



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/97/36

**Creator(s):** Department of the Taoiseach

**Accession Conditions:** Open

**Copyright:** National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

## PERSONAL FOR THE TAOISEACH

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

27

THE PRIME MINISTER

5 September 1995

When we spoke this morning, I thought we were close to agreement on the way ahead. However, from the texts we have since received and your position as reported by Paddy Teahon, I fear that is far from the case. There now appear to be serious differences over a number of the points on which I thought we had agreed. In particular:

The status of the Chilcot/Dalton Report: Patrick Mayhew discussed the Chilcot/Dalton Report of 17 August with Dick Spring. They had the text in front of them. I understand they agreed that its essential points, including the description of the task and terms of reference, held good and provided the basis for the International Commission. But Paddy Teahon has told Roderic Lyne this afternoon that this is not your position. You will recall that I referred to the Chilcot/Dalton Report only this morning, as part of my understanding of the ground on which we both stood.

The number of Commissioners: in our conversations last week, I told you that we could not agree to reduce the number of Commissioners to only one, from the 3-5 recommended by Chilcot and Dalton. I explained why at some length. I had assumed from

5-SEP-95 TUE 17:39

P. 02

**PERSONAL FOR THE TAOISEACH**

- 2 -

the fact that you did not raise this suggestion again in our conversations last night and this morning - and from Patrick Mayhew's conversation with Dick Spring yesterday - that you had accepted that the position should remain as in Chilcot/Dalton. I would be content to settle on three Commissioners. As I have told you, I think this essential if we are to ensure that the Commission has the necessary balance and spread of expertise to carry credibility. It would not be right to expect one person, whoever he might be, to bear the sole responsibility for the Commission's recommendations; and I am certain that this would not command the wide support which the Commission will need.

Criteria for progress over decommissioning: a week ago, we accepted in a telephone conversation that at this stage the two Governments did not have a common position on the third of the criteria which Patrick Mayhew set out in Washington and on many other occasions. We also agreed that this should not prevent us from moving the process forward through the "twin-track" initiative. The draft proposals accommodated the views of both Governments on this point. I made clear that we would have to say, when asked, that there had been no change in our view - i.e. that to implement paragraph 10 of the Downing Street Declaration and create the conditions necessary for substantive all-party talks on a future settlement, a process of decommissioning would need to have been agreed and to have started. I did not ask you to subscribe to this view in any of the Summit documents, but I explained that it was a point of fundamental importance for the British Government, as also for a number of the parties.

## PERSONAL FOR THE TAOISEACH

- 3 -

I told you this morning that, while the third condition was not a point at issue for this Summit, we would have to make it clear, when asked, that we stood by this point. However, I understand that you take exception to the fact that Patrick Mayhew did precisely this yesterday; and it is being suggested that this was somehow incompatible with the agreement that we had in mind.

I understand that at the moment it is necessary for you to request a postponement of the Summit for the reasons you set out yesterday evening. Although I regret the necessity for this, I am of course ready to agree. But I don't think I can credibly set a date for another Summit if matters previously agreed are now called in question. Given the time constraints, I think the present circumstances would best be handled by your announcing in Dublin that you had requested a postponement and that we had agreed. I gather that the Irish media are already carrying reports of a postponement and preparing evening programmes about it.

I hope that we can resolve the outstanding points very speedily, but I don't think it would make sense to set fresh dates for the Summit until we have come closer to agreement again than we have been over the past few hours. Perhaps the best course would be for our personal representatives to meet privately and review the present situation.

I am sorry that all the progress we have made over the past weeks should have stalled on the eve of the Summit, and I look forward to hearing your views as soon as possible.

Mr John Bruton TD

*Yours Truly,*  
*[Signature]*

5-SEP-95 TUE 17:40

P. 04