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OIFIG AN AIRE GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
DUBLIN 2

CONFIDENTIAL

19 September 1979.

Private Secretary
Office of the Taoiseach

Taoiseach
20/9
20 see re
- Mar. 6 87.
20/9

Dear Private Secretary,

I have been asked by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to enclose for the Taoiseach's information, a report on Mr. Roy Jenkins recent call on His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

Yours sincerely,

James G. Gildea
Private Secretary

Mr Nalty 24/9
Mr Donohoe 24/9
Mr Knowles 24/9
Mr Stokes
21/9

CONFIDENTIAL

C.C. PSI
Mr. O'Neil

COMMISSION
OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Office of the President

Chef de Cabinet

NOTE: Copy of report handed to Miss O'Dwyer of Permanent Representation, Brussels, by Mr. Takell, Chef de Cabinet to President Jenkins on the understanding that it would be regarded as strictly confidential and not mentioned in any discussions.

CALL ON THE POPE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMISSION: CASTELGANDOLFO,
11 SEPTEMBER 1979 AT 12.10

The President of the European Commission called privately on the Pope at Castelgandolfo on 11 September. Their conversation, which was à deux, lasted about half an hour. It was conducted in a mixture of English and French. Mr Jenkins noted that the Pope was not entirely at ease in either language.

2. Mr Jenkins referred to the interest shown in and support given by the church to the development of the Community. He expressed particular interest in a statement made by the Pope in reply to that made by the President of the European Parliament on 5 April 1979. In that statement the Pope had laid some emphasis on the sovereignty of each Member State. He himself well took this point. There was a balance to be struck between preserving the sovereignty of Member States and advancing the common interest. The Pope said that he had been thinking more about individuals, and the need for each to have sovereignty over himself. Mr Jenkins said that in short no man should possess another any more than a nation should possess another. The Pope agreed.

3. Mr Jenkins drew attention to the article written by the Pope and published in Vita e Pensiero shortly before his election last year. In that article the Pope had emphasised that Western Europe was only a part of Europe and all Europe was only a peninsula attached to Asia. The Pope showed lively interest in this article. Mr Jenkins said that the Community hoped to improve its relations with Eastern Europe and achieve that better understanding to which the Pope had referred but it was not easy. The East European countries were closely associated with the Soviet Union which, unlike China, had still not recognised the existence of the Community as such. Things were proceeding fairly slowly. The Pope asked if that meant that there was no progress. Mr Jenkins said that there was progress but it was fairly slow. Unfortunately there was only partial respect for the provisions in the Helsinki declaration. The Pope agreed.

14. Mr Jenkins

4. Mr Jenkins said that the Community attached the highest importance to the preservation of human rights and other fundamental freedoms. The three Community institutions had pledged themselves to observe the fundamental rights embodied in the constitutions of Member States and in the European Convention on Human Rights. The Community had openly condemned violations of human rights in such countries as Uganda and Chile. In the negotiations for the entry of Greece, Portugal and Spain to the Community the Community had also made clear that respect for human rights and the practice of parliamentary democracy were essential to membership of the Community. The Pope said he greatly welcomed the attitude of the Community on this point. He hoped that the Community would do still more to make its attitude clear. It was sometimes easier and more impressive for the Community as such to act in this field than for Member States to do so individually.

5. The Pope asked whether Mr Jenkins was satisfied with the results of the direct elections to the European Parliament. Mr Jenkins said that the essential point was that we now had such a Parliament. Its existence would give a new impulse and direction to the evolution of the Community. By and large the poll had not been too bad but there were considerable variations. For example the turn out in Italy had been good but in most of Britain it had been bad. Northern Ireland was an exception where proportional representation was the rule.

6. Mr Jenkins took up the problems of Northern Ireland. Although he did not know Northern Ireland particularly well, he had had considerable experience of the problem during his two periods of office as Home Secretary. The Pope said that there were undoubtedly "people behind" such terrorist organisations as the IRA. Mr Jenkins agreed. Terrorist organisations in different places had established direct links with each other. The Pope expressed unqualified condemnation of the activities and methods of terrorists. As Mr Jenkins knew he would shortly be going to Ireland where his purpose was to promote a spirit of reconciliation. In this respect he said he was very sad at not being able to go to Armagh. Mr Jenkins said that he feared that in the circumstances it would not be wise for him to go to the North. There was a danger of a Protestant backlash. Use of the word Protestant had virtually dropped out in Great Britain but in Northern Ireland it continued. There were terrorists on both sides, although the Protestants had not recently been active. But there was now a danger for the future. In the Republic the great majority were against violence but there was a minority which gave passive support to it. It was this minority which it was worth seeking to persuade otherwise. The Pope agreed. He repeated the phrase "minority which gives passive support" and seemed to register it. He said that much work was now being devoted to the drafting of his speeches in Ireland.

/7. Mr Jenkins

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7. Mr Jenkins said that both parts of Ireland belonged to the Community. The Pope agreed that here was ground for hope. The Republic was a committed member of the Community and saw its future within it. Northern Ireland was part of the United Kingdom, and people perhaps shared some of the British reservations about it. The Pope took note. Mr Jenkins thought that he did not entirely understand the nuances of the relationship between the Republic and Ulster and their constitutional positions. Nonetheless his mind was increasingly running on to his visits to Ireland and the United Nations.

Crisp Tickell
Crispin Tickell

12 September 1979

Copied to:

President
Members of the Cabinet
M Noël
Mr Audland
Mr Froschmaier
Sir R Denman