



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Uimhir.....

Government Meeting on 15th May, 1992.

Northern Ireland etc.

Taoiseach,

Referendum

The last day for making the Order fixing dates is Monday. The Minister for the Environment proposes to make the Order late tomorrow (Friday) fixing 18th June as polling day. He will fix the time for voting as between 9.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m.

There may be some problems about "difficulty" Orders about which I can speak to you separately.

Northern Ireland

The Foreign Affairs Memorandum sets out the background to the current Talks, as a basis for discussion at Government tomorrow. The essential questions are, I think:-

1. What attitude do the Government wish to take to Strand II and, in particular,
 - what form of institutional arrangements do they seek and
 - what is their attitude to Articles 2 and 3?

Work is going ahead, following your meeting this morning, in Foreign Affairs and here, on possible forms of institutional arrangements. It would be desirable for the Government to decide on their bottom line on this. Essentially, this might be that any institutional arrangements must involve Dublin in some way or another.

[This has been the position since

- (1) the Government of Ireland Act 1920 - which looked to a Council of Ireland which the British King publicly declared he would wish to see leading, eventually, to reconciliation throughout the entire island;
- (2) the Sunningdale arrangements which envisaged another type of Council of Ireland;
- (3) the Anglo-Irish Agreement arrangements, which established an Anglo-Irish inter-Governmental Conference etc.

ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Misc.
F. 2.

Uimhir.....

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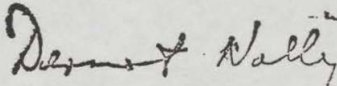
Any arrangement which did not include this involvement could be seen as an abandonment of the idea of Irish unity - and a rowing back from the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985 etc. etc.]

However, to obtain what we want in this particular area, and to involve the Unionists, we must offer something of worth to them. It is hard to see what precisely this could be. One element, admittedly slight, at present, would be an institutional arrangement for their involvement in negotiations in Brussels on Structural Funds, CAP, future Treaty changes etc. Another could be an institutional arrangement for greater security cooperation within the island of Ireland. Again, there are obviously tricky aspects to this. Another would be institutional involvement in the resuscitation of border areas North and South, with community, London and Dublin funds. Another would be institutional involvement in equality legislation in Northern Ireland. All this will be subject to further consideration.

Attitudes to Articles 2 and 3 would depend to a considerable extent on the outcome of discussions on the institutional arrangements for North/South cooperation and/or reconciliation; and it should, at this point, perhaps, be unnecessary to try to devise an answer to this question now.

2. The second aspect of the discussion tomorrow should be the nomination of Ministers to represent the Government in Strand II.

I would suggest the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Justice, with whatever additions are considered necessary. (It is worth recalling that in Sunningdale the Taoiseach and six Ministers attended the negotiations. For the Anglo-Irish Agreement negotiation, the detailed discussions were supervised by a Cabinet Committee consisting of the Taoiseach, the Tánaiste, the Minister for Justice, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Attorney General, with associated officials. A similar arrangement would probably be helpful on this occasion also.



Dermot Nally
14th May, 1992.

c.c. Mr. Noel Dorr, Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs.
Mr. Joe Brosnan, Secretary, Department of Justice.
Mr. Sean O hUiginn, Asst. Sec. Dept. of Foreign Affairs.
Walter Kirwan