



Council of Ireland ♦ Common law area for murder

TALKS END IN PACT

Unity by consent pledge to North

From MICHAEL MILLS in Sunningdale

AFTER MORE than 50 hours of talks over the past four days here, the delegations from Dublin, London and Belfast eventually reached agreement on the formation of a Council of Ireland shortly before 8.0 o'clock last night. The general consensus was that a sound agreement has been drawn up which promised to open up a new era of relations between North and South and between Ireland and Britain.

The way is now clear for the setting up of the Northern Ireland Executive, and will be passed in the British House of Commons on Thursday to devolve powers on the new institution. The agreement covers a package deal of which the formation of the Council is the essential point, and policing, a common law enforcement area, human rights, and the status of Northern Ireland are dependent factors.

FULL TEXT OF COMMUNIQUE

THE FULL text of the Sunningdale Communique, covering 20 points, runs as follows:

1. The conference between the British and Irish Governments and the parties involved in the Northern Ireland Executive (Designate) met at Sunningdale on December 6, 7, 8 and 9.

2. During the conference, each delegation stated their position on the status of Northern Ireland.

3. The Taoiseach said that the basic principle of the conference was that the participants had agreed to see what measure of agreement of benefit to all the people concerned could be secured. In doing so, all had reached accommodation with one another on practical arrangements. But none had compromised, and none had asked others to compromise, in relation to basic aspirations.

The people of the Republic,

together with a minority in Northern Ireland as represented by the SDLP delegation, continued to uphold the aspiration towards a united Ireland. The only unity they wanted to see was a unity established by consent.

4. Mr. Brian Faulkner said that delegates from Northern Ireland came to the conference as representatives of apparently incompatible sets of political aspirations who had found it possible to reach agreement to join together in government because each accepted that in doing so they were not sacrificing principles or aspirations.

The desire of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom, as represented by the Unionist and Alliance delegations remained firm.

5. The Irish Government fully accepted and solemnly declared that there could be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a majority of the people of Northern Ireland desired a change in that status.

The British Government solemnly declared that it was, and would remain, their policy to support the wishes of the majority of the people in Northern Ireland. The present status of Northern Ireland is that it is part of the United Kingdom, if in the future the majority of the people of Northern Ireland should indicate a wish to become part of a United Ireland, the British Government would support that wish.

6. The conference agreed that a formal agreement incorporating the declarations of the British and Irish Governments would be signed at the formal stage of the conference and registered at the United Nations.

7. The conference agreed that a Council of Ireland would be set up. It would be confined to representatives of the two parts of Ireland, with appropriate safeguards for the British Government's financial and other interests. It would comprise a Council of Ministers with executive and harmonising functions and a consultative role, and a consultative assembly with advisory and review functions.

The Council of Ministers would act by unanimity, and would comprise a core of seven members of the Irish Government and an equal number of members of the Northern Ireland Executive with provision for the participation of other non-voting members of the Irish Government and the Northern Ireland Executive or administration when matters within their departmental competence were discussed.

The Council of Ministers would control the functions of the Council. The chairmanship would rotate on an agreed basis between representatives of the Irish Government and of the Northern Ireland Executive. Arrangements would be made for the location of the first meeting, and the location of subsequent meetings would be determined by the Council of Ministers.

The Consultative Assembly

At the Civil Service Training College here in Sunningdale, where the tripartite conference was held, there was obvious welcome among all the delegations for a successful ending to their deliberations.

The Irish Government and the SDLP were particularly happy that for the first time the British Government had declared support for a united Ireland if the majority of the people of the area should indicate that wish. The SDLP were hopeful that this declaration, which goes beyond the previous statement of the British Prime Minister, Mr. Heath, that Britain would not stand in the way of a united Ireland, might persuade the Provisional I.R.A. to stop their campaign of violence.

The Unionists, led by Mr. Faulkner, were also happy that for the first time an Irish Government had solemnly declared that there could be no change in the status of Northern Ireland until a majority of the people of the area desired a change in that status.

Dramatic

An agreement incorporating the declarations of the British and Irish Governments will be made at the formal stage of the conference early in the New Year, and will be registered as an international agreement at the United Nations.

The first dramatic news that agreement had been reached came in an unofficial announcement at 7.45. It was confirmed officially shortly afterwards, and the hundreds of journalists waiting in the press centre were summoned to hear the statements welcoming the agreement by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Heath; the Taoiseach, Mr. Cosgrave, and the three Northern leaders, Mr. Faulkner, Mr. Fitt and Mr. Napier.

There was a danger at one point only of the conference of a breakdown. This occurred in the early hours of Saturday morning on the question of policing, when Mr. Faulkner was said to have come close to a refusal to take any further part in the negotiations in this area unless clear assurances on the R.U.C. were forthcoming.

He was persuaded by Mr. Heath and by Mr. Fitt to enter into the lengthy process of negotiations again, which resulted in the formula on policing which is contained in the agreed communique.

The key issue was whether the Council of Ireland should have a role in policing so that the minority in Northern Ireland could identify with, and support, the R.U.C.

Agreement

The agreement is that the Irish Government will set up a police authority and make appointments to it after consultation with the Council of Ministers of the Council of Ireland.

There will also be a Northern Ireland police authority, to which appointments will be made after consultation with the Northern Ireland Executive and with the Council of Ministers of the Council of Ireland.

When the two police authorities are set up, they will make their own arrangements to achieve "improved policing throughout the island and developing community identification with and support for the police services".

