

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## IRELAND



<b>Reference Code:</b>	2014/105/825
<b>Creation Date(s):</b>	16 May 1984
<b>Extent and medium:</b>	14 pages
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of the Taoiseach
<b>Access Conditions:</b>	Open
<b>Copyright:</b>	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

Taoiseach Mr. Nally,  
Tánaiste Amb. Donn  
Minister  
Secretary Mr. Lillis

SECRET

Anglo-Irish Exchanges 10 May 1984

The talks lasted from 10.15 a.m. to 12.50 p.m. They were followed by lunch at Brooks's Club. The atmosphere throughout was very friendly and relaxed - particularly so at lunch. Those present were Sir Robert Armstrong, David Goodall (both of the Cabinet Office), Mr. Nally, Mr. Lillis and the undersigned.

The Irish side used the attached text as a speaking note. The text is based on the Governments decision of 9 May 1984.

Confidentiality

Mr. Nally began by stressing the need for absolute confidentiality and the dangers which the Taoiseach would see in leaks. These were two-fold - he would be accused by the Opposition of going back to 1922; and within the Government there was a danger of going ahead of the consensus.

Sir Robert Armstrong We have taken special steps to keep matters confidential since the approach of the 1st of March. There are two problems (a) Mr Prior - who says that he only refers in public to what is already in the public domain. (Armstrong said he had personally "warned" Prior earlier this week); (b) the NIO in London and Belfast. They had tried to keep the information to London and to as small a number as possible. They had also tried to ensure that no paper went to Belfast. They hope this position is maintained and will do their best to do so.

Statement of Principles

Nally There is a political and a security problem about confidentiality. We recognise realistically that it can't be kept completely under wraps. Therefore we have been thinking of working towards a statement of principles which could be issued at the appropriate time as a framework or umbrella for the discussions.

Armstrong: We always felt that there would be a problem. Once the matter came into the public domain it would be necessary to move extremely fast. He personally had thought that it might be necessary to move very fast from the level of official talks to the level of a top political conference on the lines of Sunningdale. What was now being suggested (i.e. the principles) seem to be a different approach? The Irish (we) on the other hand were arguing for a joint statement of general principles which would not envisage particular measures: a statement which would not have the "hard stuff" in it.

Nally: Take it as a suggestion - we will each want to report back.

Michael Lillis: There have been leaks. There is need for some kind of public position which would be seen as reasonable.

Armstrong: I understand what you are saying. (At this point it became necessary to clarify that we were not thinking of the principles as, so to speak, an end in themselves or as something that would require long and detailed negotiation at official level but rather as a framework, publicly established by both Prime Ministers, to allow detailed negotiations and contacts to proceed).

David Goodall: Do you envisage a negotiation on the principles?

Nally: It is very important to the Government in Dublin to get the Unionists involved.

Goodall: We would have some difficulty about being seen to engage in a dialogue on the basis of the principles in the Forum Report. The debate so far on the Report has been generally helpful. There could be dangers as well as advantages in trying over time to agree on a statement of principles. (There followed some brief discussion of whether the European Council under the French Presidency in June might possibly be an occasion to issue a statement).

Armstrong: We would not exclude the possibility of some kind of statement from the European Council to cover what we are doing but some aspects of the position might have to be stated on a unilateral basis. Goodall might prepare a British draft on the basis of 5.1 and 5.2 of the Forum Report.

Goodall: These contacts (i.e. such as the present) can't wait for that. The tone of any common statement would be determined for the Prime Minister to a considerable extent by what might emerge from our present talks.

Nally cited the example of the short statement issued from the Heath/Cosgrave meeting at Baldonnell in 1973. At the time it seemed quite innocuous but Sunningdale eventually was based on it.

Armstrong immediately recalled this and took Mr. Nally's point as worth considering.

#### P.Q.s

Nally: There is still the problem of PQs. On our side we are talking of referring to "soundings" with a view to discussions.

Goodall: For the next three or four weeks we can stand on the position that we are studying the Report and the reaction to the Report and we will be considering the way forward in the light of that debate. Thereafter we would look forward to discussions with the Irish Government... (This turned into an effort to find some suitable formula - in part between Armstrong and Goodall but the Irish side also contributed. Some phrases tried by Goodall included "maintaining the dialogue" "still studying the Forum Report and the public reactions to it in both countries", "we welcome the constructive elements and hope it will lead to a constructive public debate". "Will follow with great interest in the light of that debate". "Look forward to maintaining the dialogue". Eventually the undersigned suggested a formula which the British side thought might be the right approach. This was on the general lines - not exact - of referring to "the continuing dialogue between the two Governments in which the Irish Government had brought the Forum Report to the attention of the British Government in all its aspects" and "the British Government is now studying this". It was agreed that there could be consultation on replies to queries).

