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AN RÚNAÍOCHT ANGLA-ÉIREANNACH

ANGLO-IRISH SECRETARIAT

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CONFIDENTIAL

28 November, 1990

Assistant Secretary,  
Mr. Dermot Gallagher,  
Anglo-Irish Division,  
Department of Foreign Affairs.

Dear Assistant Secretary,

Paisley's Address to the D.U.P. Conference

Mr. Alston has given me a copy of Paisley's speech which I attach. You will see that a section of the speech is underlined on page four. I understand that this section was underlined by the DUP themselves for the attention of Mr. Brooke. You will note that Paisley argues:

- That the British Government has agreed that the Unionists will be part of the UK negotiating team and that if Unionists are "plenipotentiaries" with the British Government then they will know exactly what is taking place and will have the advantage of being able to argue their case personally and forthrightly without any fear that they might be betrayed (by the British).
- The suggestion that to take part in talks is an act of betrayal is utter nonsense. It would indeed be a betrayal if Unionists failed to take up their proper place as part of the UK team and ensure the unscrambling of the dictat.
- Dublin can have no place whatsoever at any talks about an internal settlement in Northern Ireland.
- Substantial progress and agreement must be made at such talks before there can be any further progress.
- The Unionists leaders will be able to decide whether there is such progress and agreement as indeed will the other parties taking part.
- At the end of the day whatever the decisions reached, they must be put in referendum to the people of Northern Ireland.

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It strikes me that the actual content is at variance with the benign interpretation of the speech, and of Paisley's position, given to us by the British.

- Paisley says Unionists had "every right to smile" after meeting Mr. Brooke in May because "the British Government did decide that the Conference should be suspended so that talks should take place and did decide that Maryfield should cease its normal operation under the terms of the Agreement... When the story unfolded it was seen that Dublin was not opposed to giving the prior conditions.... a replacement of the Agreement ... the closing of Maryfield (my emphasis) ... the suspension of the Anglo-Irish Conferences". The reference to closing Maryfield was repeated by Paisley on Radio Ulster last Sunday.
- The reference to substantial progress and agreement (my emphasis) in talks about an internal settlement before further progress can be made, is unqualified.
- The decision on timing is not left to Mr. Brooke. It is claimed for the Unionist leaders as well as the other parties. Paisley said on Monday that he would agree to Mr. Brooke's being an impartial go-between on timing as long as he was convinced that Brooke was acting completely free of Dublin interference (Guardian, 28 November) which the British see as encouraging, but which still leaves the final say in Unionist hands.

Yours sincerely,

Declan O'Donovan  
Joint Secretary