

ALLIANCE PARTY OF NORTHERN IRELAND

D3 MEETING WITH SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE ALLIANCE PARTY DELEGATION IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM WED. 8/5/91 at 4pm

PRESENT SECRETARY OF STATE PETER BROOKE, UNDER SEC. OF STATE BRIAN MAWHINNEY AND OFFICIALS OF NIO BELFAST AND LONDON

ALLIANCE JOHN ALDERDICE, SEAMUS CLOSE, SEAN NEESON, STEWART DICKSON, ADDIE MORROW, EILEEN BELL, STEVE MC BRIDE, PHILIP MC GARRY, PAUL MAGUIRE.

SOS reported on earlier separate meetings with SDLP and joint UNIONIST delegations re their latest positions on the venue situation. Unionists apparently still adamant that a Dublin meeting would only be part of the later stages of Strand 2, perhaps, as discussed earlier, the last meeting of that stage and the first of Strand 3. SDLP still adamant that Europe was not a practical venue in view of the expenses etc. and wanted Dublin as a Strand 2 venue (possibly Throne Room in Dublin Castle).

SOS then said that he had considered all comments over lunch and then at a post lunch time meeting with the SDLP put the following proposals----- London would be the venue for the first meeting in the 2nd Strand as a symbolic one then a series of substantial meetings in a venue in Northern Ireland, not the Stormont Estate, and at the close of process a meeting in Dublin which would finish Strand 2 and a transitional one for Strand 3. This was received by the SDLP for further consideration and we were also asked to consider it as a possible solution to this problem.

Dr. Alderdice then asked for full clarification of this proposal and after this he assured the SOS that we will consider this carefully and he was sure that we would accommodate any constructive suggestion.

There was then a discussion about concerns about certain press "leakages" and it was agreed that this would have to be looked at and in fact this was the reason that all future meetings would be held in the first floor Conference Room instead as previous on the ground floor. It was thought that the leak was as a result of the latest "technical equipment".

Under-Secretary Brian Mawhinney then said there was a degree of optimism because the Sdlp, while not formally accepting the proposal, they did not "blow it out of the water"

Party Leader then finished by expressing the hope that the break would not result in loss of momentum and further damage the credibility of the talks process.

The SOS said that he would report any further developments as they happen.

Further meeting as above at 5.15 pm with Mervyn Jones in attendance in place of Paul Maguire. All others as above.

The SOS announced to the Delegation that after a further meeting with the full 20 strong joint Unionist delegation it was proposed that there should be further meetings tomorrow morning at 10.30 and hopefully a decision arrive at this week.

It was also agreed that the proposals would be typed out by NIO Staff for discussion to-morrow.

The PL, on behalf of the delegation, agreed to this proposal.

THURSDAY 9 MAY at 10.00 AM.

Dr Brian Mawhinney asked the PL for a private meeting and it was disclosed afterwards that the SOS will be talking to the other delegations this morning on the proposal mentioned above. he will then see our delegation after these meetings to inform us of outcome.