

PS/3191/88/DR

ANGLO-IRISH GOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN IVEAGH HOUSE, DUBLIN ON 13 SEPTEMBER 1988

Present:

	<u>British Side</u>	<u>Irish Side</u>
Ministers:	Mr King Mr Stewart	Mr Lenihan Mr Collins
Officials:	Sir John Blelloch Mr Burns Mr Fenn Mr Innes	Mr Mathews Mr Dorr Mr Gallagher Mr Brosnan Mr O'Donovan Ms Anderson Mr Corcoran
Secretariat:	Mr Miles Mr Masefield Miss Steele Mr Canavan	Mr O hUiginn Mr Ryan Mr O Floinn

INTRODUCTION

Following a private meeting lasting 45 minutes between the Taoiseach and Mr King, Ministers had private discussions over breakfast. They were joined by the Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner together with Messrs Innes, Mathews, Ryan and Masefield for a discussion on security matters which lasted for an hour. The plenary session started at 11.50 hours.

E. R.

SIR KENNETH BLOOMFIELD

2. Mr Lenihan began by referring to the bomb outrage the previous day which had destroyed Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's home and asked that his best wishes be conveyed to Sir Kenneth and his family. Both Chairmen agreed that as Sir Kenneth the Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service normally attended Conference meetings special mention should be made of him and Lady Bloomfield in the Conference communique.

ARTICLE 11 REVIEW

3. Mr Lenihan suggested that a joint paper on the Article 11 Review should be prepared by officials which would facilitate a detailed discussion of the Review at the next meeting of the Conference in October. In response to Mr King's query on whether the paper would deal with the substance of the Review or the mechanics, Mr Lenihan expressed the view that both should be left open until that discussion. Mr King explained his desire to involve the Unionist parties in the Review procedure but he wished to do so without implying that his invitation to them was issued with the permission of the Conference or the Irish Government. There should be an opportunity for Unionist input before the nature of the Review appeared to be finalised. It was agreed the work to be undertaken by officials on both sides would be regarded as preliminary and that the communique would reflect these sensitivities.

4. On timing, Mr Lenihan concurred with Mr King's view that the Review should begin on 15 November. Mr Lenihan's initial thoughts were that the Review might take up to six months but Mr King was also anxious that the impression should not be given that the exercise was open ended and preferred a tighter deadline. It was agreed therefore that the scope and timescale for completion would also be discussed in October. Mr Burns observed, and both Chairmen agreed, that the Review would be an exchange of views between the two Governments and not for publication.

E. R.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SECURITY FORCES AND THE COMMUNITY

5. Mr King referred to the Irish paper on nationalist perceptions of harassment by the security forces which was still being considered though his preliminary view was that there was a lot in it with which the British side could agree. Mr Burns reported that officials would be meeting at the end of the month to prepare a joint report for a future Conference meeting on building confidence in the system of justice in Northern Ireland. Mr Collins was concerned that this issue should be addressed at the next Conference meeting as it was being exploited by Sinn Fein supporters and Mr King agreed. Mr Burns confirmed that the report would cover the very wide range of issues discussed by officials over recent months, though naturally some would be more highlighted. The Irish side recorded their wish to see issues affecting the administration of justice, including the courts, covered in the report.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS

6. Mr King said that the work of drafting new Fair Employment legislation was in hand, and on target for the next session of Parliament. The Irish would continue to be kept informed. In certain respects changes were being planned to the previous position which they should find helpful.

7. Following their discussion at the last meeting in July, the Co-Chairmen welcomed the recent decision of the Board of the International Fund to give priority to disadvantaged areas in Northern Ireland and to consider further the possibility of a small number of "flagship" projects. Mr Lenihan said that this approach would be more readily understood in the U.S. and that he hoped to use his forthcoming trip to press for continuing financial support for the Fund.

8. In response to a question from Mr Gallagher, Mr King confirmed that work was pressing ahead on the West Belfast initiative.

E. R.

Mr King suggested that it would be more fruitful to discuss West Belfast and other disadvantaged areas at the next Conference meeting when consideration of public expenditure matters had been taken further.

SECURITY AND LEGAL MATTERS

9. Mr King confirmed that the review of cases of young offenders detained under the Secretary of State's Pleasure would be completed by Christmas. While it was too soon to say what the outcome of the review might be in particular cases, consideration could be given to a reference in the communique following an October Conference.

10. The Co-Chairmen confirmed that during the restricted security discussion it had been agreed that the Working Group on Extradition should meet as soon as possible. The Group had been asked in addition to examine the scope for extra-territorial judicial proceedings.

11. Mr King said that he understood that disciplinary charges had just been served on the police officers involved in the Stalker/Sampson investigation.

[Afternote: It has since been learned, and notified to the Irish side, that (a) at that stage nine of the twenty officers recommended by the Kelly team for disciplinary action had actually been served with full statements of charges and supporting papers; (b) those papers had since had to be withdrawn in order to delete privileged material; (c) the amended papers would then be resubmitted to Kelly, which would delay the hearings by some two months.]

COMMUNIQUE

12. In the process of finalising the joint statement, Mr King stressed the need to recognise Unionist sensitivities in relation to the Agreement and to involve them in the Review process.

C O N F I D E N T I A L

E. R.

13. In discussion of the section on security, Mr Collins wished to emphasise that the security forces must operate within the law at all times. British Ministers stressed that this was and would continue to be the case.

14. The Irish side wished to include the reference to "confidence in the administration of justice" the language of the original Agreement. Mr King referred to the sensitivities it raised and Mr Burns argued that the work of the Confidence Measures Group was much wider than the administration of justice. It was agreed that the wording "system of justice" should be retained.

15. The attached joint statement was agreed for issue to the press at the end of the meeting which concluded at 12.30.

C O N F I D E N T I A L