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

FROM: C D KYLE
15 MAY 1995

CDK/17243/94/HC

cc PS/Sir J Wheeler (B&L) B
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) B
PS/Malcolm Moss (L,DOE&DHSS) B
PS/PUS (B&L) B
PS/Mr Fell B
Mr Thomas B
Mr Legge B
Mr Elliott (DHSS) B
Mr Williams B
Mr Steele B
Mr Shannon B
Mr Bell B
Mr Watkins B
Mr Daniell B
Mr Leach B
Mr Wood (B&L) B
Mr Maxwell B
Mr Perry B
Mr Marsh B
Mr Stephens B
Mr Dodds B
Mr White B
Mr Canavan B
Dr Power B
Mr Maccabe B
Mr Brooker B
Mrs Brown B
Mrs Collins B
Mr Bramley B
Mr Maitland B
Mrs Kenny B ✓
Ms Checksfield B
Mr Lamont, RID B
HMA, Dublin B
Mr P Lever, Cab Office
Mr David Gould, Cab Office
Mr Stephen McDonald, Washington
Chief Constable, RUHQ

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) - B

INTERNAL RECORD OF THE PLENARY SESSION HELD IN DUBLIN ON 28 APRIL
1995 - IC(95)2

Attached is the final version of the Internal Record of the Plenary
Session of the Intergovernmental Conference held in Dublin on
28 April.

[Signed]

C D KYLE

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

INTERNAL PLENARY RECORD OF THE
INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
HELD IN DUBLIN ON 28 APRIL 1995

PRESENTBritish Side

Sir Patrick Mayhew
Sir John Wheeler
Michael Ancram
Mr Moss

Officials

Mr Fell
Chief Constable
Mr Thomas
Mr Legge
Mr Elliott (DHSS)
Ambassador Sutherland
Mr Stephens
Mr Lamont
Mr Howard
Supt Robin Campbell

Anglo-Irish Secretariat

Mr Williams
Mr Smyth
Mr Kyle

Irish Side

Mr Spring
Mrs Owen
Mr Noonan

Officials

Mr Dorr
Mr Dalton
Mr O'Dwyer (DOH)
Garda Commissioner
Mr S O hUiginn
Mr Donoghue
Mr Hennessey
Mr Finlay
Mr Hickey
Mr Brosnan

Anglo-Irish Secretariat

Mr O'Donovan
Mr Mellett
Mr Farrell

The Plenary Session followed on from the Restricted Security Session. It commenced at 1010 hours and there was a break for approximately one hour at 1045 hours when Ministers and Mr Fell on the British side, along with Irish Ministers and senior Irish Officials, attended a ceremony at the Irish War Memorial Park, Islandbridge. The discussion on political matters involved restricted numbers and is recorded separately. Mr Moss and Mr Noonan, who had had a separate meeting during the course of the morning, joined the Conference at around 1315 hours for the North/South Economic and Social item.

2. At the opening of the Plenary Session the Tanaiste welcomed the British side to Dublin and expressed a special welcome to the recently appointed British Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, Mrs Veronica Sutherland.

CONFIDENCE ISSUES

Response of Security Forces to Cessation of Violence

3. The Tanaiste recounted that the British side would be familiar with the Irish Government views on the need for a rapid and visible response by the security forces to the new situation. He noted that since the last Conference meeting a number of useful steps had been taken including the ending of routine army patrolling in Belfast and elsewhere, and the first significant troop withdrawals. He believed it was now timely to reassess the situation and he spoke of a growing sense, among the nationalist community, that HMG's response was unduly cautious. He added that at the same time Irish Government contacts suggested that there was an acceptance across much of the unionist community of the need to adjust the security profile in line with the new situation. He commented that it was fairly remarkable that almost 8 months into the ceasefire there were more troops in Northern Ireland than there had been in 1990.

