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ANGLO-IRISH GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
NOTE OF MEETING HELD IN OLD ADMIRALTY BUILDING, LONDON
ON 27 JULY 1988

Present :

BRITISH

Mr King
Mr Stewart

Sir John Blelloch
Sir Kenneth Bloomfield
Mr Stephens
Mr Fenn
Mr Chesterton

Mr Miles
Mr Masefield
Miss Steele

IRISH

Mr Lenihan
Mr Collins

Mr Mathews
Mr Dorr
Mr O'Rourke
Mr Gallagher
Mr Brosnan
Mr O'Donovan

Mr O hUiginn
Mr Collins
Mr Hughes

INTRODUCTION

The Ministers first had a private discussion for an hour and a quarter, following which they met with the Chief Constable of the RUC and the Garda Commissioner together with Messrs Stephens, Mathews, Hughes and Masefield for a discussion of security matters (recorded separately) which lasted for a little over an hour. The plenary session started at 12.20 hours.

2. Mr King welcomed the Co-Chairman Mr Lenihan back to the Conference following his illness. Mr Lenihan in turn welcomed Mr Stewart on his appointment to the NIO and asked that his best wishes be passed on to Sir John Stanley.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

3. WEST BELFAST: Mr King referred to his recent announcement of a new programme of measures to help those areas of greatest need in the Belfast area and emphasised that the £10m to be spent in the present financial year was only the beginning; he thanked Mr Lenihan for the welcome his government had given to the announcement. Mr King warned that money alone would not solve the problems of these areas of deprivation and referred to the disincentive to outside investors of some recent terrorist outrages. He encouraged the Irish to suggest ideas for projects that could be supported in these areas and asked them to encourage responsible local leaders to come forward also with ideas. Mr King assured the Irish that this was the start of a sincere and determined effort to tackle the problems of multiple deprivation in these disadvantaged areas.

4. Mr Lenihan welcomed the evidence of this commitment which had been demonstrated by additional financial resources as well as the creation of the new unit to carry forward a continuing programme of measures. He agreed that efforts should be concentrated on well established public sector and voluntary agencies such as the West Belfast Enterprise Board which would involve and encourage responsible community leaders in these areas as well as diminish the danger of waste.

5. Sir Kenneth Bloomfield described the increased coverage to be given by the creation of additional Action Teams who would work closely with the local community to identify schemes that could be supported. Mr King confirmed that resources for the continuing programme would be included in the public expenditure survey to be completed later in the year but it was not yet possible to say what these would be.

6. FAIR EMPLOYMENT: Mr King said that work was progressing on the drafting of the legislation and, he hoped for its inclusion in the programme set out in the Queen's speech. Mr Lenihan welcomed the

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progress being made with the legislation which he hoped would be as effective as possible. He urged that guidelines and objectives should be as explicit as possible and suggested that the legislation should provide for the new Commission to submit an annual report to the Conference monitoring this aspect of its work. Mr King confirmed that the Commission would be required to provide an annual report to Parliament and that this could be discussed at the Conference. He agreed to consider this suggestion but a reference to this effect would probably be more appropriate in the second reading speech.

7. Mr Lenihan again stressed the importance of the legislation not only for the purposes of attracting US investment but to counteract adverse propaganda in the States. Mr King said that he looked forward to support from the Irish Government on that front. It was agreed that officials could have a further meeting on the remaining unresolved points of detail eg on affirmative action and tenders and contracts awarded by public bodies and report to their respective Ministers but that this should not delay the drafting of the legislation which was being prepared on a tight timetable.

8. INTERNATIONAL FUND : Mr King referred to the strategy review to be conducted by the Board of the Fund in September and the paper prepared by the Advisory Committee for that purpose. Mr Gallagher explained the main proposals suggested by the Advisory Committee namely to phase out a number of existing programmes and by adopting a more targetted approach to concentrate on disadvantaged areas in rural as well as urban areas. It was also suggested that a small number of "flagship" projects be identified; these could be more easily represented to the US government as the major contributor to the Fund for future continued support. The linking of the Erne and Shannon waterways by the re-opening of the Ballyconnell Canal was a project identified by the Advisory Committee as an initiative in a depressed rural area which would have major significance for tourism North and South of the Border with the joining of the two major waterways. The Irish side pointed out that the project could be implemented on a phased basis.