Nally: You should of course know that the three Dublin morning papers today have some stories about official contacts. This is not based on anything we said.

Armstrong (seemed to accept this cheerfully enough). If anything comes out about the present talks we would presumably put them in the AIIC context. (It was decided to reserve question of whether these exchanges are or are not in the AIIC framework).

Forum Report

Nally: The following ideas while approved by our Government are without commitment. Furthermore the Government will want to be kept regularly informed and monitor what is happening very closely.

Armstrong: That is true on both sides. The PM will keep close contact with the Foreign Secretary and the Northern Ireland Secretary. The previous approach (1 March) had the general authority of the Cabinet. There had been a report back to the Cabinet but nothing had been put on paper.

Nally read out the first and second paragraph of A of the speaking note (welcome for a British consideration of a new effort and glad they share our concerns). He added some comments about the future projections in the independent study accompanying the Forum Report pointing to the gloomy prospects for Northern Ireland. In particular these showed that if the situation continues unemployment would grow to 30% and 30% GDP would come from the British Exchequer. This would be a wholly intolerable situation. The particular figures could be questioned but it was clear that if the situation was allowed to drift there would be catastrophic consequences (Forum Report 5.1.6).

Armstrong: We might not say so publicly but we would not disagree with the general trend or the social implications drawn from it.

#### Status of Northern Ireland

Nally continued with the third paragraph of A of the speaking note (glad the focus of British thinking is to find ways of developing joint Anglo-Irish structures to guarantee both identities in NI). He then read out item B from the speaking note (as amended during a preliminary discussion). This indicated that the Government would be ready if necessary to have it solemnly declared and registered with the UN that there could be no change in the present position of NI without the consent of a majority of the people of NI. He went on to say that in other words we are ready to repeat the Sunningdale declaration and have it registered with the UN.

Armstrong and Goodall noted that a similar approach had been contained in paragraph 6 of the Sunningdale Declaration but that because the second stage of that Conference never took place there had never been the formal agreement to register with the UN.

Armstrong asked if such a declaration would be challenged in the Courts in Ireland.

Nally: Yes but the challenge could be withstood. In the case taken by Kevin Boland following Sunningdale in 1974 the stress in the Supreme Court judgement had been on two points (a) that what had been agreed was a Communique and not a formal agreement; and (b) that the recognition given was de facto and not de jure. In regard to the present idea our Attorney General had advised that we would not be concerned about the decision of the Supreme Court on the first point i.e. he believed that even a formal agreement would be upheld by the Court. In other words the approach outlined would be accepted by the Court as within the Constitution so long as the Government kept from de jure recognition of Northern Ireland. The expectation was that there would be a constitutional challenge to any such agreement but on the advice of the Attorney General it had been concluded that the Government could win such a challenge.

Armstrong: In other words the compact agreed at Sunningdale is still available. Is that the course which the Irish Government prefer?

Nally: That is a subject on which the Irish Government have not taken a position. (Here there was some further clarification of this point on the general lines that the Government had considered the matter and had agreed that they would be willing if necessary to make a declaration on the lines outlined. They had not however considered the question of constitutional change - either way).

Goodall: But if you envisage being able to plead in the Supreme Court that the recognition given to Northern Ireland is de facto only, how can that be sufficient reassurance to the Unionists?

Goodall: The political logic of this exercise is: if you can satisfy the Unionists that their constitutional position is absolutely secure, then other things are possible. He appreciated that it would be very difficult for Dublin to offer this reassurance. But if we have to rest our defence of a declaration on the grounds that it did not have de jure effect, that would not meet the requirements of the situation.

Dorr intervened here with some explanations about the Sunningdale formula and the fact that it had in the event not been formally registered with the UN. The intention was now that a solemn declaration formally registered with the UN would indeed provide the necessary reassurance to Unionists. Since the agreement would be a solemn one and would be registered with the UN in accordance with the standing procedure one could not really say that it was not de jure. It would be more accurate to say that (on the advice of the Attorney General) this course could be taken without conflict with the Irish constitution Articles 2 and 3 (so long as they were maintained).

Goodall: (Clarifying) This would be one element in the agreement with the UK? It would be registered by both Governments with the United Nations?

Nally passed over a copy of an extract from a UN document about the registration procedure for treaties and agreements.