4. The Secretary of State explained that the response to the ceasefires was governed by the advice given by his principal security advisor, the Chief Constable of the RUC. He emphasised that changes were not introduced as a matter of political expediency; the response continued to be cautious in the light of intelligence which indicated that both the Provisional IRA and Loyalist paramilitaries retained their capabilities. Measures introduced to date could be reversed in a short time, but the British side would be interested to hear if there was more which the Irish side thought could be done.

5. Sir John Wheeler recalled that during the Restricted Security Session both sides had heard reports from the two police chiefs which indicated that there continued to be a real threat from PIRA, and that they continued to target and retain their arms and munitions. It was against this background that one had to look at the response by the security forces in Northern Ireland. The Minister believed that the security forces had responded rapidly and

imaginatively to the ceasefires, with routine military support having been withdrawn in many cases and military patrolling levels in support of the RUC having dropped by 75% compared with pre-ceasefire levels. He added that the border roads reopening programme was well underway with the majority of roads now open; there was no longer any routine military support to the RUC in about 20 cities, towns and villages (in Belfast there was, of course, no routine military patrolling at all now); most town centre barriers were now open; there was no routine checking of vehicles at patrol bases and PVCs; and 2 Roulement Battalions had been relocated to their respective home bases. It was of course the British side's long term objective to move to normal policing, but until such times as this was possible it was for the Chief Constable and the GOC to advise on operational requirements and on the resources needed. Ministers would be guided by professional advice, and would not be second guessing it. A good deal had already been achieved and Sir John Wheeler advised that he had a lengthy list of measures taken by the security forces to date. He went on to note that there had been a change in the attitude of the public and he was particularly pleased to note that in a recent RUC recruitment campaign some 22% of applications had come from the minority community, as well as 34% coming from women. This was very encouraging and indicated that the community was voting with "a fountain pen".

6. The Chief Constable commented that he was slightly taken aback by the Tanaiste's remarks that matters should proceed more rapidly. He saw the move forward as going further than he would have believed possible at the time of the announcement of the ceasefires. He remained cautious, but thought it was of particular note that the RUC were now patrolling all areas of Belfast without military support. He explained to the Conference that he also had a lengthy list identifying movements in response to the ceasefire. He emphasised that the way these changes had been managed spoke volumes for the men and women at constable level in the RUC. He was keen to see further movement but it had to be in a cautious manner. He also referred to the growing co-operation from the public for the RUC, including from the minority community.

The Tanaiste said he did not wish to take away from what had been achieved, but he would urge the British side to consider the dismantling of some of the more obtrusive security structures. He referred specifically to the Rosemount Tower in Londonderry saying that it continued to be an irritant, and also the protective wall around the police station in Middletown. Could progress be made in relation to these particular areas?

8. The Secretary of State commented that there was nothing between the two sides in their objectives. The security response had to be measured against a perceived threat. In relation to Rosemount Tower the Secretary of State indicated that he would only be too glad to see it go, if security advice permitted, but it had to be borne in mind that it was because of the surveillance available through this structure that it had been possible to take troops off the streets in the area. In relation to RUC Middletown he hoped that the time would come when a reduced threat would allow the height of the wall to be lowered.

9. The Chief Constable added that he would like to see further changes; issues such as the protective wall around RUC Middletown were being looked at, with redrawings of the plans being produced. In the long term no-one wanted to see police stations resembling fortresses. The Tanaiste referred to remarks by Acting Deputy Chief Constable Flanagan about reviewing the fortifications at RUC stations, and seeking to make them less forbidding in appearance. The Chief Constable explained that he had asked the Acting Deputy Chief Constable to look at this matter; he hoped that it might be possible, for example, to move down from a Mark 15 mortar protection to a Mark 10 level of protection. The aim was to get to a stage where police stations appeared as normal as elsewhere.

