

AN RÚNAÍOCHT ANGLA-ÉIREANNACH

BÉAL FEIRSTE

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BBC Radio Ulster "Inside Politics", 3 December 1994
Interview with DUP Leader the Rev. Ian Paisley

INTRODUCTION: As 1994 draws to a close it must certainly be remembered as an historic year in the affairs of Northern Ireland. Indeed in the final month of this dramatic year political developments are happening which less than 12 months ago would have appeared almost impossible. Next Wednesday representatives of the British Government and Sinn Fein will meet together for exploratory talks designed to lead to the full inclusion of Sinn Fein in the political process. The symbolism of the venue for those discussions in Parliament Buildings at Stormont is striking. For Republicans it represents everything they have opposed for 70 years. It will be the first time any member of Sinn Fein has set foot in the building. Efforts to exclude Sinn Fein from the Investment Conference in Belfast later this month have also been reversed under what is believed to have been American pressure. On Wednesday the Secretary of State said it would be premature to invite the party to the Conference before talks take place. Only a day later the talks date was announced along with a compromise on Sinn Fein's attendance at the Conference. (4) Councillors from Belfast and Londonderry have now been invited. Those moves by the British Government have caused disquiet in many sections of the Unionist community occurring as they did in a week when the Prime Minister John Major's dependence on Ulster Unionists support in the House of Commons became even more vital to him than ever. The removal of the Whip from his party's Euro rebels now leaves him technically the leader of a minority administration and looking for cooperative friends. This is likely to further strengthen the undoubtedly warm relationship between the Prime Minister and the Ulster Unionist Party Leader James Molyneaux. Despite nervous signs from some of his party colleagues Mr Molyneaux still

appears relaxed about the long term intentions of the British Government. The same cannot be said of the DUP leader Ian Paisley who in stark contrast to Mr Molyneaux has absolutely no relationship with John Major. Furthermore relations between the DUP and UUP leaders are noticeably distant and cold. Today Dr Paisley has been addressing his party's annual conference. On the face of it the DUP are politically more isolated than ever but this is undoubtedly a game of high stakes and there is still some considerable distance to go. When I spoke to him yesterday I first put it to him that his opposition to talks between the British Government and Sinn Fein was having no effect and that his party was now the only voice against that process.

Dr Paisley: I don't of course accept that. What do you mean by isolation? Do you mean that I have absolutely no support on the ground?

Interviewer: You are the only party who are now opposing the Government talking to Sinn Fein?

Dr Paisley: Well as we happen to be the largest Unionist Party in the last election that means that the majority of people who accept that what I said at the election and voted for me and the many who have joined our ranks since that have proved that we are not in a minority position at all and shall I say to you that when people are advocating betrayal and surrender and a voice is raised loud and strong against it, to say that that voice is an isolated voice. Then I suppose you could have said that Churchill's voice was isolated when he raised his voice against Germany. But he was right and at the end of the day his was not an isolated voice, his was a voice that carried the vast majority of the British people. I am convinced that I am speaking for the vast majority of the Unionist electors in Northern Ireland.

Interviewer: The Government has done a U-turn just in the last few days. How much does that damage their case do you think?

Dr Paisely: Well the fact that the Government are doing U-turns all the time proves that this Government will stand up to no pressure at all. They are not capable of resisting pressure from Republican sources. Now the Secretary of State made it clear that they would not be inviting Sinn Fein or Sinn Fein members to the Economic Conference. It was on that basis and the basis that there was to be no interference from Dublin at the Conference that we accepted the invitation to go to the Conference. Then he said that he had changed that because he felt that the two major councils, that their committees should be invited but he didn't invite the committees to be represented, he invited every individual in the committee in order to get Sinn Fein in by the back door. For instance the committee in the City Hall would not have appointed the Sinn Feiners to be there so here we have the Secretary of State doing a U-turn, not only doing a U-turn but acting in deceit in order to achieve his ends and the Conference is manipulated and controlled and dominated and dictated to by Washington and I will be no party to any such Conference that is dictated to by Washington and I might say that the leaders of commerce here should be very careful because the leaders of commerce are dependent on the goodwill of the people of Ulster and the if the leaders of commerce are prepared to become mere puppets of Mr Clinton and the Republican lobby from Boston and Washington then they may find themselves at odds with the people that they depend on. We cannot be bought by American money and in fact what is more, the mere pittance of their contribution to the Ireland Fund, the mere pittance of it, and the mere pittance of what they can do for us directly makes me feel that there is a con trick going on and you would think to read the Press and to take cognisance of the media that America was subsidising our country to the tunes of millions and millions, which is not so. We are receiving far more and will receive far more from the Economic Union. I was with Mr Delors yesterday and spoke to him about this matter and we will be receiving far more from the Economic Union, properly monitored with the consultation of the three European MPs at it and not a fund set-up completely unanswerable to anybody but themselves and

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this ex-Senator who has been appointed is the envoy. They can call him what he likes and what we are having here we are being treated like a third world country with a mighty American waving the green dollar in his hand saying I am coming over to tell you what to do. My party will have nothing to do with the US Envoy. We repudiate his right to come to Northern Ireland and interfere in the internal affairs of Northern Ireland.

