

**E. R.**

*Mr. Gense.*

PS/Secretary of State (B & L)

**NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY: PROGRESS REPORT**

**PLENARY SESSION**

The Assembly met in plenary session on 26 February to hear a report on the Unionist leaders' meeting with the Prime Minister on 25 February.

Mr Molyneux said that he and Dr Paisley had warned the Prime Minister that they would never accept the Anglo-Irish Agreement and would not engage in any discussions, even on matters such as devolution or in a round-table conference, as long as the Agreement remained in being. The Prime Minister had put forward various suggestions which they had agreed to reflect on but having consulted the joint working party it was felt that there was little to be gained by a further period of reflection or a further meeting with the Prime Minister as she would not abolish or suspend the Agreement. In view of the Prime Minister's refusal to even suspend the Agreement to enable constructive talks to take place, the parties were issuing joint instructions for a day of action on 3 March. This would be a disciplined show of rejection and repudiation of the Agreement.

Dr Paisley said that the statement issued after the meeting was the Prime Minister's statement and not an agreed communique. They had told the Prime Minister that the conferences had to stop and the secretariat at Maryfield had to be removed but she had replied that she was not going back on the Agreement. The Prime Minister would have to reflect whether she is prepared to go ahead and implement the Agreement and thereby put all talks in jeopardy. Unionists were happy to sit around the table but they would not talk to her while the sword is held over their heads.

Mr Robinson said that after next Monday's protest unionists would organise the total withdrawal of **consent** in the province. The withholding of consent had already embarrassed the government considerably and when the day of action was over they would be able to do that even more effectively.

The Assembly stands adjourned and no further meeting has yet been arranged.

*J G Sullivan*  
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