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POSITION PAPER

TALKS TIME-TABLE

Seamus

1. All delegations entered the present talks process on the same basis - the Secretary of State's 26 March statement. In the statement Mr Brooke said:-

"To allow an opportunity for such a wider political dialogue, the two governments have agreed not to hold a meeting of the Anglo-Irish Conference between two pre-specified dates. All parties concerned will make use of this interval for intense discussions to seek the new and more broadly based agreement which I have just mentioned."

2. Unionists entered into these discussions on the basis of,

" a suspension of the working of the Anglo-Irish Agreement".

In our own discussions with the Secretary of State it was indicated that a period of about 10 weeks would be made available for the talks. Later, and without reference to us, the two governments announced the time-band. We do not intend, in this document, to wrangle about the cause for delaying the talks process to deal with procedural matters which we felt could and should have been dealt with in the margins of Strand 1. Sufficient for us to state the obvious - when we commenced plenary sessions on Monday 17 June 1991, seven weeks after the bilateral talks started on Tuesday 30 April, only 4 of the 11 week time-band remained.

2. Mr Brooke's statement of 26 March clearly shows that the talks began after the last Conference meeting and will end when the next one takes place. It is therefore only the insistence on a meeting under the auspices of the Anglo Irish Agreement that brings the agreed process to a conclu-

sion.

3. We are anxious to make urgent progress and, in keeping with our determination to make progress in Strand 1, and thereby, if possible, to move to Strand 2, we propose a significant intensification of the talks.

4. The proposal involves a six-day week with morning, afternoon and evening sessions on a number of days. The programme is such that we can condense the number of available hours the Secretary of State had originally proposed for the 10 week process into the time available. In effect this intensification will put the talks back on the original course in terms of available hours.

5. We not only propose that the available hours be substantially increased but suggest that the manner in which the talks are operating could be improved as soon as the preliminary presentations are completed. We suggest a more flexible approach which allows the discussions on the workplan issues to continue while small working groups, perhaps under the Minister of State, assess and put together areas of agreement.

6. If the two formats operate in parallel it will eliminate time-wastage. The Minister of State would take ownership of any recommendations to be brought forward. He would nevertheless be guided by the working-groups.

7. These proposals are a genuine attempt to preserve the talks and bring about a momentum that alone can bring success. Undoubtedly the programme we offer will cause havoc with all our diaries - we recognise the difficulties - but we feel the benefits that could flow

to Northern Ireland from this process would make the additional effort worthwhile.

8. This proposal:-

*** is jointly made by the two unionist delegations.**

*** acknowledges that the Minister of State will deputise for the Secretary of State from time to time;**

*** recognises that all members of**

each delegation will not be able to attend at all times;

*** is not solely for plenary sessions - it will be used for some working groups and other non-plenary meetings employing a more flexible approach;**

*** re-instates the 1 July;**

*** permits 10 weeks available hours of the original plan to be carried out in the now limited period;**

Schedule "A"

Actual time available

INTENDED PROGRAMME

After lunchtime, teatime and coffee breaks have been deducted the original working day of 10.30am - 12.30pm & 2.30pm - 5.00pm with two 15 minute breaks leaves 4 hours per day. There were to be 10 weeks available and it was planned to work 3 days each week.

10 weeks x 3 days x 4 hours = 120 hours available

INTENDED PROGRAMME = 120 hours available

Schedule "B"

Actual time available

PRESENT PROGRAMME

Mon 17	12.50 - 1.05	&	2.30 - 5.00		= 2.5 hours
Tue 18	10.30 - 12.30	&	2.30 - 4.30		= 3.5 hours
Wed 19	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00		= 4.5 hours
Mon 24	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.00		= 5.5 hours
Tue 25	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 8.30	= 7.0 hours
Wed 26	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.00	<i>even</i>	
<i>Thurs</i>					
Tue 2	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 8.30	= 7.0 hours
Wed 3	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.00		= 5.5 hours
Mon 8			time not yet set		= 5.5 hours
Tue 9			time not yet set [but if the same as 24/26 then:-]		= 7.0 hours
Wed 10			time not yet set		= 5.5 hours

PRESENT PROGRAMME = 59 hours available

SCHEDULE "C"

Actual time available

PROPOSED PROGRAMME

{The hour total is after breaks deducted}

Mon 17	12.50 - 1.05	&	2.30 - 5.00		=	2.5 hours
Tue 18	10.30 - 12.30	&	2.30 - 4.30		=	3.5 hours
Wed 19	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00		=	4.5 hours
Mon 24	10.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.00		=	5.5 hours
Tue 25	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Wed 26	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Thu 27	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Fri 28	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.30		=	7.0 hours
Sat 29	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.30		=	7.0 hours
Mon 1	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.30		=	7.0 hours
Tue 2	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Wed 3	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Thu 4	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Fri 5	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.30		=	7.0 hours
Sat 6	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 6.30		=	7.0 hours
Mon 8	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Tue 9	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours
Wed 10	9.30 - 12.45	&	2.15 - 5.00	& 6.00 - 9.30	=	8.5 hours

PROPOSED WORKPLAN = 127.5 hours available.