Interviewer: You say you wont be attending the Conference. Can we expect though that your party will picket that Conference given the presence of Sinn Fein?

Dr Paisley: I think you just have to wait an see what my party does and you will just have to wait until the time comes. But in no way are we going to be forced. My members are forced to sit down in Councils with Sinn Fein because that is the only way that they can have their representation, given to them by the people, represented. They have disassociated themselves completely from those men of blood in the Councils and they have adopted that attitude ever since those Sinn Feiners got into the Councils. In fact Mr Molyneaux and myself issued a document which both of us declared war on Sinn Fein in the Council. Mr Molyneaux of course has given up that because he has said yesterday in the press that as long as they were elected representatives he would be quite happy for them to be at the Economic Conference and then he tells us in the next breath that the Economic Conference is our Forum. There is a great difference between a Nationalist Forum in Dublin and a Forum at which the representatives of the men of blood are going to be in session, that is another sham completely. This is not a Unionist Forum that has been set up. This is a Forum to try and buy and bribe and deceive the people of Ulster holding out at the end of the day more jobs for them and I don't think they will bring one useful job to NI.

Interviewer: You talk there of the Secretary of State Patrick Mayhew being deceitful. You have been offered a meeting and have

conceded that the meeting was a meeting which the Prime Minister made to us in response to the letter that I wrote to him and I think that it was our duty to accept that invitation made through the Prime Minister for the Secretary of State to meet us and we have no part in the Ancram talks. We never had and never will have a part in those talks. But we certainly are going to put the case for consent for that is the most vital case. But our meeting is to take place early next week. But the Secretary of State is having a lot of difficulties with his diary. Well that is his business, I am not saying that this is done purposely, on purpose or not. But I just want to say that it is not us that is holding up the meeting. He is holding up the meeting and that meeting of course will be our post box directly to the Prime Minister and of course the Prime Minister is going to be forced eventually to see us. I mean he can't do anything else. But of course if he doesn't want to see the elected representatives of 30% of the people of Northern Ireland, that is his business. If he would rather send love letters through his office to the men of blood who have only 11% of the electorate, that is his business too.

Dr Paisley: Well that meeting was a meeting which the Prime Minister made to us in response to the letter that I wrote to him and I think that it was our duty to accept that invitation made through the Prime Minister for the Secretary of State to meet us and we have no part in the Ancram talks. We never had and never will have a part in those talks. But we certainly are going to put the case for consent for that is the most vital case. But our meeting is to take place early next week. But the Secretary of State is having a lot of difficulties with his diary. Well that is his business, I am not saying that this is done purposely, on purpose or not. But I just want to say that it is not us that is holding up the meeting. He is holding up the meeting and that meeting of course will be our post box directly to the Prime Minister and of course the Prime Minister is going to be forced eventually to see us. I mean he can't do anything else. But of course if he doesn't want to see the elected representatives of 30% of the people of Northern Ireland, that is his business. If he would rather send love letters through his office to the men of blood who have only 11% of the electorate, that is his business too.

Interviewer: The publication of the Framework Document. Now this is something that has been running on for about six months now. It was originally to be ready early in the summer. It is now possibly going to be the new year. Wont the publication of that Framework Document indicate who is right about whether the Union is safe or not?

Dr Paisley: Well first of all the shenanigans in Dublin has exposed the rottenest of the whole political system in the Irish Republic and more and more everyday the hidden things of darkness are coming to light and that murky relationship between the Roman Catholic authorities and the Dublin Government and the fact that

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the Dublin government has been a mere puppet of the Church to be moved across the chess board by the hand of the hierarchy is proved every day more and more and those people who were reckoned to be Protestant bigots who dare to say these things now can only refer people to the press where a press that castigated me for being a bigot and Protestant now is exposing the very things that I have been exposing for years and the power of the hierarchy in the system of Government in the South. Secondly, could I say that the Framework Document has been leaked largely from the South of Ireland and I don't think that the Dublin Government has even said that anything that appeared in the recent Irish Times exposure was wrong and it is quite clear from that the British Government has backed away from Articles 2 and 3. They are not going to insist that both Articles go. Now they are going to allow them to retain their main claim that the whole National territory is the whole of this island.

