



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN, LONDAIN



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cc Tánaiste  
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Mr Nally  
A-I Section  
A-I Secretariat

13 February 1987

*W. Molyneux* *huse*  
*M. J. Carthy*

A Conversation with Ron Aitken, Political Adviser to Martin Smyth MP

*huse*  
19.2.87

Dear Assistant Secretary

Aitken receives an allowance from Martin Smyth and the OUP to be their only adviser at Westminster. He is something of a maverick having been first active as a SPUC organiser in Ireland during the anti-abortion campaign.

His principal loyalty is to Smyth who spends 2 or 3 days a week in Britain, giving speeches to low key student and minority groups. The major theme on these occasions reflects the line from Frank Millar in Belfast: 'When is the British Government going to do something for the reasonable OUP to stop it losing out to the nasty DUP?' No doubt this appeal is modeled on what Unionists consider to have been a successful tactic employed by the SDLP in relation to Sinn Fein. Aitken illustrates the danger by saying that Roy Beggs in East Antrim and Cecil Walker in North Belfast could loose to DUP challenges if the Election is much delayed; furthermore Kilfeddar could be vulnerable in North Down. If this were to happen the spectre of Brian Faulkner would haunt the party and undermine those in favour of power-sharing.

Aitken believes that Molyneaux, who has little else to do, will hold the leadership unless he is pushed. The heir--apparent is Smyth and he will not push Molyneaux because he privately believes that the leadership at present is a bed of nails. It was notable, Aitken said, that Smyth was included in the delegation to present the petition to the Queen where it had earlier been limited to Molyneaux, McCusker, Paisley, Robinson and Kilfeddar. (See press release attached - British journalists were not impressed by the stunt and N.I. Question Time threw out the notion of a referendum from all sides).

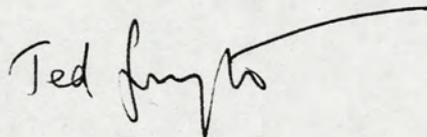
Paisley claimed at yesterday's Press Conference that No. 10 are very embarrassed by the petition. Aitken claims that Central Office is worried by a number of aspects of Unionist opposition pre-Election. First, there is the extra challenge to vulnerable Scottish seats; second they are worried by the vote at the recent Young Conservatives rally

(from which Aitken was excluded, he claims). Finally, even if Mrs Thatcher wins a majority of 30 this would leave her vulnerable to Unionist assault. (Comment: This seems a vain hope but may be an indication that Unionists are beginning to recognise the unlikelihood of a hung Parliament).

Aitken hopes that a victory for Fianna Fail will at least take some of the steam out of the Agreement and give the OUP a respite. Interestingly enough, he began to talk in terms of what arrangement (he did not specify suspension etc.) could trigger inter party talks in N.I. and then trigger power sharing. Failing that what arrangements could trigger an OUP return to Westminster (the integration scenario).

It is hard to know to what extent Aitken echoes his master's thinking. He is something of a headbanger but it is probably worthwhile remaining in contact with him.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted Smyth". The signature is written in dark ink and has a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Ted Smyth  
Press & Information Officer

Mr Eamon O'Tuathail  
Assistant Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
DUBLIN 2



The Rt. Hon. James Molyneaux, JP., MP.

LEADER — THE ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY

House of Commons,  
London, SW1A 0AA.

Unionists accept the sovereignty of the Crown in Parliament.

The two Houses of Parliament separately approved the Anglo Irish Agreement but did not attempt to legislate thereon.

When, in the late 1970s, Parliament did legislate to produce an unique method of governing Scotland and Wales, Parliament also insisted that those two areas be given the opportunity to indicate by referendum whether they accepted the proposed structures. Naturally only the electors of Scotland and Wales could vote in the referendum. The electors in England and Northern Ireland were excluded as their forms of Government were not being altered.

There is a related point, the elected representatives of Scotland and Wales had been consulted before that legislation was brought forward and the Bills debated at great length.

But when in 1985 Her Majesty's Government engaged in negotiation with the Irish Republic, the elected representatives were totally excluded. On 14 November, 1985, three Ministers in the House of Commons denied that agreement had been reached. We now know it had been reached three days earlier and Northern Ireland Members were presented with a fait accompli.

Our respectful plea to Her Majesty is that arrangements be now made for a Referendum to ascertain whether the joint authority

/structure

structure is acceptable to the people of Northern Ireland.

The plea comes from over 400,000 electors in Northern Ireland. That is forty per cent of the electorate. Forty per cent of the United Kingdom electorate would be 16,000,000.

As the present Government was elected by only 13,000,000, its authority is based upon only 30% of the electors of the United Kingdom.

We trust that Her Majesty's Government will now act in the true traditions of democracy and submit the Anglo Irish Agreement to the test of the ballot box.

We, the Unionist representatives, will say 'yes' to the verdict of the ballot box.

12 February, 1987.