### Unitary State

Nally, moving on to section C of the speaking note, recalled that the Forum Report had been drafted by the four democratic nationalist parties in the island. In our view paragraph 5.1 and 5.2 were the core of the Report - that plus the judgements that the consequences of inaction could be catastrophic. He referred in particular to paragraph 5.2(10) (the slide towards further violence and Britain's duty to respond now). The best and most durable basis for peace in the view of the parties to the Forum Report would be Irish unity. Paragraph 5.7 set out the particular structure which the Forum would wish to see established. This was a unitary state achieved by agreement and consent embracing the whole island of Ireland and providing irrevocable guarantees for the protection and preservation of both the unionists and nationalist identities. As a first question therefore he had to raise with the British side the question as to the possibility of attaining this?

Armstrong: This comes as no surprise. I have to say that the British Government does not believe that agreement on unity is available since there is no consent from the majority in Northern Ireland to it. Therefore we don't see it as a durable basis for peace and security in the foreseeable future. We see no reason to believe that the unionist majority would regard irrevocable guarantees as providing the protection that they need which is provided at present by the border and the fact of being part of the UK.

Goodall: Some in the British Government would go further and say that constantly reiterating unity as a solution is unhelpful because it increases the intransigence on the unionist side. If ever unity were achievable it could only be because confidence had been built up sufficiently to make it natural.

Michael Lillis said that one could accept such a view as being understandable, coming from Unionists. The British should have learned that the desire of a majority of Irish people for Irish unity was a reality that could not be wished away. He added that the preference of the Irish Government for a unitary state remained "on the table".

Goodall: We understand this. It is the position of the Labour Party but it is certainly not the position of the present Conservative Government.

Armstrong read out paragraph 5.1(6) of the Forum Report about the drift into more widespread civil conflict. He said that the unitary state was not likely to arrest this drift.

Nally: We have to stick with the Forum Report.

#### Federal/Confederal

Nally went on to read out the point about a federal/confederal approach as in item (b) of section C of the speaking note. This refers to the possibility that it could make very full provision for accommodation of the sense of British identity of the unionists. He added that it could also have some financial advantages but these were secondary.

Armstrong: I have to say that in our judgement unionist opinion is that this would go counter to what they need as already mentioned - the protection of the UK and the border. A solution on the lines of Chapter 7 of the Report (federation/confederation) as David Watt says in the Times this morning should be easier for the unionists to stomach but our judgement is that it is not within the realm of possible achievement. We also believe that there is no likelihood of a process which would lead to its acceptance by a majority of the people of Northern Ireland in the time-scale we are talking about. The British Government does not regard this therefore as a practical

or immediate contribution to arresting the decline in Northern Ireland. The British Government belief is that it will be by relatively small steps that one would have to move in that direction. The rock in the end is membership of the UK and the right of recourse to London (i.e. for the unionists).

Goodall asked about paragraph 7.7 of the Forum Report which referred to the possibility that Unionists 'could maintain special links with Britain'. What did this mean?

Lillis said that on the negative side he had to say that he thought this was not intended to involve membership of the United Kingdom but what it meant precisely would have to be worked out.

Goodall wondered if it had any possible meaning.

Dorr, simply to show that the concept was not wholly without meaning, referred to the rather anomalous situation envisaged at Sunningdale where a Council of Ireland would provide special links between Northern Ireland, which still remained within the UK, and the South.

Armstrong (repeated his earlier comments). This does not seem to the British Government to be a likely basis for going forward in the immediate future because the unionists will not accept it. Unionists will not accept removal from U.K. or removal of authority of U.K. Government.

Goodall: They will not agree to break the constitutional link.

Armstrong: Maybe there are some in Northern Ireland who would be willing to consider this but there is simply no prospect of modifying the British guarantee. It is too difficult for the present British Government to contemplate. It appears that some change in the guarantee would certainly be involved in this approach. He suspects that otherwise Paisley might go for it - though he would never say so publicly. This meant in effect that the Government is boxed-in - all the Unionists have to do is to sit tight.

Goodall (reinforcing more strongly what Armstrong had said). Yes but there is a very strong feeling on the part of the Unionists that all this talk about acceptance of their "identity" is double talk. What they want is membership of the United Kingdom. It is very difficult for any British Government - even a Labour Government - to lift the guarantee. If it had never been given it might be all right but granted that it is there it would be very difficult to contemplate lifting it since this would involve the idea of possibly pushing citizens out of the United Kingdom.