10. Mrs Owen welcomed the news that a substantial number of changes were already in hand in response to the ceasefires; she looked forward to further developments and more resources being used in normal type policing activities. She referred to the fact that some

£2.5 billion had been spent on the Irish side on security and advised that the Garda had been conducting a major review of their deployment in the light of the ceasefire. The level of Garda protection in certain prisons had been reduced, Garda manpower which had been previously deployed full time on security duties was now being assigned part-time to other duties, and checkpoints had been withdrawn. As the favourable security situation continued Mrs Owen expected that there would be redeployment of manpower and resources from the border during the current year. Nevertheless, whilst there had been a freeing of resources the Irish did not envisage any cuts in Garda numbers especially as the scourge of drugs, both North and South of the border, appeared to be growing. Mrs Owen believed it was important that the two police forces should continue to work closely together on this particular issue, and she asked for the Secretary of State's and the Tanaiste's agreement that the issue of the drugs menace might be raised at a future Conference. She went on to say that there had been a number of excellent finds and seizures on both sides of the border, but this did highlight the seriousness of the problem; she feared that the island of Ireland was being targetted as a back door for moving drugs into Europe. She hoped that the release of resources from security activities could be used in the fight against the drugs problem.

11. Sir John Wheeler expressed the hope that the level of co-operation would continue to grow and prosper, commenting that HMG had recognised for some time that the reducing terrorist threat would lead to an increased level of organised crime. He referred to an announcement he was making on Monday 1 May about a crime prevention initiative in Northern Ireland. He identified the example of Newry as one of those towns which was taking part in the safer towns initiative, and he regretted the attitude of Sinn Fein in the town towards the crime prevention schemes. He emphasised that it was in everyone's interest to appreciate the value of such work.

12. The Chief Constable explained that there was no question but that PIRA and the Loyalist paramilitaries were involved in drugs.

He added that the RUC had recently increased resources in its Drugs Squad. Paramilitary involvement with drugs fluctuated from time to time and, in response to a point from the Tanaiste asking about a move of paramilitaries to involvement with drugs, the Chief Constable explained that loyalist paramilitaries had a long history of involvement with drugs whilst republicans were somewhat more cunning in their operation; they took a cut from the parties involved.

Policing Structures

13. The Tanaiste said that he had been following with interest the debate on policing which had opened up since the ceasefire; he would be grateful if the British side would share their perspective on this debate involving the Police Authority, community groups and political parties. He noted that the Chief Constable had hosted an information forum on 15 March and he referred to recent remarks by Acting Deputy Chief Constable Flanagan about an examination of the force's structure.

14. The Secretary of State replied that the RUC's primary obligation had been to defeat terrorism and that it was now hoped to re-establish normal policing in the community. He referred to the NIO's document 'Policing in the Community' which showed HMG firmly committed to the principles of a tripartite structure involving the Government, the police service and the community, with statutory accountability mechanisms, links between the police and the community, and improvements to efficiency and effectiveness by giving the Chief Constable greater freedom to manage and deploy policing resources. Ideas were being worked up and the aim was for ongoing dialogue across the range of issues. The Police Authority for Northern Ireland had been conducting a series of public meetings all over Northern Ireland thus showing a clear desire to take the mind of communities. The Secretary of State welcomed the increasing number of applications from the minority community to join the RUC. He knew that in nationalist areas the re-establishment of community

policing was important and in a democracy everyone wanted to see policing by consent.

15. The Chief Constable explained that there had been a large number of radio and TV interviews with officers of the RUC at all ranks. There had been a number of major set piece debates and he referred to the main one which had been held at RUC Garnerville; he noted that a number of suggestions had been put to the police at it. He said that the question of dealing with Sinn Fein remained difficult but he had given instructions that, unless the subject matter involved discussion on the future of the RUC, he was content for his officers to meet groups which included Sinn Fein representatives; especially in addressing matters such as domestic violence. He emphasised that there was a ground-swell of opinion within the RUC which wanted to make sure that the good story the force had to tell was not lost.

16. The Tanaiste said that the new climate of debate in self-examination on policing was potentially very useful and he thought that Cardinal Daly had captured the wider challenge well in his Easter homily. The Cardinal had said that on the one hand there must be a great increase in nationalist participation in the police service whilst on the other hand he had observed that recruitment drives among Catholics would not be enough to bring this about. New relations with alienated communities had to be developed. The police had to be perceived as actively pursuing all aspects of the new and non-partisan identity to which they aspired.

