



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/97/12

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Taoiseach  
to Mr M.

Mr Hyde S.12  
Mr Larkin  
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TAOISEACHS MEETING WITH REV ROY MAGEE,  
GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS, 12 JANUARY 1995.

1. Welcoming Rev Magee, the Taoiseach said that the Government were anxious to make the peace process work. He asked Rev Magee for his assessment of the current situation.
2. Rev Magee said that there was an urgent need to deal with the underlying cause of the conflict, and to move ahead from the issues such as the reopening of cross border roads etc which, while important, did not get to the root of the problem. He described this as the conflicting allegiances of the two communities in Northern Ireland. To deal with this, he was proposing a conflict resolution programme. Such programmes existed in Britain and the US but he felt it might be insensitive to use these - Scandinavia would be a more acceptable place from which to draw a professional team which would attempt to move the two sides together.
3. In response to a question from the Taoiseach, Rev Magee said that he could not envisage the PUP and the UDP merging to form one party. Their ideology was different - the PUP were strongly socialist whereas the UDP were not. His own conclusion was that both parties would have to integrate into the main Unionist parties. There was optimism in both groups about their prospects in future elections in Northern Ireland but he thought that this was misplaced.
4. Rev Magee said that it was important to understand that unionists and loyalists perceived that British Ministers had no electoral mandate in Northern Ireland. They wanted their own legislature there and if they had this it would be easier for them to accept cross border institutions. The Taoiseach indicated that a role for a Northern Ireland assembly in cross border structures had been taken on board in discussions on the Framework Document. Stressing that the terminology of cross border

structures was important. Rev Magee said that there were many areas where co-operation was obvious and there would be no problem with these. The use of the term "executive", however, had meant that some extreme elements were able to get a hearing.

5. As regards the position of the Loyalist paramilitaries, Rev Magee said that they did not wish to go back to violence but there were pockets of unease about the ceasefire - the DUP were of course cranking it up on a regular basis. It was important to realise that most of those who had been involved in loyalist violence had no jobs and no profile in their communities now that violence had ceased. There was always the danger that they would revert to violence/crime. This problem can only be dealt with by establishing resettlement offices where these people could be trained and re-educated. There was a small example of this in the Lower Shankhill where an office set up by the UDP had been very successful in exposing former paramilitaries to political action. The Parole Board had thought well of the idea of resettlement office but the proposal had not made much progress.
  
6. The Taoiseach said that the Framework Document would be the next big issue to be faced as would the question of prisoner releases. Agreeing with this, Rev Magee said it was important not to suggest that an amnesty was involved. The emphasis should be on phased releases and quicker use of normal release mechanisms. He had made this point to the British and while he felt that some Ministers were willing to move there was still opposition to it. On the weapons question, Rev Magee said that this had to be addressed. The fact that the INLA were not on board on the peace process created a problem for Loyalist paramilitaries. He had put proposals to them on the weapons question. But the reality was that, in his view, that the INLA were still "in a state of war". Concluding his remarks, he said that in the event of a breakdown of the ceasefire there would have to be fairly positive measures taken to end paramilitary violence. The reality was that the those involved were known to the authorities.

7. The Taoiseach expressed his thanks to Rev Magee who readily agreed to further meetings at any time in the future.



Brian McCarthy  
13 January 1995

- cc Mr Proinsias de Rossa, Minister for Social Welfare  
✓ Mr Paddy Teahon, Secretary, Department of Taoiseach  
✓ Mr Frank Murray, Secretary to Government  
Mr Tim Dalton, Secretary, Department of Justice  
Mr Sean O'hUiginn, Second Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs