone too badly - It did not end in tears.

The Prime Minister had made it absolutely clear that the agreement was there and would stay. At the same time she said that the arrangements were open to some type of consultation if this could be devised.

She would go along with the idea of a round table on devolution - and would be very happy if, in fact, this occurred.

On the question of whether work at the round table or on devolution was going ahead, the Conference would be suspended, she had said "no". There were other parties to the arrangements and the effect on them of suspension would be to end all participations so far as they were concerned. At the same time, she said that she was prepared to see the Conference arrangements being implemented sensitively.

The participants went away, apparently to think further. One of them had been more extreme than the other. While the Prime Minister had agreed to see them again, if they wished, no time for this had been fixed.

Sir Robert said that he would be in touch with me again, later in the week, or early next week, to speak of further contacts if these should be seen to be necessary.

[Handwritten signature]

25.2.86.

Copy to Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Justice, Attorney General, Ambassador Dorr, Messrs. Ward, Donohoe, Russell and O'Tuathail

Michael Conroy
huk

A. Kuf 25.2.86

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