



**An Chartlann Náisiúnta**  
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1. Note on Responsibility for Northern Ireland affairs and staffing in Northern Ireland Division

1. Since 1969, successive Taoisigh have indicated, in reply to Parliamentary Questions, that policy on Northern Ireland is primarily the responsibility of the Taoiseach. The most recent reply was on 27 April, 1993. However, since the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, an inevitable distinction has been apparent between the role of the Taoiseach and that of the Minister for Foreign Affairs given the latter's responsibility for implementation of the Agreement.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs takes the lead role in the operational implementation of policy and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and of Anglo-Irish relations generally. That Department supplies much of the information and analyses, from contacts and otherwise, that are the raw material of the policy formulation process. The Taoiseach, however, holds primary responsibility in terms of overall policy, as he does in relation to other major policy areas. The Taoiseach and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, together with their respective Departments, work in the closest co-operation.

2. Note on staffing in Northern Ireland and International Affairs Division  
The Northern Ireland and International Affairs Division at the Department of the Taoiseach is headed by the Assistant Secretary to the Government. The Division reports directly to the Secretary to the Government and has a full-time staff compliment of one Principal Officer, one Higher Executive Officer, one Clerical Officer and one Clerical Assistant.

jc 30/4

## 2. SUMMARY OF HUME'S ADDRESS TO SDLP ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

In his keynote address to the SDLP Party Conference on Saturday, John Hume made the following key points.

1. 'The key to peace ... now exists. John Major is in possession of that key'. Therefore, he must 'turn that key and open the door to our new future, based on agreement and respect for diversity'. To this end, the British Government 'should positively commit themselves to actively promoting with the Irish Government agreement among the divided people of Ireland, an agreement which must earn the allegiance and agreement of all traditions and respect their diversity'.
2. 'Both Governments should make clear that whatever agreement emerges will be endorsed by them and they will take the necessary legal and constitutional steps to implement it. They should also take the necessary steps to create the framework in which such an agreement can take place'.
3. 'The people of Ireland as a whole have the right to self-determination'. His talks with Gerry Adams focused upon 'how the right is to be exercised and it is the search for agreement and the means of reaching it on which our talks are concentrating'.
4. Unionists are entitled to insist that any new relationships within Ireland must have majority agreement within Northern Ireland.
5. Unionists must have the self-confidence to negotiate an agreement with the rest of the people on this island - 'their real guarantee is their numbers and their geography and the problem cannot be solved without them'.
6. The North-South relationship was central to any new agreement. 'Until that relationship is settled, to the satisfaction of the people of the North, as well as the South, nothing will work'. It should therefore be 'the priority of any government or indeed any party that seeks a lasting solution'.

JHC 30/11

### 3. SUMMARY OF PAISLEY'S ADDRESS TO THE DUP ANNUAL PARTY CONFERENCE

In his keynote address to the DUP Party Conference on Saturday, the Rev Ian Paisley made the following main points:

- Dublin could have 'no involvement in the North's internal affairs' and Mr. Major should 'have the guts and the resolution to stand up to Dublin'.
- The current Anglo-Irish process was 'the greatest threat to the union since the Home Rule crisis'.
- John Major is 'doing dirty deals behind our backs'. He has entered 'into cahoots with the Taoiseach, Tánaiste, Cardinal and every other offspring of the IRA republican beast'.
- Hume, Adams and Dublin want 'a united Ireland or nothing'. All their 'platitudes' amount to hypocrisy, lying and doublespeak. Unionists 'have seen 80 per cent of the Protestant population eliminated in the Irish Republic, and they are well aware the same fate awaits them if they allow themselves to be cajoled into a country which refuses to enter the 20th century'.
- On the Irish Government's leaked draft document on Northern Ireland, he said: 'Anybody who expected any unionist to find anything acceptable in the document would be out of his senses'.
- Molyneaux's call in the House of Commons for the establishment of an Assembly in Northern Ireland had narrowed the gap between the two unionist parties.

jc 30/11

1. Summary of "The Observer" report on British contacts with the IRA

- On Sunday, The Observer newspaper, quoting from "an authoritative British source" said that "a secret communication chain has been running between the [British] Government and the IRA with the Prime Minister's approval". This communication channel is essentially "a message delivery service run by unofficial intermediaries". These included "clergymen, professionals and businessmen". The source "emphatically denied direct government involvement" though "Martin McGuinness and others have said that a civil servant was used".
  
- According to The Observer report, "the chain of contacts eventually led to a key meeting with Mr. [Martin] McGuinness just after the Warrington bombing on 20 March, when both sides exchanged formal position papers". In the context of this meeting, The Observer reproduces an aide-memoire which it claims was delivered orally to Martin McGuinness. Also handed over was "a written document, Annexe C". These documents, according to the newspaper were leaked via "a Unionist MP" who identified himself in a radio interview on Sunday as the Rev. William McCrea.
  
- The transcripts published in The Observer "set out the parameters of Britain's position". The British Government recognise that "this process is fraught with danger" but "are nevertheless prepared to tackle these and accept the risks that they entail". However, subsequent "acts of [IRA] violence could only enhance these [risks] quite conceivably to the point [where] the British

Government would consider that a potentially historic opportunity had been squandered". The transcript continues: "As it [Annexe C] makes clear, we wish to establish whether this provides a basis for a way forward. We on our side are ready to answer specific questions or give explanations." The transcript also states that "the above has been personally approved by SOSNI [Secretary of State for Northern Ireland]."

jc <sup>24</sup>/<sub>11</sub>

## 2. Reaction to "The Observer" report from the British Government and Sinn Féin

- On Saturday night, the Northern Ireland Office issued a statement which contained the following key points:
  - (1) "No one has been authorised to conduct talks or negotiations on behalf of the Government with the Provisionals, Sinn Féin or any other organisation perpetrating or supporting violence for political ends".
  - (2) "At the end of February this year, a message was passed onto the Government from the IRA leadership. It was to the effect that the conflict was over but they needed our advice as to the means of bringing it to a close."
  - (3) "The Government accordingly responded" and the response stipulated that "there had first of all to be a genuine end to violence". The response "also repeated the constitutional guarantee".
  - (4) "The IRA have not delivered the ending of violence envisaged in their original approach."
- Sir Patrick Mayhew said on Sunday that the IRA message "came by a channel of communication or chain of communication that has been in place for some years". He said however that "no negotiation" had taken place.

- On the same day (Sunday), Gerry Adams directly contradicted much of the NIO statement and Sir Patrick Mayhew's comments.

(1) John Major "authorised" the process and "outlines of policy were exchanged and discussed."

(2) There had been a process of "dialogue and contact" between the British Government and Sinn Féin - not the IRA. The British Government initiated this process.

(3) At no point was there any communication from the IRA that the "conflict is over".

- Speaking in the House of Commons yesterday, Sir Patrick Mayhew said its 'chain of communication' to the IRA remained open. He confirmed that the British Government had been prepared to enter 'exploratory talks' with Sinn Féin 'within a week of the parliament's return in January '1994. But this was conditional upon the IRA giving 'an unequivocal assurance that violence has indeed been brought to a permanent end!

- Sinn Féin described Sir Patrick's statement and subsequent documents disclosed by NIO as counterfeit and bogus.

Jgc <sup>39</sup>/<sub>11</sub>