The question of the Irish Government's acceptance of the status of Northern Ireland was resolved at an early stage of the conference, Mr. Cosgrave indicated that his government



Pictured after the signing of the Council of Ireland agreement last night are (from left) Mr. O'Neil (Alliance), the Taoiseach, Mr. Cosgrave, the British Premier, Mr. Heath; Mr. Brian Faulkner (Unionist), Mr. Gerry Fitt (SDLP).

A realistic package, says the Taoiseach

Faulkner happy over 'recognition'

AT A PRESS conference following the talks, the Taoiseach, Mr. Cosgrave said that what had been sought "was a settlement which would foster the growth of trust and ease community fears throughout the island of Ireland and benefit all its people." And he added: "The agreement which we have reached to establish a Council of Ireland is of primary importance because such a Council can establish trust between both parts of the island and with all sections of the Irish people."

Tired faces at Sunningdale

By AIDAN HENNIGAN

IT WAS a succession of very tired-looking politicians that took the stand in Trevelyan Hall, Sunningdale, last night, to make their statements to some 200 journalists. If the journalists had complained rather bitterly that they were without food or drink for many hours last night, it appeared that the delegates fared less well.

"We simply did not have anything to eat or drink for quite a long time," Gerry Fitt told the reporters.

Mr. Heath certainly looked weary when he took the first conference. Sometimes, in fact, he was scarcely audible and he conceded to the journalists present that he had spent 55 hours in the negotiations and had not in fact slept all of Saturday night.

With Mr. Heath on the platform was the new Secretary for Northern Ireland, Mr. Francis Pym, looking strangely unwell, but the man on whose shoulders will fall the responsibility of implementing the decisions reached at Sunningdale.

It was the Taoiseach's turn next and although he also looked somewhat tired, bearing the strains of the marathon negotiating sessions, he was obviously conscious of the achievements which he and his team had secured around the conference table.

Then it was the turn of Mr. Faulkner, who of all the delegation leaders looked less strained and less tired. In fact, he was responsive and cheerful and despite the fact that there were some oblique proings about his political future and the kind of support he would receive in the Assembly, he was firm and confident and dealt in precise terms with the questioners.

Qualified welcome by Lynch

IN A statement last night, the leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lynch, said that he welcomed the fact that it was found possible to reach agreement on the setting-up of a Council of Ireland, but that this welcome must be qualified pending the allocation to it of adequate powers, particularly in respect of law enforcement and human rights.

"I would like to say that I recognise fully the arduous task that confronted the Irish Government Ministers and their officials in the Sunningdale talks,

'Another Munich'

THE REV. Martin Smyth, head of the Orange Order, commenting in Belfast last night on the Sunningdale agreement, said: "I want to study the document in depth, but I would not place a great deal of hope on the trustworthiness of the treaty because history has not given us much ground for thinking

the Southern Government will keep it. "I will be waiting to see what assistance the R.U.C. gets from south of the Border. "I think the negotiators will get a welcome home in Northern Ireland similar to that given to Chamberlain when he returned from Munich," he said. (Reaction report: Page 4)

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WEATHER

A cold front is approaching from the north-west.

Forecast 6 a.m. to midnight: Cloudy and mild at first, with outbreaks of rain mainly in the west and north-west. South-westerly winds will be fresh or strong. The rain will spread eastwards during the day, and a clearance to brighter, colder, showery weather will reach the west in the afternoon and all areas during the evening and night.

Further outlook: Frost tonight, remaining rather cold, with moderate or fresh westerly winds.

Lunchtime weather reports yesterday included the following temperatures in Celsius and Fahrenheit:

- Amsterdam, sunny, 2, 36.
- Athens, sunny, 17, 63.
- Belfast, cloudy, 4, 39.
- Berlin, snow, minus 3, 27.
- Brussels, fair, 3, 37.
- Cork, fair, 6, 43.
- Dublin, fair, 8, 46.
- Las Palmas, cloudy, 19, 66.
- Lisbon, sunny, 12, 54.
- London, sunny, 4, 39.
- Madrid, sunny, 9, 48.
- Manchester, fair, 3, 37.
- Paris, sunny, 4, 39.
- Rome, sunny, 18, 61.
- Shannon, cloudy, 7, 45.

TODAY'S TIDES

Time	Galway	Sligo	Donegal	Waterford	Wexford	Youghal
High	11.34	11.24	11.14	11.04	10.54	10.44
Low	5.19	5.09	4.59	4.49	4.39	4.29
High	10.37	10.27	10.17	10.07	9.97	9.87
Low	11.02	10.92	10.82	10.72	10.62	10.52
High	5.26	5.16	5.06	4.96	4.86	4.76
Low	5.06	4.96	4.86	4.76	4.66	4.56
High	7.53	7.43	7.33	7.23	7.13	7.03
Low	4.10	4.00	3.90	3.80	3.70	3.60
High	10.51	10.41	10.31	10.21	10.11	10.01
Low	10.48	10.38	10.28	10.18	10.08	9.98

SUN RISES 8.29; SETS 4.07

MOON DAY 16, FULL MOON RISES 4.35

URSCEALA

2,000 FEET FLAMES IN FACTORY BLAST

Huge blast in refrigerator factory rocked Buenos Aires last night, starting a fire which spread to a rubber factory and several homes. Flames 2,000 feet high. No immediate word of casualties. Police cordoned off area which was blacked out. Residents evacuated. Study lesser blasts.

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