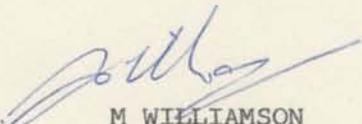


CONFIDENTIALNOTE FOR THE RECORDCHAIRMAN'S MEETING WITH DR PAISLEY - WEDNESDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 1975: 10.15 - 10.45 AM

1. Dr Paisley came to meet the Chairman at the latter's request. The Chairman referred to the undoubted influence which Dr Paisley exerted in Northern Ireland affairs and to his particular personality and suggested that these could well be a key to the present situation and certainly were the reasons for their present chat. He queried whether what he had been saying over the past days did, in fact, appear to Dr Paisley to make sense.
2. Dr Paisley confirmed that it did but said that the question of power sharing with SDLP was one of conscience and of principle. He had no objection to Roman Catholics as such. He did have objections to republicans.
3. The Chairman pointed out that what was being suggested was not imposed power sharing for he realised nothing could be done at the expense of a genuine scruple. What, he wondered, did a Roman Catholic SDLP member have to do to square himself with Dr Paisley's conscience in order to serve in a British-style coalition. Dr Paisley replied:-
 - i. the abandonment of Irish passports and the proper use of British passports;
 - ii. total and unconditional support for the RUC and Security Forces which was not to be interpreted that SDLP should not seek to change the structure of the RUC or to have any particular safeguards attached to the Force by way of special committees;
 - iii. the taking of an acceptable Oath of Allegiance.
4. The Chairman posed the question: What would be Dr Paisley's reaction if SDLP told the Irish Government in public that they should repeal Articles 2 and 3 of the Republic's Constitution? Dr Paisley replied that this would be marvellous even if it did not come about. It would be better than anything achieved under Sunningdale.
5. The Chairman made a point that there was a limit to how much SDLP can, in fact, do but if they could do sufficient to enable him and his colleagues to accept them as upholders of the institutions of the State would that not help? Dr Paisley was inclined to agree and felt that if the present proposals were put to the country and the country was in favour, that would be another matter. He knew that Bill Craig was very keen on the matter but UUUC as a party had been very cross about the insertion of paragraph 8 into the policy document.
6. The meeting was most cordial and Dr Paisley undertook to come back for a further discussion on some of the matters which had arisen. He further agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that no one should rush off and take a unilateral line in public on the present discussions.



M WILLIAMSON

4 September 1975**CONFIDENTIAL**