17. Sir John Wheeler related that as he went round Northern Ireland on visits he had heard good reports about the RUC. The recent Community Attitudes Survey found that 75% of people considered that the police were doing a good job. In recognising the need to seek to improve whatever formal structures were necessary he added that it was important that local police and the local communities had a good relationship. The Chief Constable said that he would like to get back to a situation where RUC members lived within all sections of the community. However, one could not be naive and ignore the

fact that there were elements such as Sinn Fein and pockets of loyalists who did not like the police or want the police. This would not change, but it did not detract from his belief that the police had a good story to tell.

Parades

18. The Tanaiste opened this discussion by acknowledging the efforts of the RUC in coping with a difficult situation which had arisen recently in relation to parades in the lower Ormeau area. He believed that the decisions taken on the two recent occasions were sensible ones and he complimented the RUC's handling of a difficult situation. He went on to say that the Irish side would like to co-operate with the British side on this issue and he advised that they had strongly encouraged the lower Ormeau residents, and those with influence in the area, to keep a dignified and non-triumphalist approach.

19. The Secretary of State explained that these were operational decisions for the RUC and he invited the Chief Constable to comment. The Chief Constable said that in recent years there had been a clear change in that the police had stopped a number of loyalist parades from going where they had gone previously, whilst Sinn Fein had been allowed to go where they had not gone previously. All parades were judged on a one by one basis and he expressed some concern that the marching season this summer might present some difficulties. In relation to the Ormeau Road situation decisions had been based on the likelihood of disorder. In this regard it had to be emphasised that it was not possible to make a decision until all the relevant facts had been assembled, consequently decisions could not be taken in advance. He did expect that the Ormeau Road situation would never be the same again. The Tanaiste sought advice on the Chief Constable's comment that he feared that this year's marching season might be more difficult than usual. The Chief Constable explained that there was a potential for difficulty if it proved necessary to re-route loyalist parades,

including those seeking to use the lower Ormeau Road; there was a potential for resentment to build up.

20. At this point the Plenary Session adjourned for an hour whilst Ministers and relevant officials attended the ceremony at the Irish War Memorial at Islandbridge in Dublin. The Secretary of State took this opportunity to convey the British side's condolences on the death of Mr Padraic Collins an official in the DFA, and a former member of the Anglo-Irish Secretariat at Maryfield.

Police Complaints Procedures

21. On return from the Islandbridge Ceremony the Conference reverted to the Confidence Issues items on the Agenda and the Tanaiste opened the discussion by referring to the Annual Report of the Independent Commission for Police Complaints issued earlier in the week, and with particular reference to its findings that complaints had increased by 16%. He appreciated that some of this might be due to more extensive reporting of complaints and he understood that there had been a decrease in the number of complaints since the ceasefires. He believed, nevertheless, that it served to heighten interest in the working of the Commission and wondered about measures which might be introduced to improve its effectiveness. He referred to the earlier Triennial Report of the ICPC noting that in his response the Secretary of State had decided to accept two of the recommendations in full and a further three in part.

22. The Secretary of State explained that the key thing was to ensure the independence of the ICPC. There had been a difference of opinion with the Commission on one and a half of the recommendations. In relation to the Commission's request to have the power to "call-in" where there was no complaint he believed this would have made a substantial change in the character of the ICPC. There would be another opportunity of reviewing his decision in the context of an overall review of policing. On the Commission's second point about having the power to be able to direct the Chief

Constable to record a complaint where there was a dispute over its classification the Secretary of State said he did not believe that this was necessary; he understood that the problem had only ever arisen on one occasion. The Secretary of State added that he had accepted five of the recommendations in full, or in part, and that a new power had been given to the Commission enabling them to draw matters to his attention; it would then be his responsibility to refer appropriate cases to the Commission. He was aware that the ICPC had felt that the NIO had impugned the integrity of the Commission in not accepting all the recommendations, but this was not the case; they were seen as independent. The Tanaiste said that the Chairman of the ICPC, Mr Grew, had publicly voiced his unhappiness at the Secretary of State's decisions and remained anxious to enhance the credibility of the ICPC. The Secretary of State responded that he was aware of the concerns expressed by Mr Grew.