The Forum Report may be a worthy document but it burkes the whole problem of consent while putting forward reasonable ideas. In the form here outlined with all its ambiguities (the federal/confederal option) the answer must be that it is not acceptable.

Nally: The guarantee poses the same problems for you as Article 2 and 3 do for us.

Goodall: There must on the other hand be a way of saying to the unionists - all right Northern Ireland is going to be part of the United Kingdom. But you in turn must recognise that you are living on the island of Ireland. The present situation is simply intolerable. Therefore you have got to learn to work in an all-Ireland framework as well as in the UK framework. This is not a stepping stone to unity - though who can say what may happen one day. In saying something on the foregoing lines to the unionists however you would have to be able to say also that the challenge has been removed.

Lillis said it was important to note that the Forum Report did not call for British withdrawal or withdrawal of the British guarantee. The report did not demand Irish unity. Rather the report criticised the way in which the British guarantee had been applied in practice and he cited Section 5.1.4 of the report.

Armstrong observed that the Forum formulation was a "fair statement on the case".

Joint Authority

Nally moved on to D of the speaking note in relation to joint authority. Referring to the British ideas of 1 March he said that - your focus is perhaps too narrow. Some of your ideas such as bands along the border would cause the IRA to become stronger.

He continued with section E of the speaking note stressing that anything done must be adequate, capable of enduring, transparent and not a Trojan horse. We recognise totally the need to create reassurance on the part of the unionists and to stop alienation (on the part of the nationalists). Alienation has become quite marked among all classes. Many law-abiding citizens are moving towards support for Sinn Fein.

What the Irish Government are suggesting after full consideration is an agreement between the two countries. Here he read out section F paragraph 14 (or paragraph 10 in the revised form) items (i) - (vi). He added the comment that the approach was that things which are causing difficulty should be given to the joint authority and things which are not causing difficulty should be given to a devolved administration in Northern Ireland. He continued with the other sub items but on item (xii) did not at this point mention the concept of alternation in the proposed joint command although this came out in discussion later.

At this point since it was becoming difficult to convey the rather dense concepts orally the text of the speaking note section F to the end was handed over informally. And there was some considerable discussion on the ideas put forward (which I did not note fully).

Goodall in discussion asked that what happens if there is disagreement within the joint authority for example on the deployment of security forces in a particular area. At present many decisions on deployment of security forces have to be referred to the political level and taken by the Secretary of State. In the new situation envisaged what would happen if within the joint authority the British and Irish Ministers were not in agreement?

Lillis said he approached the matter differently. Northern Ireland in practice would be within the United Kingdom. However the problem is that there is deep alienation there and no acceptance of authority. The need is to win acceptance for authority. The ideas which the British side had floated earlier are of some interest and have been discussed but are seen as inadequate and would be no enthusiasm within our Government for going ahead on that basis. If we were to go ahead it would have to be on the adequate basis. If we go ahead with anything at all on these lines the Irish involvement should not be seen as subsidiary. In that case we would simply be accused of "doing the Brits dirty work". It is necessary therefore for both Governments to have equal status within the framework set. This leaves the question of how you resolve differences. This is very difficult but the problem cannot be met simply on the basis of saying that the UK Minister within the authority would be pre-eminent. Some ideas could be thought of - for example the concept of alternating responsibility for six months at a time or the idea of a third party to help resolve disputes.

Goodall: But how would the individual citizen feel? Would this approach really introduce greater stability? He said that he had spent the previous week in Northern Ireland among the R.U.C.. As Unionists they felt that their system worked reasonably well. They also hoped that their province would benefit from any upsurge in prosperity in the rest of the U.K. Their people seemed to be settling down to a state of "normality". The Irish ideas being presented seemed designed to cast the whole institutional life of Northern Ireland into a state of acute uncertainty. The British approach was based on the notion of keeping the present structure of authority in place and bringing in the Irish dimension, getting people accustomed to the idea of all-Ireland institutions. "This (the Irish proposal) is a very unsettling thing indeed". Now immediately after a call for unity by the four parties in the Forum can you really possibly imagine that this complex system envisaged here would produce peace or stability?

Armstrong could see the reason for saying that the British vote could not be the dominant one. This suggested the possibility of a casting vote? What could it be where sovereignty rests with the UK? It would certainly have to work quickly in reaching decisions (these comments by Armstrong seemed to me to be ruminative rather than objections).

Dorr said that the British proposals of 1 March while rather different had also envisaged some kind of joint action. They spoke of a security commission. The question still arose however how disputes would be settled within the commission - in other words the problem was not simply one in the Irish ideas but one which had to be addressed in any kind of joint approach.

