

ASST 0822/3
SEC - 2 MAR 1998
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UNDER/ SEC
- 2 MAR 1998
CENT SEC

FROM: [REDACTED]
SPS/MR BELL
2 MARCH 1998

C

- PS/Secretary of State (B&L)
- PS/Mr Murphy (B&L)
- PS/Mr Ingram (B&L)
- PS/PUS (B&L)
- PS/Mr Semple
- Mr Thomas
- Mr Steele
- Mr Leach
- Mr Shannon
- Mr Stephens
- Mr McCusker
- Mr Watkins
- Mr Woods (B&L)
- Mr Beeton
- Mr Brooker
- Mrs Collins
- Mr Hill
- Mr Maccabe
- HMA, Dublin
- Mr Fergusson, RID
- Mr Warner

Mr McCaughey
1. Mr Lannon
2. ~~Mr [REDACTED]~~
Mr Jones
LD213

IGC AGENDA: DUBLIN, 5 MARCH 1998

Can you please link the attached Agenda (Annex A) for Thursday's IGC to the minute issued by Mr Bell on 27 February 1998.

Signed:

[REDACTED]
01232-427532 Ext 304

Jacqueline
Attached are the papers for the IGC on 5 March - EU Structural Funds and other topics.
Do these all go on this file?
Nigel's papers for general arrangements for meeting should go on general file? W/annex 6/3

MEETING OF THE ANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
IN DUBLIN ON THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 1998

AGENDA

- 1620 Hrs : Secretary of State and party arrive Dublin Airport.
- 1700 Hrs : Arrive at Iveagh House, and photocall.
- 1705 Hrs : Tête-à-tête.
- 1720 Hrs : Restricted Security Session.
- 1750 Hrs : Plenary:
1. Political Matters
 2. Confidence Issues:
 - Response of Security Forces to current situation
 - Parades
 - Prisons Issues
 - Policing
 - "Bloody Sunday"
 3. Fair Employment
 4. North/South Economic and Social Co-operation
 - EU Structural Funds
 5. Any Other Business
 - Irish Language
 - Broadcasting
 - Fisheries: Hague Preference
 - Springvale
 - Workings of Anglo-Irish Secretariat
- 1930 Hrs : Press Conference (Secretary of State to lead)
- 2000 Hrs : Dinner/Secretary of State and party depart for Dublin Airport.

FROM: P N BELL
BRITISH SECRETARY
27 February 1998

ASST DB 16/3
SEC - 2 MAR 1998
CENT SEC

UNDER
413.
- 2 MAR 1998

C

- PS/Mr Murphy (B&L)
- PS/Mr Ingram (B&L)
- PS/PUS (B&L)
- PS/Mr Semple
- Mr Thomas
- Mr Steele
- Mr Leach
- Mr Shannon
- Mr Stephens
- Mr McCusker
- Mr Watkins
- Mr Woods (B&L)
- Mr Beeton
- Mr Brooker
- Mrs Collins
- Mr Hill
- Mr Maccabe
- Mr Warner
- HMA, Dublin
- Mr Fergusson, RID

Mr McGuinness
 Mr Dever
 LD 2/3
 1. ~~Mr Brown~~
 2. Mr Canavan

2
2-3

PS/Secretary of State (B&L)

INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE: DUBLIN, 5 MARCH 1998

The Secretary of State has agreed to hold the next IGC in Dublin on Thursday 5 March. An agenda for the Conference provisionally agreed with the Irish side of the Secretariat is attached (Annex A); the rest of this note comprises a deliberately much shorter (and experimental) steering brief. Detailed written briefing material is however available if Ministers wish. A brief meeting with officials has already been pencilled in for Wednesday. (We should be grateful for feedback on whether the Secretary of State finds this approach more helpful).

British Objectives

2. On the **political side** these may include:

- enlisting a 'all stops out' Irish commitment to our concept of the end game (in the light of the Prime Minister's meeting with the Taoiseach on 26 February, and the former's meeting with Mr Trimble today);
- settling the arrangements for Sinn Fein's re-admission to the Talks; and
- such further objectives as have crystallised by Thursday.

3. On the **Security side**, they may include:

- ensuring the Irish understand the gravity of the present threat from **both** Republicans **and** Loyalists (fringe Republican, and Loyalist activities in the Republic concentrate Irish minds);
- convincing the Irish that intensified security measures are as much in the interests of Nationalists as anyone else, are limited and proportionate to the threat and deserve Irish support;
- whatever differences there may be over points of detail (eg on appointments to the Parades Commission), the two Governments need to be **seen** to be at one and to be helping to reduce tensions as the Marching Season begins. (No injudicious 'playing politics').

4. More **generally**, Ministers will want to reassure the Irish that:

- Nationalist sensitivities are understood and being actively addressed (eg in response to the Fair Employment Review, policing and Irish language issues - both for their own sakes and in the context of the Talks);

- Irish concerns are properly understood elsewhere in Whitehall (eg Roisin McAliskey, prisoners transfers and RTE broadcasting); but;

- Anglo Irish relations (and North/South relations in particular) cannot be a one way street. Legitimate Unionist concerns (and fears) need to be addressed (in Talks generally; demystifying Maryfield) as do the economic interests of the North as a whole (eg over Fisheries);

Irish Objectives

5. On **political matters**, we are on a convergent course, but they are still likely:

- to press for the two Governments to give a very strong joint lead to the Talks and sign up to an Anglo Irish single text. (This could be counter-productive); and
- to press strongly for a Prime Ministerial Meeting with Sinn Fein (which depends in part on IRA behaviour) before 9 March.

