

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Call from Gerry Kelly

1. Gerry Kelly gave me a very negative read out of Sinn Féin's response to the Secretary of State's speech in the House of Commons. He wanted to stress that we are all entering a very difficult period.

2. He said (in colourful language) that Peter Mandelson was making a very grave mistake by his refusal to implement the Patten report. It was a worse mistake than the one he made in suspending the institutions. He added that it was very difficult to do business with "this arrogant man".

3. Republicans were faced with a situation where they have made serious compromises at Hillsborough to get the institutions restored only to find that Mandelson was putting a new road block in place - a road block that had the potential to wreck the Good Friday Agreement. Reform of the police service was a fundamental part of the Agreement and the GFA would not work without it.

4. He said that only Tony Blair could bring about the necessary changes in the legislation. Mandelson did not listen to his civil servants, some of whom were very good, he mentioned Bill Jeffrey in this regard. Blair would have to step in and save the situation. Sinn Féin have already given Jonathan Powell this message.

5. Kelly said that the securocrats and civil servants, who had been in control in the "bad old days", have taken "the guts out of Patten". Their handiwork on the Patten Report was ample testament to the need to

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remove them from direct control of the new police service.

6. Kelly said that Sinn Féin still had major difficulties in the area of the Oath, Disqualification of former POWs, the failure to deal with the Special Branch/CID issue, the District Policing Boards, as well as a number of other areas. These would have to be rectified before Sinn Féin felt that the new police service would be acceptable in Nationalist areas.

7. In conclusion, Kelly said that the Irish Government (in particular), Sinn Féin and the SDLP would have to keep up the pressure on the British Government to deliver on the promises they made at Hillsborough.

8. He said that Sinn Féin will be meeting with the NIO tomorrow morning and will be delivering a very strong message about the present Bill.

Ray Bassett
Anglo-Irish Division
6 June 2000

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