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Reference Code: 2021/96/27

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Northern Ireland: Speaking Points

Meeting between the Taoiseach and
President Clinton:

JOINT DECLARATION

I am greatly encouraged by the personal interest and concern which you have shown in relation to the Northern Ireland problem.

We especially appreciated your support for the Joint Declaration signed by Prime Minister Major and myself on 15 December.

The active support of the United States in the search for peace and a lasting settlement is an extremely important asset for all of us.

The Declaration sets out a framework of principles and realities within which the two Governments believe that a lasting political solution of the Northern Ireland problem can be found. It has achieved widespread support, including across both communities and in both islands.

It is necessary to build on this foundation and to maintain the momentum for peace.

The continued violence and lack of a satisfactory response from the Republican movement has been frustrating but I do not give up hope.

I believe there is an intense debate going on in the Republican ranks with significant elements of the leadership seeking a way into the peace process. Provided there is a cessation of violence, we will seek to be flexible on the path they might choose into politics.

The Irish Government have made clear they are not willing to wait indefinitely, and that no party can have a veto on political progress.

If we do eventually have to proceed without Sinn Fein, we must both be sure that political dialogue builds on the Declaration and maintains the same unwavering focus on a deep solution.

[I know that the decision to grant Gerry Adams a visa was a difficult one.

We have fully shared your hope that this decision would encourage Mr. Adams to make peace and help bring an end to the cycle of violence.

There is no doubt that Mr. Adams received during his visit here a clear message of overwhelming support at every level for the achievement of peace in Ireland and the expectation that he will play his part in this.

If peace is achieved, I believe your decision will be seen to have played a helpful and constructive part]

THE TALKS PROCESS

We have consistently said that the peace process and the talks process are complementary to each other.

The achievement of peace would obviously transform the prospects of success for Talks. We have therefore been working to promote movement on both fronts.

The view of both Governments is that any future talks must build on the Declaration and be aimed at the achievement of a deep and lasting settlement which addresses the three central relationships.

Northern Ireland: Background Note

Recent developments relating to (a) the Joint Declaration
and (b) political talks

JOINT DECLARATION

1. At a meeting in Downing Street on 19 February, the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister reaffirmed their commitment to the Joint Declaration.
2. In an interview in the Irish Times on 14 February, the Secretary of State stated that self determination can lead to a range of possible outcomes subject to the consent requirement on the status of Northern Ireland. He said that, following an end to violence, exploratory talks with Sinn Fein could discuss the party's admission to the political talks process, its role in Northern Ireland along side the other constitutional parties and the practical consequence of the ending of violence.
3. In an article in the Irish News on 25 February, Prime Minister Major made a strong appeal to the Republican movement to end violence and said that the central principles behind the Downing Street Declaration were democracy and an absence of coercion: "in other words, consent, no outside interference and an end to violence". The Prime Minister stated that, while his Government would "encourage, facilitate and enable" the achievement of agreement between the people of Ireland, it was not the British Government's job to tell the Irish people what they should think or dictate to them where their future should lie.
4. At the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis on 27 February, Martin McGuinness described the British Government as "tentatively grappling with new realities" and accepted that Sinn Fein involvement in talks would require a

cessation of violence. McGuinness said that "if the British Government are prepared to say that the Unionists will not have a veto over British Government policy than there is no good reason why talks cannot take place in an appropriate atmosphere".

The Taoiseach stated in the Dáil on 1 March that he had noted "both positive and negative statements" made at the Sinn Fein Ard Fheis (26-27 February).

5. On 4 March, the Secretary of State in a speech in Trinity College said, inter alia, that the two Governments "agree and are determined that it is self-determination, in other words democracy, that shall prevail . . . it is in democracy that we find the supreme concept in which the ideas of national identity can be accommodated . . . no one should claim a veto to override that".
6. On 6 March, DUP leader Ian Paisley said that any restoration of DUP-UUP links must involve a repudiation by the UUP of the Downing Street Declaration.

PROSPECTS FOR POLITICAL TALKS

7. At the Inter-Governmental Conference on 28 January, the Irish side stressed that resumed Talks should be based on a framework agreed between the two Governments and commensurate with the depth achieved in the Declaration.
8. Following their meeting in London on 19 February, the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister said they had agreed to give new impetus to a resumption of the talks process in the context of the principles set out in the Joint Declaration.
9. At a press conference on 28 February, James Molyneaux stated that the UUP would not re-enter a resumed

three-strand talks process. He launched an UUP document, "Blueprint for Stability", which called for unilateral British Government action to restore "accountable democracy" to Northern Ireland and proposed an Assembly of 85 members with executive power being exercised through departmental Committees. There would also be a separate election to a panel of three people with "significant consultative, monitoring, referral and representational functions". The document was virtually silent on North/South institutions.

10. In the Dáil on 1 March, the Taoiseach stated that the Irish Government "will not entertain a one-sided approach that downgrades the Irish dimension, and makes any discussion of it contingent on the prior achievement of an internal settlement, and that was totally contrary to the framework and the spirit of the Declaration".
11. In the Dail on 2 March, the Tánaiste stated that "there are recent indications that the Unionist parties are retreating more and more from the position they agreed in the March 26 statement and reverting to the pursuit of an internal settlement". He said that such an internal strategy was unlikely to command much interest or support in any other quarter and that its most likely result would be to marginalise the role and influence of the leaders of the Unionist community, at a time which could be of considerable importance for the future of the island.
12. In his address in Trinity College on 4 March, the Secretary of State said that there will be no let-up in the search for a new political accommodation and that no one will be allowed to place impassable procedural barriers to progress. The Secretary of State said that neither Government will negotiate on any of the principles clearly agreed in the Declaration.

