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PSM. ~~...~~ PSSG. ~~...~~
~~...~~, Ambassadors
~~...~~
~~...~~
~~...~~ Messrs Teahon,
Murray, Dalton and Mansergh
Kirwan. Counselor A.I.

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cc: Mr. Goodwin
Mr. + 6.

Confidential

Multi-Party Talks

Daily Report - 25 February 1998

*My McLaughlin copy
This is a
duplicate of
one already handed on*

17. 2. 98

1. Today's proceedings at Castle Buildings consisted of a morning meeting of the Liaison Sub-Committee on confidence-building measures and an afternoon meeting of the Liaison Sub-Committee on decommissioning. In addition, there was a meeting of the Business Committee.
2. This morning's confidence-building meeting, at which the Government delegation was led by the Minister of State, continued the Sub-Committee's discussion of paramilitary activity. Papers were tabled by the British Government, the PUP and Alliance.
3. The Secretary of State spoke to the British paper (which essentially reproduced points made on this subject at the Sub-Committee's last meeting). The Minister of State delivered the attached statement.
4. Alliance and the UUP (Maginnis) commended our Government for the Garda Siochana's success in uncovering the Redhills bomb and praised the quality of security cooperation between North and South. Maginnis was particularly appreciative, mentioning his view that the bomb was destined for his own constituency.
5. The debate produced little of interest and was relatively subdued. The NIWC, the PUP and the UDP argued that condemnation of paramilitary violence which was not accompanied by action to address the root causes was futile. This brought predictably indignant responses from Alliance and the UUP. The Loyalist parties dwelled on the significance of projects at local level to devise new approaches which might eradicate punishment attacks.
6. Maginnis regretted that Sinn Féin were being received by our Government, and potentially by the British Government, at a time when they were orchestrating street violence and when, he claimed, information was available to both Governments regarding the killing of Kevin Conway and the Moira and Portadown bombs.
7. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Sub-Committee would consider cultural issues (on which the Secretary of State volunteered a paper) and would also deal either with prison issues (with the Narey Report due next week) or with policing.
8. The Business Committee, at which the Government were represented by David Cooney and the undersigned, agreed on the desirability of maximising the time available for talks in the Monday/Wednesday period each week. The possibility of running meetings of the Sub-Committees in parallel with meetings of the Strands was

also noted.

9. The UUP had been pressing for a review Plenary to be held next week, pointing out that one was due in the very near future under the rules. They indicated privately to the Governments that they envisaged a session of a couple of hours only, which would not delay the talks, and saw merit in timing it for a period when Sinn Féin were absent. Our suggestion that Senator Mitchell might consult with delegations on this point early next week (with Tuesday evening as a possible slot, subject to agreement) was agreed by the Business Committee.
10. The following schedule was agreed for the next two weeks:

//	Monday 2 March	2pm	<u>Cross-strand meeting</u>
	Tuesday 2 March	10.30am-1.30pm 2.30pm- 5.30pm	Strand Two // Strand Two
	Wednesday 3 March	10.30am-1.30pm 2.30pm-5.30pm 10.30am	Strand One Strand One Liaison Sub-Committee (CBMs)
	Monday 9 March	10.30am-1.30pm 2.30pm- 5.30pm 10.30am	Strand One Strand One Liaison Sub-Committee (decom)
	Tuesday 10 March	10.30am-1.30pm 2.30pm- 5.30pm 10.30am	Strand Two // Strand Two Liaison Sub-Committee (CBMs)
	Wednesday 11 March	9.30am Afternoon	Strand Three liaison (poss) Cross-strand (poss)

It was agreed that bilaterals might be envisaged during the week from 16 March. It was also noted that President Santer would be coming to Castle Buildings at 9.00am next Tuesday for an informal working breakfast with delegations.

11. This afternoon's meeting of the Liaison Sub-Committee on decommissioning will be the subject of a separate report.

David Donoghue

David Donoghue
25 February 1998

Liaison Sub-Committee on Confidence Building Measures25 February 1998PARAMILITARY ACTIVITYSPEAKING NOTES:

- This Sub-Committee considers paramilitary activity in the aftermath of the appalling bomb attacks of recent days. The Irish Government strongly condemns the bombing of Moira and Portadown and the attempted bombing at Dromad.
- These actions have caused severe damage to the towns of Moira and Portadown. Thankfully there were no serious injuries and no loss of life, but this is no thanks to the perpetrators who knew that their actions and all such actions carry that risk.
- The bombings are also a deliberate attempt to destroy the process in which we are engaged. We must resist this.
- The security forces on both sides of the border are co-operating fully to counter the enemies of peace and democracy. In doing this they have the full support of the two Governments and the people of these islands who wish to see an end to all violence.
- We must also reassert the primacy of political negotiations. It behoves the two Governments and all the parties to re-double our efforts to bring the

Talks process to an early and successful conclusion.

- In my Government's statement to the meeting of this Sub-Committee on 10 February, we placed on record our condemnation of abhorrent practices such as so-called punishment beatings and the intimidation of people out of their homes and neighbourhoods.
- These practices are repugnant and run contrary to the Mitchell Principles of democracy and non-violence to which all parties in the process have signed up. The ending of these practices would represent a significant confidence building measure.
- We recognise that the best way to eradicate violence, and the threat of such violence, is for the process in which we are engaged to succeed in achieving a comprehensive political settlement.
- We cannot allow those who have planted bombs in recent days to deflect us from pursuing such a settlement.

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