Prisons Issues

23. The Tanaiste recalled that there had been a very comprehensive discussion on prisons issues at the last Conference meeting. He believed that since those discussions there had been indications on both the republican and loyalists sides of an increasing unease at the lack of progress, with signs of a re-invigorated protest movement at community level. He referred to protests in both jurisdictions by families of republican prisoners, while on the loyalist side the Irish perceived that there was clearly a serious problem with UVF prisoners. He understood that Michael Ancram had discussed prisons issues in his talks with loyalist parties and the Irish side believed that as both loyalists and republicans were interested in movement on prisons issues this should increase the British side's room for manoeuvre in this area. He emphasised that a great deal of care must be taken in dealing with the issue and he did not want to see strong emotions aroused; this was something which he hoped could be nipped in the bud. The Tanaiste mentioned that one specific area where there might be an early opportunity to demonstrate flexibility was in the operation of the Summer Home

Leave scheme. He had been encouraged by the British view at the February IGC that this was something which could be looked at; he believed that signs of flexibility in this area could be helpful.

24. Sir John Wheeler explained that Northern Ireland already had one of the most progressive regimes compared to the rest of the United Kingdom and to the Republic of Ireland. In referring to Christmas and mid-year Home Leave arrangements he advised that there was no such facility in England and Wales, Scotland or the Republic of Ireland, whereas in Northern Ireland prisoners were considered for this scheme after 11 years. In noting the progressive regime which existed in Northern Ireland he added that the matter was kept under review as part of wider penal policy. Life sentence cases were already reviewed at regular intervals (there were five Life Sentence Review Boards held each year) and there were no plans to change this. The changed circumstances of a continuing ceasefire would have little direct effect on time served, as recognition was already given to the fact that such prisoners were less likely to become reinvolved in paramilitary activity than determinate sentence prisoners. He went on to say that the introduction of earlier first reviews by the Life Sentence Review Board on its own would not lead to early release, early release would only occur as a result of the changed view of the requirements of deterrence, retribution and risk; the ceasefire might in time result in a reconsideration of some or all of these elements. On determinate sentence prisoners a move to harmonise the remission periods would require primary legislation. Sir John Wheeler reiterated that all of the issues were kept under regular review.

25. The Tanaiste explained that the Republic of Ireland does give Christmas Home Leave, and he went on to ask if it would be possible to consider giving Summer Home Leave to prisoners who had served less than 11 years. The Secretary of State replied that he could understand the desire for a liberalising approach coming from both loyalist and republicans. It could be argued that there were merits in some of the ideas being put forward, but there was a political balance to be struck and he emphasised that it was essential to bear

in mind that there could be no suggestion that there were any "political prisoners" in prison in Northern Ireland. He could not emphasise this strongly enough; murder was murder. The current arrangements did allow for a degree of flexibility for life sentence prisoners, and any attempt to harmonise the remission rates for determinate sentence prisoners would require primary legislation. He made clear that the British side recognised the centrality of the prisons issues noting that prisoners on both sides had played a part in bringing about the ceasefires. Taking all this on board there was still a fine balance of principle when considering any changes.

26. Mrs Owen repeated the importance with which both republican and loyalist prisoners viewed this issue. She believed that they saw it as tangible demonstration of the benefits of the peace process. She advised that a further seven prisoners had been released from Irish prisons recently following consideration by herself as the Department of Justice Minister and then by the Government as a whole. She pointed out that the Republic of Ireland did have a liberal regime on early releases for all prisoners except those on capital murder. She added that the Irish Government had recently published ratifying legislation on the transfer of sentenced people and that this was taken as a signal that the Irish Government intended showing further benefits of adhering to the peace process. The issue of prisoners was likely to remain to the forefront of the agenda and, in noting the difference of 50% remission for ordinary prisoners and 33% remission for those convicted of scheduled offences, she sought clarification that any harmonisation would require new legislation.

