



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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24 July 1998

Mr. Dermot Gallagher  
Second Secretary  
Anglo-Irish Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
Dublin 2

cc  
Mr. W. Sullivan  
✓  
4E 27/7

Dear Dermot,

**Paisley's Intentions in relation to the Executive**

Geoffrey Martin, who heads the EU Commission's Office in London, was amongst the guests at a Reception I gave at the Embassy last night. Martin is, as you know, from South Armagh, and takes a continuing interest in Northern Ireland affairs.

Ian Paisley invited him to dinner in Strasbourg the other evening, mainly to discuss European issues, but the question of participation in the Executive also came up. According to Martin, Paisley wants the DUP to take up their two seats and to participate actively in the work of the Executive. Paisley himself is not interested in a portfolio, preferring to concentrate on his work as an MEP, but he foresees Robinson and Dodds as Ministers. When asked by Martin how he could contemplate sitting down with Sinn Fein, Paisley replied that he would not have to do so because he personally would not be on the Executive. (Martin however said that he would not take from this that it would be necessarily easier for Robinson and Dodds to sit on the Executive with Sinn Fein)

Paisley has given similar indications to Jim Dougall, who heads the Commission's Office in Belfast.

Martin, who has known Paisley for a number of years, was convinced that

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Paisley was serious. When I put it to him that the intention might be to undermine the Agreement from within by making life difficult for Trimble, Martin said that he had no sense from the conversation of a destructive intent on Paisley's part. His impression was that Paisley, seeing that the Agreement was going to work, and that the Executive would have considerable powers in the government and administration of Northern Ireland wanted his hand (or his Party's hand) on the levers of power.

Yours sincerely,



Edward Barrington  
Ambassador