13. Following an informal meeting in Dublin with the Secretary of State on 5 March, the Tánaiste said that there had been a useful exchange of views on the progress being made by officials of both Governments in the Liaison Committee. The Tánaiste said he had discussed with the Secretary of State the prospects for "developing the Declaration".
14. On 6 March, UUP leader James Molyneaux said in a BBC "On the Record" interview that he had no intention of rejoining a "tripartite circus act" in relation to talks.
15. On 7 March, a UUP delegation met Michael Ancram for discussions. Afterwards, Party Chairman Jim Nicholson said that the UUP will not enter round table negotiations with Dublin and that "this is not a policy that will end in June". Nicholson criticised recent speeches by Sir Patrick Mayhew and accused the two Governments of a "grovelling approach to Sinn Fein".
16. On 8 March the Tánaiste said that he rejected the UUP allegation of "grovelling to Sinn Fein". The Tánaiste said that the Irish Government has made enormous efforts over the past 12 months to establish peace and that the Downing Street Declaration is a solid foundation upon which to develop the three-stranded talks process. He urged the Unionist parties to express their willingness to enter into talks and called on Sinn Fein to take the necessary steps to participate in the ending of the conflict.

Anglo-Irish Division
9 March, 1994

A1814

Northern Ireland: US Aspects

Joint Declaration

1. In a statement on 15 December, President Clinton warmly welcomed the Joint Declaration and expressed the hope that all parties would be inspired by the vision the Taoiseach and Prime Minister had shown. The President reaffirmed the "readiness of the United States to contribute in any appropriate way to the new opportunities which lie ahead in Northern Ireland".
2. In a letter to the Taoiseach on 10 January (responding to the Taoiseach's letter of 2 December inviting the President to visit Ireland), Mr. Clinton said he continued to "admire the courage and determination with which you and John Major and your respective governmental teams are pursuing this issue ... of course, we stand ready to assist in any appropriate way". The President expressed appreciation for the invitation to visit Ireland and stated that "I would very much like to do so and look forward to arranging mutually convenient dates".
3. Accompanying Prime Minister Major to Pittsburgh on 28 February, the President in media comments said that he strongly supported the Joint Declaration. He said that the Declaration "offers new hope for the goal of peace ... I again urge an end to the use of violence as a means of solving political problems and achieving political aims ... it has no place in that effort".

Adams visa

4. In a statement on 30 January, the White House stated that the President supported the "difficult decision" of Attorney General Reno to grant Mr. Adams a visa to attend the Conference on Northern Ireland in New York (1-2 February). The statement continued that "it is ... in the interests of peace that the United States reach out to Mr. Adams to press him to go forward ... we are

hopeful that enabling him to attend the Conference in New York will encourage Mr. Adams to make peace and help bring an end to the tragic cycle of violence that has plagued the people of Northern Ireland for too long".

5. [In Dáil PQ replies on 8 February and 2 March, the Taoiseach and the Tánaiste stated that the decision to grant Mr. Adams a visa had strictly been a matter for the US authorities. The Tánaiste on 2 March said that Irish Government position had been one of neither support nor objection.]
6. On several media occasions during the recent visit of Prime Minister Major to the United States, the President defended the decision to grant Adams a visa. At the White House on 1 March, he said "I don't think we can draw a conclusion yet about whether it will advance the peace process... We made an objective call that we ought to try to encourage them (the IRA) to move towards the Joint Declaration and try and make peace". Asked whether Adams would get another visa in the future, the President said that the ball was now in Adams' court.

US Special Envoy

7. In a statement issued during the 1992 Presidential campaign, Mr. Clinton stated, inter alia, that "I believe the appointment of a US Special Envoy to Northern Ireland could be a catalyst in the effort to secure a lasting peace".

Taoiseach's discussions with President Clinton. St. Patrick's Day 1993

8. In their discussion on St. Patrick's Day last year on a possible US role in relation to Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach expressed the appreciation of the Government for the interest of the US President and Administration.

He recalled the helpful background role which President Reagan had played in the run up to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Although the Agreement gave the Irish Government only a consultative role, it nevertheless represented a breakthrough in the joint management of the Problem.

9. The Taoiseach indicated to the President that the US were friends to both Governments and both communities. US involvement should be on a constructive and not a divisive basis. The Taoiseach suggested that the President might leave his options open in this regard. He could consider an exploratory mission to inform himself, perhaps in June or July when the local elections were out of the way. The President said that he thought that approach (i.e. leaving options open) made a lot of sense.

Meeting between President Robinson and the Tánaiste with President Clinton (May 1993)

10. President Robinson, accompanied by the Tánaiste, met President Clinton at the White House on 14 May 1993. There was a general discussion on the situation in Northern Ireland and President Robinson conveyed to Mr. Clinton appreciation for his constructive approach which was much appreciated in Ireland.

Tánaiste's meeting with President Clinton (November 1993)

11. The Tánaiste met the President at the White House on 17 November. The Tánaiste briefed the President on developments in Northern Ireland and the President offered to speak to Prime Minister Major and express his full support for the efforts of the two Governments to agree a framework for peace.

Present Position

12. The President in comments to journalists on 2 February

[during the Adams visit to the US] was quoted as saying that the envoy question "has been overtaken by events". The President was quoted as saying that "when I spoke about that in the campaign, we didn't have the evidence that we now have, that the British and Irish Governments would take the steps they have taken ... since that campaign, I think its astonishing what's been done... the Joint Declaration is something the US very much supports".

Anglo-Irish Division
3 March, 1994

A1833