



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/99/21

**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.

Copy.

PSM; PSMOS; PSS;  
S/S Gallagher; Mr Teahon;  
Mr Dalton; Dr Mansergh;  
Ambassadors Ottawa and  
Helsinki; Counsellors A-I Div.  
Section; Box

①  
②

Confidential

Secretary of State's meeting with David Trimble - 16 September 1997

David Hill rang me last night to brief me on the outcome of yesterday evening's meeting between the Secretary of State and David Trimble. Trimble was accompanied by Ken Maginnis, Jeffrey Donaldson, Reg Empey, Anthony Alcock and David Kerr. Hill described the meeting as difficult, and said that the Secretary of State had been disappointed with the outcome.

Trimble had given no undertakings on the likely timing of his entry into substantive negotiations. As regards today, he had indicated that there were a number of other issues to which he had to attend, including catching up on some sleep! Hill, for his part, speculated that Trimble might turn up at Castle Buildings today for a bilateral meeting; that he might enter the Plenary next week to prosecute his claim that Sinn Féin should be ejected from the talks; and that he might support a procedural motion to enter substantive negotiations sometime thereafter.

Comments in the draft procedural motion

While recognising that the Governments had gone to some length to adopt their proposed language on decommissioning, the UUP had a number of difficulties with the latest draft (16 September 17.45) of the procedural motion. They are to come back today with written amendments. The following are the main points:

- (i) They are not prepared to accept this paragraph, which is drawn from the Downing Street Declaration. Amongst other things, they have a fundamental objection as Unionists to the term "people of Ireland".
- (ii) They are also unhappy with this paragraph (which is taken from the text of paragraph 1 of the Ground Rules), particularly the commitment "to agree new structures and institutions to take account of the totality of relationships".
- (iii) They indicated their support for an amendment put forward by the UDP which would require that while any agreed outcome of the negotiations would be put to

referendums North and South, only approval in the Northern referendum was required for ratification of the agreement. (I had already indicated to Hill earlier in the afternoon that this proposal was unacceptable to us. I now suggested to him that if the UUP could not accept paragraphs (I) and (ii), there might be a case for stripping out from the procedural motion all paragraphs which were not strictly relevant to the items on the agenda of the opening Plenary, including paragraph (iii).)

(iv) 2(a) First indent

The UUP now want to delete the words "noting that not all delegations have had this matter addressed to their satisfaction" which they put forward earlier in the day. They claim to have realised that such language would violate an agreement which they have with the DUP?

Second Indent

Hill said that the Chairmanship issue has now emerged as a major problem. The UUP are insisting that De Chastelain must be the Chairman of Strand Two and that Mitchell should only fill in when De Chastelain is unavailable. They claim that it was agreed back in 1991/2 that the Chairman of Strand Two should be drawn from the "Old Commonwealth". According to Hill, the UUP had argued that Strand Two had to be chaired by one of Her Majesty's subjects!

(I warned Hill that the Unionists had to be faced down on this. De Chastelain could chair either Strand Two or the Commission but not both. I also pointed to the damage which the Unionists were inflicting on De Chastelain's credibility by suggesting that as a Canadian he was likely to be more understanding of the Unionist cause.

Hill conceded that it looked increasingly likely that De Chastelain would have to stay on Strand Two and that the Governments would have to appoint the Finn to chair the Commission).

## 2(b) Second Indent

The UUP now want to amend their own text to bring it in line with the Governments' proposal of 25 June, so that it would read "the participants each hereby commit themselves to work constructively and in good faith.....".

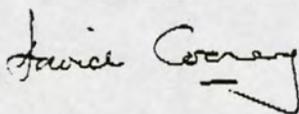
## Third Indent

According to Hill, Trimble was red faced at the proposal that the Plenary should merely "note with interest" the Governments' wish to see some decommissioning during negotiations. Accompanied by much finger-wagging, he had accused the Governments of renegeing on the terms of Monday morning's statement.

- 2(c) The UUP had objected to the definition of the mandate of the Liaison Sub-Committee on Confidence-Building Measures. They had pointed out that they do not agree with all of the confidence-building measures identified in the Mitchell Report and were not therefore prepared to assist in their implementation as proposed in the second paragraph of the section of the motion dealing with the Sub-Committee.

- (ix) (last paragraph, incorrectly listed as (iv) in the 17.45 text)

The UUP want to incorporate language from the Governments' proposal of 25 June. This would indicated that the Review Plenaries would "offer all participants the opportunity to review progress across the entire spectrum of the negotiations and to consider whether the necessary confidence and momentum towards agreement is being sustained".



David Cooney

17 September 1997