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News Extracts

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**Michael Murphy:**

The Taoiseach has said that the setting up of a select committee on Northern Ireland at Westminster would undermine the Anglo-Irish Agreement and would not be welcomed by the Irish Government. Mr. Reynolds said the talks process was the only way forward for future stability in the North. His remarks came as the British Labour Party Spokesman, Kevin McNamara, said he wouldn't support the establishment of a Westminster committee and the SDLP hinted that it might boycott any such committee. Kevin McDonald reports.

**Kevin McDonald:**

It was a day out for the Taoiseach and his family at University College in Dublin where his 20 year old daughter, Andrea, was conferred with an Honours Degree in Economics, but the Taoiseach was quite firm when he said that a select committee in Westminster on Northern Ireland was not the way forward and would be opposed by the Government.

**Albert Reynolds: (An Taoiseach)**

Well first of all, I don't know whether it will ever come into being or not, but should it come into being, and at this stage I'm believing what I'm told by the British Government and Governments have to do that, but if it were to come into being I would say first of all it would cut across and run contrary to the agreement of the 26th of March 1991, which was the foundation on which the talks process started, where any new relationships between institutions in Ireland and Westminster were to be part of that discussion. This would pre-empt that discussion, it would make a decision in advance, it would enshrine another principle of majority rule in the committee itself because it would operate on a majority rule

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basis. Now majority rule has not worked in Northern Ireland and consequently to transfer that principle into a committee that would have an inbuilt majority rule basis would not be successful and consequently with the Labour Party not participating it would certainly be just one way traffic. Now that's not a good way to build trust between communities or to build trust between Governments. I have always set out on the basis of building trust, to try and get those communities to recognise that there's a better way of life for all of them and to find a peace formula. This, if it were to happen, and I've no reason to believe it will happen and at the moment I'm not accepting that it is happening, but if it were to happen it would totally undermine that trust.

**Kevin McDonald:**

Would it undermine the Anglo-Irish Agreement?

**Albert Reynolds:**

Of course it would, I mean it's taking away, part of the negotiation process away and making a decision in advance of it and consequently it would certainly tend to go a long way to undermine the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

**Kevin Reynolds:**

Well the SDLP are not going to co-operate, the British Labour Party are not going to co-operate, is that the end of it now?

**Albert Reynolds:**

I don't know, I mean as far as the Irish Government is concerned, we have no reason to believe there is a deal done, I'm only saying if a deal were to be done the consequences and the very concerns with which an Irish Government would have to view it.

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