Armstrong said that they had not had closed minds. What they had been thinking of in their proposals was some kind of joint squads on the model of the inter-Constabulary joint squads in Britain and possibly a joint police authority. There had also been some thought of the possibility of a third police force (i.e. neither RUC or Gardai). If this approach had been followed in the UK view the Commander could be either from North or South - he would be answerable to a joint police authority. It had seemed possible to them that some kind of agreement on policing on areas on either side of the border would be easier to come by than elsewhere. There would be a real prospect that a joint police authority responsible would be able to work objectively. We may have been over-optimistic in this. It seemed however a good approach to take as a first step.

Lillis: You see it as experimental? Our feeling is that in that case the uncertainty and instability would increase.

Armstrong: Our initial proposal related to nationalist areas where something on these lines would be seen as a more remote threat to the unionists while at the same time doing something for the nationalists. That is to say the concept was of "jointness" in areas where it was needed and not where it would seem a threat. This was the kind of thinking behind it. He talked about the concept of "joint squads". (I am not sure that I have fully grasped the details of British thinking as outlined by Armstrong on this point). Armstrong (who has a Home Office background) however seem to argue that in the initial British thinking the "jointness" would be limited in areas and that the whole thing could be handled more as an operational matter than a political one. At one stage in the discussion I thought he had moved towards saying that while there would be "bands" on each side of the border and some movement across it as well as some kind of joint policy authority, the important decisions on either side would be taken by the relevant political authority and not jointly. I should add however that it did not seem to me that Armstrong and Goodall were really trying to pursue the initial British ideas with us in this

discussion. It was simply that reference had been made to those ideas to show that the problem of resolving a dead-lock within the relevant joint authority could exist in any case and even apart from our specific proposals.

Armstrong: If item (viii) about powers reserved to the joint authority did not include security it would be easier. (This led to some tentative discussion of that point between Nally and Armstrong without commitment on either side).

Armstrong (explaining his idea): Security would remain at Westminster but there would be a right for the Irish Minister within the joint authority to be consulted. The view of the British Minister would however prevail.

Lillis emphasised that we are trying to think of something which would last.

Armstrong accepted this and commented that for that reason we were suggesting a much bigger jump than the British side had envisaged. Their approach had been a matter of individual steps.

Lillis: This would be destabilising in itself. The ideas now being considered would not work if the perception of the minority was that the system of authority remained British but that its agents on the street simply included some Irish forces.

Goodall: If in all decisions that matter the Irish Government has an equal say then it is difficult to argue that sovereignty is unaffected. Sovereignty in fact has been emptied of content.

Armstrong recalled from his studies in political science that the elements of sovereignty were regarded as three-fold - finance, foreign policy, and defence and security. It seemed that our approach envisaged the first two as remaining with the British Government but not the third.

Goodall explained that because of these difficulties their earlier approach had envisaged the idea of "commissions" with long-term objectives. The question is, is there any political all-Ireland dimension that could be considered without giving rise to the difficulties mentioned? Could there be for example an Irish Commissioner resident in Belfast with some right to be consulted? Or an Irish Minister resident in Belfast? (This was said rather speculatively).

Armstrong and Goodall together said that on balance the proposals we had outlined would seem "very cool" to the Prime Minister. Her immediate reaction would be to say "they have the veto and we pay!"

Lillis pointed to item (ii) and explained the concept. He said that we believed it was necessary to provide reassurance to the unionists which would remain valid even if there were to be a change of sovereignty at a later date by agreement.

Armstrong returned to the question of whether it would be tolerable to the Irish Government if security were reserved to Westminster?

Nally speaking personally wondered if it might be? He said he had no authority on the point however.

This led to a certain amount of discussion of what "the joint authority" meant - was it the two Governments or was it an instrumentality established by the two Governments?

Armstrong (Nally?) mentioned the concept that Westminster could exercise certain powers through the joint authority

Goodall asked how the executive would be appointed - would it contain equal representation for the minority and the majority.

Nally doubted that this was the intention and Lillis supported this.

Armstrong asked if there could be a return to the concept of their ideas of a joint commission rather than a joint authority.