27. In response the Secretary of State confirmed that new legislation would be required to harmonise the remission rates; he went on to confirm his understanding of the sensitivities involved. He could appreciate that people would look for a tangible demonstration of the benefits of maintaining the peace process, but care had to be taken not to pay benefits simply for not killing people. Progress would be required in parallel with other matters and he was fully aware of the points that the Irish side were

making. He had to bear in mind that decisions in Northern Ireland could play over into England, Scotland, and Wales. In relation to Mrs Owen's reference to the publication of legislation to ratify the transfer of sentenced people, he confirmed that the British side was committed to the principle that prisoners should serve their sentences as close to home as possible. The rate at which Northern Ireland prisoners in GB could be transferred to Northern Ireland was governed by their assimilation into prison regimes. He added that any reference to this item in the Communique must be phrased to take account of the sensitivities involved.

HMP Belmarsh

28. The Tanaiste said that he was coming under pressure on the question of conditions for Irish prisoners in England, particularly at HMP Belmarsh and HMP Full Sutton. He understood that there had been some improvements, but the Irish side continued to receive reports of difficulties regarding visits and other matters. The Tanaiste said he would appreciate any assistance the Secretary of State might be able to give by using his good offices to emphasise the need for flexibility in this area. The Tanaiste believed that experience had shown the value of access to prisoners by Sinn Fein representatives; stories relayed back to Ireland about disruptions to visits exacerbated problems.

29. In response the Secretary of State said he could understand that small things could take on very large proportions. He understood that a meeting had been held on 20 April between the Home Office, Prison Service and Consular officials from the Irish Embassy in London. This meeting had been full and constructive and had addressed a number of issues that had the potential to cause difficulty. He understood that Sinn Fein's suggestion that there was tension in Belmarsh prison was completely unfounded, and he added that the regime for the Whitemoor escapees held in Belmarsh had now improved since they were no longer in the modified regime which followed their attempted escape. Most of the complaints raised by prisoners at Belmarsh had been found to be untrue; the

Secretary of State quoted the example of the complaint where the prisoners alleged that they had lost weight but this was not supported by their medical records. He added that Consular officials had regular visits at both prisons and that correspondence between the Home Office and the NIO on the issue had recently been passed to the Irish side of the Secretariat. The Secretary of State concluded by making clear that the British side were not in the business of inflexibility or allowing sores to fester.

30. The Tanaiste commented that if families felt they had been treated unreasonably they would publicize their grievances; he hoped that any problems arising in this area could be nipped in the bud.

Review of Emergency Legislation

31. The Secretary of State explained that the current Emergency Provisions Act expired in August 1996 and one possibility was to come forward now with legislation reflecting the development of a new situation. However, it was unlikely that it would be possible to do this in the time available. It was possible, of course, that individual provisions would lapse as and when appropriate. The Secretary of State added that he was currently awaiting a report from John Rowe following his review of the operation of the EPA in 1994 but he believed it unlikely that a large scale lapsing of powers would be recommended at this stage. On the Prevention of Terrorism Act it had to be borne in mind that this did not just affect Northern Ireland; it dealt with terrorism from diverse sources.

32. The Tanaiste commented that the Irish side had been guided by the remarks in the Secretary of State's Coleraine speech in December 1992 when he had said that with the cessation of violence emergency legislation, on which many of the responses of the security forces were founded, would have served its purpose. The Tanaiste no longer saw a threat of violence, and thus the need for protection, as provided under the emergency legislation, no longer remained. Mr Sean O hUiginn intervened to note that it was by using

Immigration powers that HMG had recently returned an airline passenger to America following the bomb attack in Oklahoma city.

