

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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a.m. 30/6

CC PSM, PSS, S/S Ó hUiginn, Counsellors A-I, Mr Teahon, Mr Dalton, Dr Mansergh, Ambassadors London & Washington, Joint Secretary, Section, Box

rec'd Mg. 30/6/97

TO: COFLOINN< A/I DIV.HQ.

FROM: BNOLAN<BELFAST.

Re. Proximity Talks on Drumcree at Hillsborough Castle, 27 June 1997.

1. As already reported by phone, I was given the following 'read-out' on the day's proceedings at Hillsborough about an hour after the talks had concluded abruptly shortly after 6pm Friday. The SOSNI was keen to get all participants well off the premises before an Orange parade due to commence in Hillsborough around 8pm.

2. The other side here told me that "considered conclusions" drawn by John Steele and Stephen Leach, both of whom were involved in the talks, were :

- they did not see SOSNI's decision to finish the talks Friday (indications were that they would carry on into Saturday) as a setback.

- the proximity talks should be seen as as an important step towards finding an honourable and principled accommodation, well worth the effort even if no definite result ensued.

- both sides were fairly intransigent.

- a range of issues was looked at and several ideas were put to the two sides separately.

- SOSNI's feeling was that she "did'nt get much back" from either side, but there was "sufficient resonance" for her to conclude that there might be scope for further effort.

- the further effort will be in bilateral mode; there is no prospect of the proximity talks mode resuming.

- there were several meetings in the course of the day with the two sides seperately. The Chief Constable was involved in some of the meetings.

- my interlocuter was unable to say what were the "glimmers of hope" which enabled the SOSNI to conclude that the day's work was not in vain and that further effort was justified.

- in the end, however, Steele and Leach felt that there is little scope for optimism.

2. A few pieces from today's NI papers on the Hillsborough talks are attached.

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