

TEN DOWNING STREET

IAN BEAUMONT

Our Ref. KB38847

Irish Prime Minister, Albert Reynolds, and the new Irish Foreign Affairs Minister, David Andrews, will be going to Number Ten Downing Street to talk to the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mr Brooke, and the Prime Minister, Mr Major. And David Andrews is on the line now. Good morning.

DAVID ANDREWS: (Irish Foreign Affairs Minister)

Good morning.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

And congratulations on the job.

DAVID ANDREWS:

Thank you very much indeed.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

Now, are you going just to get to know each other or do you have a very serious agenda?

DAVID ANDREWS:

Well, as you know Mr Major and Mr Reynolds knew one another in a previous incarnation as the Exchequer

and Mr Reynolds as Minister of Finance, and they got to know one another. But this is really the first opportunity to meet the heads of their Governments - Mr Reynolds as Prime Minister and of course Mr Major as Prime Minister. The meeting I think will underline the continuing and ongoing peace talks in the Northern Ireland context. We think that the issue has, to say the very least of it, moved up in the

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*Mr Wain fle*  
*As promised.*

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IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER, DAVID ANDREWS

INTERVIEW

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BRIAN REDHEAD: (Presenter)

Today the new Irish Prime Minister, Albert Reynolds, and the new Irish Foreign Affairs Minister, David Andrews, will be going to Number Ten Downing Street to talk to the Northern Ireland Secretary, Mr Brooke, and the Prime Minister, Mr Major. And David Andrews is on the line now. Good morning.

DAVID ANDREWS: (Irish Foreign Affairs Minister)

Good morning.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

And congratulations on the job.

DAVID ANDREWS:

Thank you very much indeed.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

Now, are you going just to get to know each other or will you have a very serious agenda?

DAVID ANDREWS:

Well, as you know Mr Major and Mr Reynolds knew one another in a previous life: Mr Major as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr Reynolds as Minister for Finance, and they got to know one another. But this is really the first opportunity to meet as leaders, or heads of their Governments - Mr Reynolds as Taoiseach, our Prime Minister and of course Mr Major as your Prime Minister. The meeting I think will underline the priority for the continuing and ongoing peace talks in the Northern Ireland context. We think that the issue has, to say the very least of it, moved up in the British Government's priority, more particularly with regard to your own Prime Minister's involvement in the recent past, and of course this is welcome on this side of

the sea, the Irish Sea.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

Because there's even talk, I understand, or at least Leo Enright told me, that the Government of Ireland Act, I think that was the 1920 one which agreed to the partition of Ireland, is now as it were back for discussion.

DAVID ANDREWS:

Yes, well as you know there's the three strands of talks, and the second strand of talks - that will be north/south - that as the Taoiseach has said, everything will be on the table and open for discussion, including Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution, other related matters and of course the Government of Ireland Act 1922. This will take account on the one hand of the concerns, that's Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitutions, of the Unionists in the North of Ireland and on the other hand the Constitution of Ireland Act would take account of the concerns of the Nationalists, so there'd be a balance, as it were. But this is all subject to the talks progressing from strand one, that's the talks within Northern Ireland, strand two, north/south, so that will be some considerable time down the road.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

And overhanging it all, of course, the fear of more violence.

DAVID ANDREWS:

Of course, yes. The huge tragedy is that since the beginning of the year there have been a success [sic] of thirty-one or thirty-two people dead, and I think that will be uppermost in the minds of the two leaders when they come to speak to one another this evening in Ten Downing Street.

BRIAN REDHEAD: ... or interfere in the decisions of the courts  
 But can we assume that there is a feeling now that it is possible to talk about everything concerning them and not, sort of, rush in to solutions? ... man of 14 years of age to move from this jurisdiction to your own jurisdiction, to

DAVID ANDREWS: ... services were there. And we would hope  
 No, I think that in advance, of course, we'd have to talk, we'd have to open negotiations and the process would be got going. And we would hope and certainly reflecting the views of the Irish Taoiseach Prime Minister, Mr Reynolds, that this ... these talks will give a new impetus to the process in the nature of things, a kick start if I may use the expression, and the talks will go apace, despite the fact that there's of course an upcoming British general election. But as Mr Hurd indicated to me in Lisbon on Monday week last, is that because of the upcoming general election this will not mean that the British authorities will be in a state of trance, rather, as I say, the agenda on the talks will be given a new heightening of awareness, having account of Mr Major's own recent involvement. And not to, of course, forget Mr Brooke, the important role in the Brooke initiative in the last number of months.

BRIAN REDHEAD: ...  
 Now, can I just finally turn you to a quite separate matter, abortion, which is concerning you all very much at the moment in the Republic. Do you think it's about time you had another referendum?

DAVID ANDREWS:  
 Well, again a referendum, as you know the 1983 referendum on the amendment of the Article 40 of our Constitution gave rise to much anguish on both sides of opinion - pro and anti. And we would be concerned as the Government that that situation might occur again, and whilst I wouldn't

wish to preempt or interfere in the decisions of the courts of our country, as you can appreciate, the Supreme Court is now deliberating on the High Court judgement of which did not allow this tragic young woman of 14 years of age to move from this jurisdiction to your own jurisdiction, to avail of whatever services were there. And we would hope that that would resolve itself in the not too distant future, ....

BRIAN REDHEAD:

... Because you would think it's ...

DAVID ANDREWS:

... and do away with the possibility of holding a referendum. In other words, what we would hope would be the outcome of the Supreme Court judgement that this tragic child, this tragic 14 year old girl/woman would be free to leave this jurisdiction to another jurisdiction.

BRIAN REDHEAD:

David Andrews, thank you very much.

DAVID ANDREWS  
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*Mr. Jones*

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