33. Mrs Owen explained that the Dail had recently passed a resolution ending the state of national emergency in the Republic, and this had been an important symbolic gesture. There was an appreciation that laws needed to be modified in the changing circumstances and the Irish commitment to review matters was reflected in the ending of the national emergency and the publication of legislation to ratify the transfer of sentenced prisoners.

34. The Secretary of State said he believed there was no real difference between the two sides. The Irish Government retained the Offences against the State Act and this had been unaffected by the repeat of the national emergency. He would like to see the restoration of jury trials for all cases in Northern Ireland; but only if there was no intimidation and currently he was not being pressed on this issue. In noting that he did not believe there was a difference of philosophy between the two sides he looked ahead, beyond 1996, when it might be possible to bring together the two Acts covering the main emergency legislation with opportunities to adjust and amend them depending on the conditions at the time. He was conscious that he should be seen to work towards this end, but he was reluctant to make promises which he might not be able to deliver at the time.

35. At this point the Tanaiste said that the issues of Public Appointments and Fair Employment should be postponed to a later Conference. The IGC now took the discussion on political matters in restricted numbers; separate note to cover this item.

North/South Economic Co-Operation

36. At the end of the discussion on political matters, Mr Moss and Mr Noonan joined the Conference for the discussion on North/South co-operation on health matters. Mr Noonan said that they had had a

very good meeting and that ongoing relationships North and South are very good. They had looked at a number of areas including health promotion, public health issues, co-operation between Health Boards around the border, specialised medical services, and co-operation on joint health sector procurements and supplies.

37. Mr Moss endorsed the Irish Minister's comments adding that there were regular meetings between Health Ministers and officials north and south of the border. He recalled that since his appointment last October he had had three meetings with his Southern counterparts. On the health promotion side he noted that both Ministers had been present at the World Health Organisation 'Health Promotions Counterparts' Conference held in Dublin in March 1995. Since 1994 a small working group chaired by the Chief Medical Officers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland had been considering the feasibility of establishing a multi-disciplinary Institute of Public Health. In July 1992 the 4 border Health Boards, North and South, had entered into a formal agreement to co-operate. He welcomed the commitment on both sides and agreed that the morning's meeting had been very useful. The Tanaiste regretted that the media did not focus a great deal on the North/South economic co-operation item but perhaps they might try and raise its profile.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Washington Investment Conference

38. The Secretary of State commented that both sides were working very closely together with the focus being on economic matters rather than on political issues. Mr Fell confirmed that planning was going ahead and that there were good relationships between the two sides. He felt that the United States had been slow to start but they were now getting their act together. He understood that Ian Paisley and Jim Molyneaux would not be attending the Conference and he advised that so far HMG had resisted giving assistance to politicians and community groups. He knew that this was an issue

that the Irish side were also looking at and he hoped that they could keep in touch on developments.

EU Assistance Package

39. Mr Sean O hUiginn said there appeared to be a difference of emphasis between the two sides. The Irish side believed that the Interreg arrangements set a good example and that this precedent should be followed and built upon. Sir John Wheeler said he saw the Conference as being of great importance, but the British side preferred an arrangement with separate committees for the work in Northern Ireland, and in the Republic, and the cross border element being administered jointly through a third branch.

Free Travel for Senior Citizens on Cross Border Services

40. Mr Moss advised that the Irish Minister of Finance, Mr Quinn, had written to him seeking his assistance in making a success of the scheme to provide free transport for pensioners on cross border services. The Minister confirmed that he had been in touch with Northern Ireland Railways and Ulsterbus, and that they could see no difficulties. The Tanaiste remarked that Mr Quinn appreciated the co-operation given by the British side; he saw this arrangement for free cross-border transport, for pensioners North and South, as a gesture towards reconciliation. He understood that it was expected that there would be a large take up of the scheme.