Interviewer: Having said that though if as a result of the Framework Document in terms of Strand I there is the setting up of an 85 member Assembly. Given that all of this is taking place within the confines of the three Stranded process will the DUP take its seats in a new Assembly?

Dr Paisley: Well the first thing is this here that the fact that you say that you are giving a lie to what the Secretary of State has said. For he said that this Framework Document would have nothing to do with Strand I. It is part of Strand I. I have said that you are absolutely right. They have included Strand I in their secret negotiations with the South of Ireland. Having said that the South of Ireland will have no part or lot in the internal running of Northern Ireland. They spent all this time talking in secret and preparing a Framework Document that has everything to do with Strand I. So they have sold the people of Northern Ireland out of that one anyway. Mr Molyneaux is saying that there cannot be any betrayal and we shouldn't speak in those terms when we have a betrayal already because the Framework Document is actually dealing with the Agenda of Strand I which

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was only to be dealt with by the elected representatives of Northern Ireland and the British Government. That is the first issue. The second issue is if there is an election to any Assembly here we will be fighting it. We will give the people of Northern Ireland their right to be represented there and we will use our position in that Assembly to destroy that Assembly. Provided that Assembly is what you say it is going to be a puppet of the Framework Document and a puppet of Dublin.

Interviewer: Well I am not suggesting that it is going to be a puppet of the Framework Document. What I am saying is that although the Government will be publishing separate proposals it is within the three stranded process?

Dr Paisley: Well if there going to have an Assembly in Northern Ireland outside Strand 2 and 3 as an internal settlement then that would be in keeping with the proposals that we put at the last talks and the proposals that were largely agreed with by all four parties until John Hume pulled his members out of the Committee that agreed them. And I mean that was a clearly an Assembly that dealt with matters relevant to the internal affairs of Northern Ireland. Are we going to have that I would welcome that. But I don't think we are going to have that I think we are going to have a puppet Assembly which has already being planned by Dublin and which we have no say over whatsoever. But the Framework Document could be diluted in such way that one would be left guessing exactly what the Governments were up to.

Interviewer: But in terms of the overall political settlement that will be proposed. There will have to be according to Dublin some form of meaningful cross-border institutions with executive powers. They have left very little room for manoeuvre on that. Will you operate an Assembly where such a system exists?

Dr Paisley: No we wouldn't be operating anything to do with cross-border bodies with executive power. I see that Mr Nicholson, the Chairman of the Executive of the Unionist Party,

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actually agreed that they would do it. But we will not be working that and the Unionists Party has done so many U-turns on these things and actually the document which I refreshed myself with last night actually, which Mr ^{Maguire} McGuinness put on table. Yes they were prepared to have cross border bodies with executive power. We would not work those bodies at all and we would make it most difficult for people from Northern Ireland to work them.

Interviewer: So essentially what you are saying is that if we are dealing still with a 3 Stranded process and if the Assembly in your view is part of that 3 Stranded process you will try to wreck the Assembly?

Dr Paisley: If the Assembly is part of a 3 Stranded process to put us into an all Ireland situation, of course we will be totally against it. But we will fight seats on it and take our seats and do what we can to destroy the end which is of course they are trying to destroy Northern Ireland and we are going to protect the interests of the people of Northern Ireland.

Interviewer: At the moment there is a great deal of discussion about the policing issue. The SDLP for instance has a strong bodied opinion there that at the end of this process when everything is agreed that the RUC, in the words of Alex Attwood, will not have that name, will not have that uniform and will not have that role?

Dr Paisley: Yes well I mean they have appointed a Chairman to the Police Authority who is dedicated to change the police. We have heard his statements. I heard one of them today and he is going to do that change. They have changed the appointments to the Police Authority and they have refused to have elected representatives on the Police Authority and they have actually of course refused to have the representatives of the Police Federation of the Police Authority and well it is done across the water and what I am saying is this: The matter of that concern is a matter for the elected representatives of the people of

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Northern Ireland and the Assembly would have to be the Police Authority. The elected representatives of the people of Northern Ireland would have to be the Police Authority and the agitation that we are now having which has been aided and abetted by the British Government by their new appointee and parrot of the police authority that that objective we would be out to defeat. Because I believe there is only one way to police Northern Ireland and that is by a United Police Force and to say that though community policing simply means that you would have ex IRA men or IRA men or full paid up members of Sinn Fein policing parts of Northern Ireland and I know what sort of policing that would be.

Interviewer: Dr. Paisley, thank you.

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