



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2021/93/49
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Accession Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

**PRIVATE NOTICE QUESTIONS addressed to the Taoiseach
for answer on Wednesday 3rd July 1991 by Deputies
John Bruton, Proinsias De Rossa, Tomás MacGiolla,
Dick Spring and Ruairi Quinn.**

QUESTION 1:

To ask the Taoiseach if he will make a statement on the apparent collapse of the Brooke talks.

JOHN BRUTON.

QUESTION 2:

To ask the Taoiseach if he will outline the Government's response to the announcement made this morning by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland that the current talks were ending; if he intends to meet with the British Prime Minister or to take any other steps to re-open this initiative; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

PROINSIAS DE ROSSA AND TOMÁS MAC GIOLLA.

QUESTION 3:

To ask the Taoiseach if he will make a statement on the breakdown of the inter-party talks on Northern Ireland.

DICK SPRING

QUESTION 4:

To ask the Taoiseach if he will make a statement on the breakdown of the inter-party talks on Northern Ireland.

RUAIRI QUINN

REPLY:

The Government regret that it has not proved possible to continue the round-table talks process at this time. The dialogue which has begun is potentially of great importance to all the people of this island and there is a shared interest in bringing the process forward to fruition. It is crucial that the commitment on the part of all participants, which has brought the process to this stage, should be sustained.

OVER

The common objective of bringing peace and prosperity to this island transcends any differences in approach among the participants in these talks. The vast majority of people of both traditions profoundly desire that the process begun in recent weeks should continue. They want their political leaders to show the maturity and self-confidence that could lead to a transformation of relationships on this island.

Consistent with our commitment to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, unless and until it is agreed that it be succeeded by new and better arrangements, we have shown our willingness to be flexible in constructing a process which would take account of the sensitivities of all participants. I would like to take this opportunity of underlining our continued flexibility in this regard.

The present opportunity for progress has not easily come about and cannot lightly be allowed go by. The Government hope that a discussion on how best to move matters forward will get under way in a positive and constructive spirit in the shortest possible time. We will work closely with the British Government and the parties involved to this end.

ENDS

POSSIBLE SUPPLEMENTARY POINTS

1. I can assure the House that the two Governments are jointly and fully committed to this process. This commitment was most recently reflected in the joint statement issued by Prime Minister Major and myself after our meeting in Downing Street on 21st June where we said that we -

"believe that the talks have an inherent capacity to achieve a far-reaching outcome agreed by all the participants". Our statement then went on to emphasise "the commitment of the two Governments to ensure that the full potential of this process is realised".

2. I fully share the view expressed by the Secretary of State in the House of Commons this afternoon when he said that "foundations have been laid for progress in the future", and the Government now look forward very much to early discussions with the British Government on how best to bring about a resumption of this crucially important process.