COMMUNIQUE

41. A copy of the agreed communique issued at the IGC is attached at Annex.

JOINT STATEMENT

ANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

DUBLIN, 28 APRIL 1995

A meeting of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference was held in Dublin on 28 April 1995. The British Government was represented by the Joint Chairman the Rt Hon Sir Patrick Mayhew MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, accompanied by the Rt Hon Sir John Wheeler MP, Minister of State, Michael Ancram MP, Minister of State, and Mr Malcolm Moss, MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office. The Irish Government were represented by the Joint Chairman, Mr Dick Spring TD, Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ms Nora Owen TD, Minister for Justice and Mr Michael Noonan TD, Minister for Health. The Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Commissioner of the Garda Síochána were present for discussion of security matters.

2. Representatives of both Governments attended the ceremony at the Irish War Memorial Park, Islandbridge, in honour of all those from Ireland, North and South, who gave their lives in the Second World War, and in honour of victims of the holocaust.

3. The Conference expressed deepest sympathy to the family of the late Mr Padraic Collins a former Deputy Joint Secretary of the Conference who gave distinguished service.

Political Matters

4. There was a full and valuable discussion of developments in the political process. Ministers agreed that the Framework Documents were not a blueprint for imposition but did represent an important step in the search for an agreed political settlement and a realistic basis for discussion.

5. The Conference noted with satisfaction the resolution of difficulties that has enabled British Ministers to join in exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein. The Conference also welcomed the progress made in exploratory dialogue between the British side and the Loyalist parties. They underlined the importance of a satisfactory resolution of all the key problems, and in particular the decommissioning of arms.

6. Both sides looked forward to the forthcoming bilateral meetings with the parties which each Government was planning to hold. They welcomed the fact that meetings were taking place between the political parties themselves. They noted also the contribution that all such meetings could make towards the achievement of comprehensive agreement on an overall political settlement covering all the main relationships.

Security Matters

7. The Conference greatly welcomed the continuing cessations of violence and the benefits already produced North and South and for all the peoples of these islands. They condemned recent acts of intimidation and so-called punishment beatings.

8. Ministers received reports from the Police Chiefs on the latest security developments. They expressed their sincere appreciation for the continuing efforts of the police forces, and congratulated them on recent important captures of weapons. They noted with concern a growth in the illegal activities of drug dealers on both sides of the border and confirmed their commitment to maintain and continue to enhance co-operation in this area.

Confidence Issues

9. The Conference discussed the continuing response of the security forces to the ceasefires. The British side detailed the measures that have been already taken and indicated that further measures would be taken as the peace strengthens and develops.

There was a discussion of a range of prisons issues, and a review of the emergency legislation. The Conference exchanged views on the recent report of the Independent Commission for Police Complaints. There was also a discussion of the future of policing in Northern Ireland. In a discussion of parades, the Conference repeated its view that the right to demonstrate should be exercised with respect for the sensitivities of others and with regard for public order.

North/South Co-operation on Health

10. As part of its ongoing programme of North/South co-operation, the Conference held a discussion on co-operation in the field of health on which it approved a joint paper. The Conference noted with appreciation the advanced level of co-operation which has been reached between Ministers, officials, and the four border health boards. Co-operation has extended over a wide range of issues of common interest. To date these have included health promotion, a proposed Institute of Public Health in Ireland, highly specialised medical services, orthopaedic services and joint procurement on which the Conference endorsed a proposal to take co-operation forward on a more formal basis. The Conference noted the potential for further practical initiatives, and welcomed the commitment which existed on both sides to pursue these for mutual benefit. Finally, the Conference endorsed the further development planned by the four border Health Boards to secure improvements in the health and social well-being of their resident populations.

Other Economic and Social Matters

11. The Conference reviewed progress in preparations for the White House Conference on Trade and Investment to be held in Washington on 24-26 May. They also welcomed the latest developments in relation to the European Union Peace Initiative.

12. The Conference welcomed the Irish Government's proposals to extend their existing free travel scheme for senior citizens, including those from Northern Ireland, travelling North/South in either direction.