



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2019/31/54
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Northern Ireland Information Service, Stormont Castle, BELFAST

RADIO/TV TRANSCRIPT

Programme: BBC NEWSBREAK

Broadcast on: 3.2.89

Transcribed on: 3.2.89

89-02-03 14:36

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Me. R. MURFIELD

\* Please refer to pages 2 and 13.

Recd. from British 5.45pm

3.2.89

TRANSCRIPT OF BBC NEWSBREAK: FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY 1989

AUSTIN CURRY, OF THE SDLP, HAS GIVEN HIS VERSION OF THE DUISBURG MEETING LAST OCTOBER INVOLVING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNIONIST PARTIES AND ALLIANCE. SPEAKING AT A NEWS CONFERENCE IN BELFAST, A SHORT TIME AGO, HE READ A LETTER HE HAD WRITTEN TO HIS PARTY LEADER, JOHN HUME, LAST NOVEMBER.

AUSTIN CURRY: "THE ONLY AGREEMENT ENTERED INTO BY ME AT THE MEETING IN DUISBURG WAS TO INFORM YOU OF THE FOLLOWING: 'I HAVE HEARD A SUGGESTION, WHICH IN MY OPINION IS WORTHY OF FURTHER CONSIDERATION. THAT IS THE MEETINGS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL NOT BE HELD FOR A PERIOD (SPECIFIED) TO FACILITATE DIALOGUE INVOLVING THE MAJOR CONSTITUTIONAL PARTIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND'."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE, TOM KING, HAS WELCOMED THE NEWS OF TALKS BETWEEN THE FOUR PARTIES. HE SAID THE APPROACH OF PEOPLE TALKING TOGETHER HAS TO BE RIGHT, BUT ADDED IT WAS IMPORTANT NOT TO UNDERESTIMATE THE SCALE OF PROBLEMS TO BE FACED.

SEAMUS LYNCH, OF THE WORKER'S PARTY, SAID IT WAS SAD TO SEE, WHAT HE CALLED, THE SAME OLD DEFENSIVE KNEE-JERK REACTIONS AT THE VERY SUGGESTION OF CONSTRUCTIVE TALKS TAKING PLACE. HE SAID THE WORKER'S PARTY HAD CONSISTANTLY CALLED FOR A PROPER DIALOGUE BETWEEN CONSTITUTIONAL POLITICIANS AIMED AT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DEVOLVED DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES HERE.

ARMY EXPERTS HAVE MADE SAFE A BOMB CONTAINING ONE KILO OF SEMTEX EXPLOSIVE AT GREENCASTLE, NORTH OF BELFAST. A POLICE SPOKESMAN SAID A CONTROLLED EXPLOSION WAS CARRIED OUT ON THE BOMB WHICH WAS LYING ON THE SERPENTINE ROAD. THE INTENDED TARGET ISN'T KNOWN. ARMY EXPERTS ARE STILL EXAMINING A SUSPECT DEVICE NEAR A BUILDING SITE AT GUNNELHILL ON THE WHITEWELL ROAD.

THE ULSTER DEFENCE REGIMENT IS MOVING OUT OF BIRDWOOD BARRACKS ON BELFAST'S ANTRIM ROAD AS PART OF THE RATIONALISATION OF 7/10 UDR - THE BIGGEST INFANTRY BATTALION IN THE BRITISH ARMY. THE FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME COMPANIES, WHICH WERE BASED AT BIRDWOOD, WILL NOW BE TRANSFERRED TO ONE OF THE OTHER THREE BASES SERVING BELFAST. A UDR SPOKESMAN SAID THE MOVE WOULD FREE MORE SOLDIERS FROM GUARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS AND ALLOW THEM TO TAKE PART IN OPERATIONAL DUTIES.

Continued.....

A CROWN COURT JUDGE HAS ORDERED THE ARREST OF A FORMER BELFAST SOLICITOR, ACCUSED OF STEALING CLIENTS' MONEY, AFTER HE FAILED TO APPEAR FOR HIS TRIAL THIS MORNING. MICHAEL HENNIGAN, OF UNIVERSITY ROAD, WHO HAD BEEN ON BAIL OF £300, FACES 17 SPECIMEN CHARGES OF THEFT INVOLVING MORE THAN £14,000 OF CLIENTS' MONEY. LORD JUSTICE McDERMOTT WAS TOLD THAT 40 YEAR OLD HENNIGAN, WHO WAS STRUCK OFF AS A SOLICITOR IN JANUARY 1987, WAS NOT AT HOME WHEN POLICE CALLED THIS MORNING. THE JUDGE ISSUED A BENCH WARRANT FOR HIS ARREST AFTER A DEFENSE LAWYER SAID HE COULD NOT EXPLAIN HENNIGAN'S FAILURE TO APPEAR.

IN THE HIGH COURT JUDGEMENT HAS BEEN RESERVED IN AN APPEAL BY CRAIGAVON COUNCILLORS OVER A SURCHARGE OF A QUARTER OF A MILLION POUNDS. MR JUSTICE CARSWELL SAID HE WOULD GIVE HIS DECISION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE 16 ULSTER UNIONIST AND DUP COUNCILLORS ARE CLAIMING THEY SHOULD NOT HAVE TO PAY THE COMPENSATION AND LEGAL COSTS OF A DISCRIMINATION CASE BROUGHT BY A LURGAN GAA CLUB. IF THEY ARE FORCED TO PAY THE SURCHARGE THE COUNCILLORS WILL BE BANNED FROM LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOR FIVE YEARS.