Goodall began to work again through the speaking note to see how it would stand. On point (i) he said that there would be an agreement which would include a declaration of the kind mentioned earlier. On (ii) it might be better to take out the explicit reference to "constitutional change". On (vi) if security were now to be considered as an excepted power then the wording of this item would need to be changed. One might consider changing "from" (which the exercise of public authority would flow) to "through". Item (vi) on Excepted Powers would arguably be revised to include security (at this point Goodall was looking through the speaking note and in effect imagining what changes would need to be made in it if one were to retain the idea which Armstrong had floated that security would be excepted to Westminster but with certain functions, while remaining the general responsibility of Westminster, being devolved to the joint authority). He added that a Bill of Rights might be envisaged.

Armstrong said that if the "joint authority" is understood to mean the two Governments then one is talking about joint sovereignty. If on the other hand the phrase is understood to mean the Ministers appointed by the two Governments then it is not a case of joint sovereignty.

As regards item (xi) of the speaking note which had been the subject of earlier discussion, Nally read out a section of the study prepared by a Sub-Committee of the Forum on the question of joint authority. The section related to the problem of resolving disagreements and suggested various methods - arbitration, a casting vote etc. It might be possible to have one of the two members of the authority have a casting vote for a time. The casting vote would then pass to the other.

Discussion returned briefly to the fact that even the initial British proposals would give rise to the problem of resolving disagreement. Goodall said that in their proposals joint crime squads would have been established and could have been used on either side of the border. But their use could only be by agreement. However for the most part the functioning of the system could be at operational rather than political level.

Armstrong said in his view it was easier to focus on the idea that the actual police and military would remain as they are but would operate under a joint authority. He thought that the idea of an alternating command (mentioned in item (xii) of the speaking note) would lead to confusion. The police could be answerable to a joint police authority.

Lillis said he had considerable problems about the way the discussion seemed to be proceeding. There was a very clear difficulty in any of these ideas. If the police ran into trouble in West Belfast for example the question had to be resolved which military force they would call in?

Armstrong said it was very difficult to see what would be done in Belfast. Along the border however he thought if the incident happened in the South the Joint Squad would call on the Irish Army and if it were North of the border it would be on the British Army.

Nally intervened to say firstly that involvement in the South was not "on" and secondly that we must not think that there was enormous enthusiasm for joint security at Government level in Dublin - indeed on the contrary there were some strong reservations and the idea was only being considered as something which seemed to be necessary. There was a clear awareness on our side that there would be problems involved and it was by no means a panacea.

Goodall: That is why we thought of an initial approach by way of a joint security commission which would see what could be done and develop ideas. Our approach was not to start in Belfast. The joint commission would monitor whatever was done at the outset to see how it worked and see about further development. We took a similar approach to the idea of an all-Ireland court. Here again we thought of beginning by setting up a commission to study the matter and look into the harmonisation of criminal law North and South.

At this point the discussions were adjourned and the participants left for lunch. Over lunch there was very little substantive discussion of the issues worth reporting and discussion ranged more over the general questions of the Anglo-Irish relationship historic and otherwise.

Prior to lunch, Goodall observed that he did not yet know whether to present the "Irish ideas" as we had presented them to the Prime Minister. He observed that on the side of British requirements of us, our suggestions were inadequate and on the other side they were excessive. He said, perhaps jocosely, that the Prime Minister might well consider that the Irish "demands" amounted to "burglary".

Over lunch, Goodall said that the Irish suggestion on the constitutional position of Northern Ireland seemed to him to be seriously inadequate. He could not himself see anything short of a constitutional amendment as being adequate. Nally said the Government had taken no negative decision on that.

Goodall also said that in his days with the RUC, he had confirmed what we had told him about their border patrolling, namely that the RUC did not patrol on the ground up to the border. He said the RUC had said that the Garda Siochana did not patrol up to the border either. He said the RUC had said relations on the border up to and including the level of Inspector were excellent. Above the they got progressively worse. He added that the RUC had told him that they had considerable respect and regard for the Garda Siochana. They greatly regretted however the dispersal from the border of the Garda Task Force. Lillis remarked that he had not heard of such a view attributed to the RUC before. He added that the only standing-down that he had heard an allusion to was that of a number of RUC officers North of the border, but that he understood it was hoped to restore earlier levels following meetings between Mr. Barry and Mr. Prior and Mr. Noonan and Mr. Prior. Goodall continued that all the RUC personnel he spoke to shared the perception that support for Sinn Fein continued to rise and that they would take a commanding position in the nationalist community in Northern Ireland following the local election in June next year.

It was privately confirmed between Goodall and Lillis that neither side had made "proposals" to the other. This understanding could be invoked in the case of queries.

N. Dorr  
16 May 1984

(Note prepared in consultation with M. Lillis)