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9. While the Co-Chairmen agreed generally with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, Mr King expressed reservations about the considerable cost of re-opening the Ballyconnell Canal (in the region of £16m) and the consequence for the Fund's remaining budget. He stressed the Advisory Committee's criteria that flagship projects be considered "on their respective merits".

CONFIDENCE MEASURES

10. Mr King began by referring to a number of measures such as the RUC Code of Conduct, the new Independent Police Complaints Commission and the newly published proposals for the PACE Order which indicated the continuing progress being made in developing a programme of measures to improve relations between the security forces and the minority community. In Mr King's view, these measures did more to build confidence in the administration of justice than initiatives such as 3 judge courts. The PACE order in particular spelt out a number of safeguards in the questioning and handling of suspects by the RUC, and it was hoped to have this legislation passed in the next parliamentary session.

11. "HARASSMENT" : Mr King accepted that contact between the security forces and the local community on a day to day basis was of the utmost importance and that correct behaviour, in spite of provocation was imperative. Although he had not yet had an opportunity to study the Irish paper just recently passed on this topic, Mr King had made his views known to the Security Forces and requested that increased attention and importance be given to this aspect of their work. Equally, responsible people in the community must be prepared to counter adverse mischievous propaganda against the security forces. Mr Lenihan concurred with these views.

12. PARADES AND MARCHES : In this context both Chairmen expressed appreciation for the way in which the RUC had handled the current marching season, especially the Portadown parades. It was noted that it had been the

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quietest season for many years. Mr Lenihan paid particular tribute to the RUC for their sensitive handling of the parades, which contributed to the genuine carnival atmosphere of the twelfth of July celebrations and reduced the confrontational and aggressive aspects.

13. EXTRADITION : Mr King alluded to the discussion which he had had earlier with the Irish Ministers on extradition and said that while the respective Attorneys had a vital role in the execution of the policy there were important political aspects of extradition which involved both Governments and the Conference. The figures demonstrated a considerable decline in the number of extradition applications made by UK police forces in recent years and possible explanations were the complicated extradition procedure and the lack of any successful outcome since the Passing of the 1987 Act. Mr Lenihan pointed out that in terrorist cases. lawyers were challenging the 1965 and not the 1987 Act.

14. Mr Collins questioned the accuracy of the figures at least for requests granted, but agreed that the apparent decline in applications from 51 in 1985 to 5 last year should be examined. He went on to say that this matter was being progressed at various levels. The letter from Sir Patrick Mayhew containing a number of suggestions was being considered; although some were totally impracticable the Irish Government's review of the 1987 legislation was due at the end of the year and statements were on record following the McVeigh case. Mr Lenihan said that the government was considering the 1965 Act, and that the Attorneys were looking at extradition procedures but he agreed that the Conference also had a role under the terms of the Agreement. Mr King repeated that he would write to Mr Lenihan suggesting an early meeting of the Working Group to take this forward.

15. SECRETARY OF STATE'S PLEASURE CASES : Mr King referred to his telephone call to Mr Lenihan informing him of the announcement of the review by the end of the year of the cases of young offenders detained under the Secretary of State's pleasure. Mr Lenihan

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welcomed the news and mentioned the impact it would have in the area of confidence building. Mr King warned against the danger of jumping to conclusions about the outcome of the review in particular cases but confirmed there were 16 prisoners in this category all of whom had been under 18 when their crimes were committed and had served over 8 years in prison.

16. STALKER/SAMPSON AND GIBRALTAR INQUESTS : Also in the context of "Confidence Measures" Mr Lenihan again stressed the need to bring the Stalker/Sampson investigation and Gibraltar inquests to speedy and judicious conclusions. Mr King said he recognised fully the dangers of misrepresentation which could be exploited by the terrorists but pointed out that the Gibraltar inquests were not within his remit. The RUC disciplinary hearings would probably start in September.

MINISTERIAL CONTACTS

17. The Conference noted and welcomed the continuing programme of bi-lateral meetings that had taken place between the Health Ministers as well as Mr Viggers and Mr Reynolds. It was also noted that meetings were being planned for the Education and Environment Ministers. Particular mention was made of the Joint Working Conference being planned for September on the Single European Market, and this initiative was welcomed by both sides.

'I' VOTERS

18. Mr King confirmed that it was hoped to include this legislation in the next parliamentary session and to have it in place for the Local Government elections next year.

