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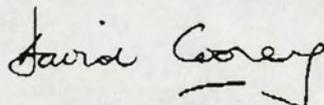
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ConfidentialSenator Mitchell's meeting with David Trimble, 22 July 1997

1. Senator Mitchell rang me this evening to give me a read-out of his meeting with David Trimble which took place at 6pm. He said that it had been a good meeting, lasting about half an hour. He said that Trimble's stated purpose for the meeting was that the Governments' decommissioning proposals assigned a great deal of authority to the Chairman in making particular judgements and that Trimble had wanted to ask him about the execution of these responsibilities.
2. In the event, the meeting had focused on tomorrow's Plenary and the implications of the vote on the Governments' proposals. Trimble had indicated that he expected all the amendments and proposals before the Plenary to be rejected. Senator Mitchell said that he had asked Trimble whether he would prefer the vote on the Governments' proposals to be delayed. Trimble had replied that he didn't really care whether or not the vote was delayed; he would not be pushing for it. Trimble had told the Senator that he would not be present for the votes, and that the UUP would be represented by Reg Empey.
3. Senator Mitchell said that he had asked Trimble whether, in the case of their being no sufficient consensus on item 2, he would be prepared to proceed to items 3 and 4. Trimble had replied in the negative, saying that these matters should await a resolution on the decommissioning issue.
4. Trimble had told Senator Mitchell that he believed that the Governments would want to revisit decommissioning and to come back in September with new proposals.
5. Senator Mitchell said that he had reminded Trimble of the Governments' determination to move to substantive talks on 15 September and that, for that reason, he intended to reconvene the Plenary during the week before that. Trimble had responded by saying that if the two Governments went down that route they would have to proceed according to one of two choices. They could either establish an entirely new process or proceed on the basis of bilaterals. Apparently Trimble had remarked that Paisley had shown some enthusiasm for the idea of bilaterals and Trimble had taken this as a sign that Paisley wanted to stay with the negotiations.

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6. As regards arrangements for tomorrow, Trimble had suggested that, following the votes, the Plenary should be adjourned until Monday of next week, so as to allow participants time to reflect on the most appropriate way forward.



David Cooney

22 July 1997