

Friday 10th May

This morning the joint unionist leaders put out a statement giving their 'position'. It was a clear breach of confidentiality but hiding within it were some acceptances of meeting in Dublin (see statement).

I went to Seamus C and we discussed a statement. I also phoned Mark D and checked that they had the real unionist amendment so that they would see the difference and not go off the deep end. They had. I also said that they had tried to recruit us without success. JH later phoned back to thank me. He held the line and though Seamus M went over the top ('headless chickens etc') emotionally the SDLP have held back from destruction. They will be there on Monday too. I went to BBC to give our view and Seamus C did ITN and RTE. I also spoke to Danny McN at Stormont. SOS met Collins for four hours. This is OK too I think. Other sources say that the NIO is in some internal dispute about the approach. Some of them seem to be advocating our approach.

In fact the whole incident may be more hopeful rather than less, but one needs to be heedful of the unionists perversity to appreciate this.