MCGIMPSEY CASE

19. Mr King said that while he recognised that the outcome of the McGimpsey hearing was a domestic matter for the Irish government, he

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wished to register the British government's interest. If the judgment was adverse, he would not seek to avoid comment but he trusted it was the Irish Government's intention to honour their obligations under the Agreement. Mr Lenihan re-affirmed his governments committment to the joint Secretariat, the Conference and the Anglo-Irish Agreement.

ARTICLE 11 REVIEW

20. The Co-Chairmen agreed that the Review would be discussed on a preliminary basis at a September meeting of the Conference and that meanwhile officials should consider how this should be conducted.

COMMUNIQUE

21. The text of a joint statement (copy attached) was agreed for publication following the Conference and the meeting ended at 13.20 hours.



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27 July 1988

ANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

JOINT STATEMENT

The Anglo Irish Intergovernmental Conference met in London on 27 July. The British Government was represented by the Joint Chairman, Mr Tom King MP (Secretary of State for Northern Ireland) accompanied by Mr Ian Stewart MP (Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office). The Irish Government was represented by the Joint Chairman, Mr Brian Lenihan TD (Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs) and by Mr Gerard Collins TD (Minister for Justice). The Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána were present for that part of the discussion that dealt with security. The Conference discussed a wide range of topics including security matters and social and economic issues.

2. The Conference discussed the security situation in Northern Ireland. It strongly condemned the continuing terrorist outrages which had so clearly been perpetrated with complete disregard for human life and which underlined the utter futility of violence. The two sides reaffirmed their determination to defeat those who sought to advance political aims by violent means and to work as closely as possible together to combat terrorism. In this context they discussed a range of specific measures designed to enhance cross-border co-operation further. They also noted the steps which had already been taken against cross-border smuggling.

3. The Irish side, recalling previous Conference discussions of West Belfast, welcomed as a first step the announcement by the Secretary of State of a new programme of measures for the most

disadvantaged areas of Belfast. Both sides agreed on the importance of increasing the involvement of the private and voluntary sectors, to complement the role of the public sector, and encouraged all responsible members of the community to play a full part in this vital work. The Conference also agreed on the importance of sustaining and developing the programme on a continuing basis.

4. The Conference discussed the question of fair employment in the light of their mutual interest in having legislation which should be as effective as possible in securing fair employment in Northern Ireland. The Irish side expressed a number of points aimed at securing this objective. Both sides agreed to maintain their close ongoing consultation on the issue.

5. The Conference reviewed the progress to date of the International Fund for Ireland set up under Article 10(a) of the Anglo Irish Agreement which states:

"The two Governments shall co-operate to promote the economic and social development of those areas of both parts of Ireland which have suffered most severely from the consequences of the instability of recent years".

The joint chairmen expressed their appreciation of the work of the Board of the Fund and noted its achievement in meeting the objectives of the Fund, particularly through the projects which the Fund has supported in disadvantaged areas. They welcomed the prospects of further support from the United States and the proposed contributions from the European Community. In the light of these contributions they agreed that it was timely that the Board would shortly be considering its future strategy, and decided that they should convey to the Board the agreed views of the two Governments on the future direction and priorities of the Fund, having regard in particular to Article 10(a) of the Agreement.

6. The Conference had a further discussion of a programme of measures to improve relations between the security forces and the community in Northern Ireland and to build confidence in the system of justice, as agreed at its meeting in March. Both sides reaffirmed their joint commitment to this important objective. Ministers considered various factors and developments affecting perceptions of this issue and identified a number of areas for further study at official level with a view to reporting back to a meeting of the Conference in early autumn.

7. In the light of earlier Conference exchanges on prisons policy, the Irish side welcomed the announcement by the British Government of a special review involving young offenders held during the Secretary of State's pleasure.

8. On the question of reinforcing bilateral contact between Ministers on economic and social matters, the Conference welcomed important recent meetings in the industry and health sectors. In particular, the Conference welcomed the announcement by the Minister for Economic Development and the Minister for Industry and Commerce of a working Conference in the autumn on preparations north and south of the Border for the Single European Market in 1992.

9. Recalling previous discussions in the Conference on the position of "I" voters in Northern Ireland, the British side restated its intention of taking appropriate legislative action to apply to all future local government elections in Northern Ireland the provisions which govern the franchise for Parliamentary elections throughout the United Kingdom.

10. The Conference had a preliminary exchange of views on the organisation of the review, provided for in Article 11 of the Agreement, of the working of the Conference.

11. The Conference agreed to meet again at an early date.