6. On past form, the Irish are likely to press harder (sometimes for the sake of form) on **security** and **confidence issues**. Thus, they will want to be satisfied that;

- current security efforts are even-handed;
- HMG appreciates the importance of the 'Rights Agenda' (including policing and prisoners matters) as of critical important to Nationalists both for its own sake, and within the Talks process - especially for Sinn Fein; and
- possibly, to take a more active role in seeking to defuse the conflicts of the impending Marching Season (owing to a lack of confidence in the Parades Commission).

Detail

7. The Secretary of State may wish to use the **tete-a tete** both to agree the handling of the Conference and to talk more freely at the political level.

Restricted Security Session

8. The Chief Constable will review the IRA cease-fire and the extent to which materials and expertise have been made available to splinter-groups, along with the capacities of the CAC, INLA and the significance of the 32-Counties Sovereignty Committee. On the loyalist side, his report should cover murders committed by the LVF and UDA since December. (The Irish side may question why compared with murders committed by DAAD, confirmation of responsibility for the murder of several Catholics took longer to establish. Irish interest in the threat posed to them remains intense).

Political Matters

9. Despite the atmosphere of 'political theatre' which surrounds IGC's political exchanges will need scarcely to be more elaborate than the Secretary of State's virtually daily encounters with Irish Ministers in the Talks. We shall provide a fuller speaking note on politics nearer the Conference.

Confidence Issues

10. Mr Ingram and the Chief Constable may wish to be pragmatic when deciding who should lead. But our side will need to provide the detail of current security measures and their rationale. The cases of [REDACTED] (recently compensated in respect of injuries suffered while in custody) and Robert Hamill will almost certainly be raised, so too may the Derryhirk Inn affair.

11. The British side may want to correct the Irish impression that far more recent victims have been Catholic: on a recent date and since 20 July 11 Catholics and 6 Protestants had died as a result of terrorism, not 17 and 2 as the Taoiseach suggested.

12. On **parades** the Irish will be critical of recent appointments (especially Barr and Cheevers) as insufficiently recognising the interests of the Nationalist community. Ministers may need to take the Irish from first principles (how the Parades Commission is designed to defuse the Marching Season, and why there is a confidence deficit on the Loyalist side) as a necessary precondition of winning any degree of Irish (or Nationalist) support for its operation. The Irish may enquire about the Commission's 'Preliminary View' planned for March/April.

13. On **prisons issues**, the Irish may welcome recent transfers to the Republic since the last Conference (and raise the Balcombe Street or other cases) as well as those of Roisin McAliskey (and Fisher and Wright). They may also press about the Narey and Ramsbotham Inquiries;

14. On **policing**, of particular Irish interest are the points raised by the Chief Constable in his 12 February interview in the Irish News on encouraging more Catholics to join the RUC, how present under-representation might be addressed after a political settlement, and issues surrounding membership of the Orange Order. They are also interested about planned closures of RUC stations, though no less interested in the progress of the Police Bill and the reception of the Consultation Document 'Your Voice - Your Choice';

15. The sting has been taken out of **Bloody Sunday** with the Prime Minister's establishment of a new tribunal. But Irish interest in its likely work programme remains abiding and intense. (Weekend Conference in Canada; preliminary hearing before Easter).

16. In general, a combination of firmness, sensitivity, and detail should inform our responses on these issues.

Fair Employment

17. The Irish broadly support the recommendations in the SACHR Report, and place particular value on a greater role for TSN and statutory backing to PAFT. They know that SACHR has already been given a (fairly) full briefing, and are likely to feel short-changed if the Secretary of State does not take them into her confidence with the offer of a full briefing before the proposed launch of the Government's proposals. The Secretary of State may not want to go farther than say work is coming to fruition; she is minded to assent to around two thirds of SACHR's recommendations, and to offer the Irish a detailed briefing, via the Secretariat, before the launch.

North/South Economic and Social Co-operation

18. Discussion will centre around the paper drawn up by the two Departments of Finance. The Irish Minister for Finance, Mr McCreevy, will be present. If not the Secretary of State, then Mr Semple might speak to the paper (in Mr Murphy's absence). The Secretary of State need do no more than thank those responsible for bringing forward the paper, and to invite endorsement of its conclusions and recommendations.

Any Other Business

19. This comprises a number of 'take-note' items. The Irish attach most importance to the **Irish language**, (active consideration being given to this sensitive subject); broadcasting (both sides welcome the increased availability of RTE, but need to use their influence and encourage dialogue between UTV and RTE over a copyright problem which would mar the present progress towards improved RTE reception); **Fisheries** (there is dialogue through the Secretariat; further progress needs made if the interests of Irish fishermen of both communities are to be sufficiently protected); **Springvale** (an appraisal report is now nearing completion - no final decisions taken); and, the **Workings of the Agreement** (greater openness needed, not least in respect of Maryfield; the Irish need to take more seriously and urgently proposals by the British side).

Press Conference

20. By custom, the Secretary of State, as guest, will lead when it comes to the press conference. If she is free, the Irish would be delighted to give her dinner. (Grateful for confirmation).

21. The fuller written material is being circulated separately on Monday to be held by PS/Secretary of State and officials

Signed:

P N BELL