FINALLY, HOUSE PRICES IN THE PROVINCE WERE STATIC LAST MONTH, ACCORDING TO FIGURES JUST RELEASED BY THE HALIFAX BUILDING SOCIETY. THAT COMPARES TO A SLIGHT FALL NATIONWIDE AND A 3% DROP IN LONDON, WHILE HOUSE PRICES NATIONALLY HAVE RISEN BY 3% IN THE LAST YEAR, THAT FIGURE IS EXPECTED TO FALL TO 5% BY THE END OF THE YEAR.

\* SECRETARY OF STATE'S COMMENTS:

SECRETARY OF STATE: 'WELL, I THINK THAT IT'S FOR THE PARTIES THEMSELVES TO COMMENT ON THEM. THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT INVOLVED. NOBODY HAS COME TO THE GOVERNMENT WITH ANY OUTCOME OF ANY DISCUSSIONS. OBVIOUSLY I HAVE ALWAYS SAID THAT IN NORTHERN IRELAND MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN. I HAVE ALWAYS ENCOURAGED PEOPLE TO TALK BUT HOW EFFECTIVELY THEY HAVE DONE IT, I DON'T KNOW.'

INTERVIEWER: 'WERE YOU AWARE THAT TALKS WERE GOING ON?'

SECRETARY OF STATE: 'I HAD SOME IDEA THEY WERE TAKING PLACE BUT AS I HAVE SAID NOBODY HAS COME FORWARD WITH ANYTHING CONCRETE OF THEM. BUT AS I SAY I HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THE WAY FORWARD IN NORTHERN IRELAND IS THROUGH THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND THEIR POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE GOT TO FIND SOME WAY IN WHICH THEY CAN ACTUALLY TALK TO EACH OTHER AND AGREE SOME SORT OF BASIS ON WHICH THEY CAN TAKE GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR TO DEVELOP THE PROVINCE.'

INTERVIEWER: 'HAVE YOU ANY IDEA OF ANY AGREEMENT THAT MAY WELL HAVE BEEN REACHED?'

SECRETARY OF STATE: 'NO, I AM NOT AWARE WHETHER ANY AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED AT ALL AS I SAY, NOTHING HAS COME TO ME.'

INTERVIEWER: 'DO YOU WELCOME THE IDEA OF PURSUING COMMON INTEREST?'

SECRETARY OF STATE: 'YES, OF COURSE. I MEAN THIS IS THE APPROACH OF PEOPLE TALKING TOGETHER HAS TO BE RIGHT WHETHER THEY CAN ACHIEVE THIS AND THERE ARE LOTS OF OBSTACLES AND THERE WILL BE LOTS OF PEOPLE SHOUTING ABUSE FROM THE SIDELINES AT ANYBODY WHO TRIES ANY CONSTRUCTIVE EFFORT BUT AT THE SAME TIME I HOPE PEOPLE WILL HAVE THE COURAGE TO SEE IF THEY CAN SIT DOWN AND TALK TOGETHER.'

INTERVIEWER: 'WHAT SORT OF EFFECT DO YOU THINK THIS WILL HAVE ON THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT?'



SECRETARY OF STATE: "WELL, IT HAD NO EFFECT AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED IN THE SENSE THAT NOBODY HAS SAID ANYTHING TO ME ABOUT. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER ANYTHING WILL COME OUT OF IT."

INTERVIEWER: "SOME REPORTS HAVE HERALD THESE AS AN END TO THE TROUBLES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. WOULD YOU HOPE THAT?"

SECRETARY OF STATE: "WELL, I THINK THAT IS PART OF WHAT PEOPLE THOUGHT WAS RATHER OVER THE TOP PRESENTATIONWISE AND IT IS A MAINLY DIFFICULT ISSUE TO GRASP BUT ONE DOES NOT WANT TO SHOUT DOWN ANYBODY WHO IS TRYING SENSIBLE CONSTRUCTION INITIATIVE. AT THE SAME TIME ONE DOES NOT WANT TO UNDER RATE THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEMS WE ARE FACING."

INTERVIEWER: "YOU DON'T SEE THIS AS A NEW INITIATIVE?"

SECRETARY OF STATE: "ALRIGHT, AS I SAY, NOBODY HAS BROUGHT ANYTHING IN TO ME SO I AM NOT THE RIGHT PERSON TO ASK. THE RIGHT PERSON TO ASK ARE THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED AND THEY WILL BE ABLE TO SAY WHETHER IT CAN COME TO ANYTHING AND WHETHER THEY THINK THAT THERE IS ANY PROPOSALS THAT THEY WOULD WANT TO PUT FORWARD."

INTERVIEWER: "ARE THEY OPTIMISTIC THE REPORTS YOU HAVE SEEN?"

SECRETARY OF STATE: "WELL, I THINK AS I SAY, I CAN'T BE OPTIMISTIC BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT ACTUALLY CONTAINED IN THEM OR WHAT PROPOSITIONS THEY MIGHT MAKE."

INTERVIEWER: "SECRETARY OF STATE, THANK YOU."

+++ENDS+++

3 FEBRUARY 1989\*

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Northern Ireland

## An Bhreith:

[The Taoiseach reviewed the position, especially in relation to the peculiar publicity following the Duisburg meeting.]

- ~~1.~~ Secretary (Mr O hUiginn)
2. Assistant Secretary (Mr Kirwan) *hm 6/2/89*
- ~~3.~~ Assistant Secretary (Mr Murray)
- ~~4.~~ Mr Hare.