

MINUTES OF CONSTITUENCY REPRESENTATIVES GROUP MEETING HELD,
2.00 PM, SATURDAY 23 MARCH 1991, IN PARTY HEADQUARTERS, 24 MOUNT
CHARLES, BELFAST.

- 1.1 **Attendance:** Joe Hendron (Chair), John Hume, Seamus Mallon, Patsy McGlone, Alban Maginness, Gerardine Leonard, Frank Feeley, Alasdair McDonnell, Tommy Gallagher, Denis Haughey, Eddie McGrady and Brid Rodgers.
- 1.2 **Apologies:** Jonathan Stephenson, Mark Durkan, Angela Hegarty, Donovan McClelland and Dorita Field.
- 2.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting were adopted on a proposal of Tommy Gallagher, seconded by Gerardine Leonard.
- 3.1 **Matters Arising:** John Hume reported on a meeting which he had with John Bruton, the Leader of Fine Gael.
- 3.2 It was agreed that since at the moment the three MP's were under severe pressure of work, other members of the Constituency Representatives grouping should meet with Parliamentary Representatives of Fianna Fail, Fine Gael and Labour. Arrangements to be made in this regard.

ACTION: P. McGLONE

- 4.1 The lack of coverage of the SDLP point of view on RTE in general and especially the Today Tonight programme was noted.
- 4.2 Alban Maginness referred to the recent appointment of a Director of the Arts Council. On this occasion the Deputy Director Brian Ferrin had been overlooked. John Hume currently dealing with this situation.
- 4.3 Analysis of the Brooke document: A letter by the Secretary of State Mr Peter Brooke to John Hume was read out by the Chairman, in which Mr Brooke specified that if any Party or Parties did not consent to the text which he had agreed upon, then he would publish it in any event. John Hume referred to the actual document and said that in it there was (1) the agenda as proposed by ourselves in November 1988 (2) a time-table which was similar to that proposed by the SDLP. It was noted that over the last two months Unionists had been trying to shape the presentation of the talks to suggest that they were about devolution only. Mr James Molyneaux's comments at a meeting of the Ulster Unionist Council where he had ruled out firmly any form of power-sharing were noted.

- 4.4 It was agreed that as an integral part of the process we would need to have a clear strategy-worked out with the Irish Government, in that regard John Hume said that when talks are announced we would need to sit down with the Dublin Government and agree a structured approach and agenda. It was agreed to arrange a meeting with the Dublin Government.

ACTION: JOHN HUME

- 4.5 A discussion followed in which Denis Haughey, Eddie McGrady, Brid Rodgers, Tommy Gallagher, Frank Feeley and Seamus Mallon participated. It was agreed unanimously that the Party send a formal message to Mr Peter Brooke accepting the text of his document, but that if other parties were to receive a detailed, specific clarification in writing that we would need details of that clarification, since such clarification could possibly be considered either as an amendment or an extension to the existing text.

ACTION: JOHN HUME

- 5.1 **Any Other Business:** Alban Maginness reported on a meeting which he had attended in Belfast with the Electricity Workers Unions, which had addressed the issues of privatisation of the Electricity Service. He reported that only he and a representative of the Alliance Party were present at that meeting, and said that the Trade Union representatives were anxious to have SDLP MP's working on their behalf.
- 5.2 Eddie McGrady reported that representations had been made to him on this matter.
- 6.1 SDLP preparation for the inter-party talks was considered. It was agreed that the Constituency Representatives Group should devote a whole day to preparation of an agenda and relevant political matters related to the talks.

ACTION: JOE HENDRON

- 6.2 As regards media presentation on the Party response to Mr Peter Brooke's document, we would not be replying to the public, but to Mr Brooke and in the interim all media enquiries would be referred to the Party Leader.

These matters discussed the meeting concluded.