

~~PP 243~~
PP 243.

Richard

Notes on Meeting with Sir Ancram MP.

15/9/93

Mr

~~Sir~~ Ancram's main objective for the meeting was to define the various points discussed at last years talks according to the following categories:

- 1) "bankable"
- 2) "contingently bankable"
- 3) "remotely bankable"
- 4) not acceptable at all

He asked for the Alliance Party representative to categorize ~~the~~ the issues in terms of those four options. He also stated a desire to know what was Dr. Alderdice's estimation of the other parties' opinions.

Mr

~~Sir~~ Ancram's stated goal was to obtain an idea of the areas of difference and of the bridges which could be built between them. The Minister also wished to know "Where we stand within Northern Ireland and within the framework of the three ~~strands~~ strands."

A ~~small~~ discussion ensued regarding the number of representatives the delegations were to be allowed. ~~Sir Ancram~~ The minister was non-committal about the numbers, but all participants agreed most emphatically about "deliverability" being essential.

The Minister's view of the three ~~strands~~ strands indicated some desire to highlight relations between the UK and the Republic of Ireland and also Northern Ireland and the Republic.

The unofficial agenda followed by Sir Ancram included these points (Alliance responses are indicated by A-):

STRAND 1

-The creation of an elected unicameral assembly
A-acceptable in principle

- 1 The importance of this to ~~Sir~~ Ancram and any new talks was unclear.

~~Executive and/or legislative responsibilities~~

- Executive and/or legislative responsibilities
 - A-preferable to draw the executive from the legislature
 - A-does not object to separation of powers, provided problems extant are solved

- Range of subjects RANGE
 - 1973 is considered the minimum acceptable by Alliance and also seemingly by ~~the~~ Angram
 - A-suggests the following may be added to agenda:
 - A-revenue raising powers of new government
 - A-relations with Europe of new government
 - A-cross-border cooperation. examples: a Ministry of Justice to be established early, with limited jurisdiction which will expand with time and creation of a "mini-Irish Interpol"
 - Is security likely to be discussed on the first day?
 - A-no

CONCERN
POWERS
OF
NEW
ASSEMBLY

} change.

- Are the executive responsibilities to be discharged through the legislature?
 - A-no answer within categories, but did specify a desire to change ~~to~~ ^{THE} current structure of 6 departments
- Heads of department to be drawn from the legislature
 - A-certainly
- Is the legislature to exercise its power through committees?
 - A-respond as contingently bankable
 - A-in favour of the departments being run by their heads, who are charged with giving an account of themselves to the committees, as opposed to direction from the committees
 - A-note the following objects ^{THAT} to direction from committee:
 - 1) committees are cumbersome
 - 2) heads of departments should be able to link with their counterparts in the Republic
 - 3) minority heads of department may be bound by majority committees, removing some protection for minorities
 - both parties agree on proportionate representation. which Alliance highlights

-A point regarding the Prime Minister, to which Alliance agrees. The nature of the point is unclear

PROP
BY
J.

A-General ~~purpose~~ ^{PURPOSES} and Finance ~~department~~ ^{COMM} to be drawn from the chairmen of committees. GP&F is expected to function as an executive ~~branch~~ under Alliance proposals (power sharing executive)

A. WANTS IT
TO FUNCT.

-Does the legislature require majority support? straight vs. weighted majority
A-weighting is inherent in proportionate representation and is vital because it is a protection for minorities
-legislature required to have a straight majority for some areas and a weighted majority for others
A-in principle OK, but has not seen a workable scheme

-Allocation of committee chairmen
A-should be due to party strength, excluding unacceptable parties i.e. ^{THOSE} supporting violence

-Bill of Rights and Community Rights
-unamendable by legislature
A-suggests adoption of the European Convention
A-may be amenable, but with protection for minorities

-From where do the chairmen and/or heads of department draw their authority
-general response from both participants indicates from the legislature

-Structure of the Panel of Commissioners. The following have been proposed by various institutions:

- (A) 1) No Panel
2) 6 externally appointed members (Hume SDLP)
3) 3 members ~~originating from the legislature~~
ELECTED

A-option 2 is not acceptable, and suspicion is warranted in consideration of option 3 as it appears to be proposed for political gain only.
A greater number of elected commissioners is preferable (6 or 6)

-what powers should such a panel hold
A-none of significance
-at what price would Alliance accept a troika
A-necessary to have a regional assembly with legislative powers and a panel with constrained powers

STRAND 2

How far would go on N-S DELEGATED

~~Tripartite Council~~

A-believes that the best situation is the creation of cooperative North-South institutions

-council to be autonomous or to require separate ratification from the legislatures?

A-preference is for council to have ~~delegated powers and to seek ratification for decisions outside of those powers~~

from relevant assemblies, North & South

A-JEFFERY
ON
DELEG. POWERS

W REQ'D
AS WELL AS PR.

3 ELEC. + 3 EXT.

- A-council to receive its authority from the domestic legislatures
- what is the price for Alliance's agreement?

on delegated power?

STRAND 3

-Roles of Articles II and III

STATUS OF

A-Articles II and III are of considerable importance

-change to aspirations versus claims

A-will agree if it can be guaranteed to pass

-what can be offered to the other parties

A-"burglar is now friend"

A-for the Republic, cooperative North-South bodies

A-concern that an agreement may be unconstitutional in the Republic of Ireland because it would require recognition of the North

-Simultaneous referendum (North and South) to ratify agreement

A-a referendum could mean that the citizens of the Republic would hold a de facto veto on Northern Ireland's internal government

-Tripartite council

A-acceptability depends upon the powers of the regional government

Sir Ancram finished by asking for estimates of the trade-offs the other parties would be willing to accept, and indicated that these initial talks were designed to establish an idea of the negotiating positions expected. He gave an approximate time of six weeks for the first rounds of meetings, and strongly hinted at furthering the talks before the European elections.