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ROINN AN TAOISIGH

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To:

From:

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

[1 copy - by letter D77A
1 copy - Room 324]

Anglo-Irish Summit, Chequers, 7 November, 1983

Report of Plenary Session

1 The plenary session commenced at 12.05 p.m. approx. A full list of the attendance on each side is appended to this note.

2 The Prime Minister invited the Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, to summarise the discussions between Ministers which were held concurrently with the tete-a-tete between the Heads of Government. The Foreign Secretary said that they had a compact discussion on the main issues in the Community on which it was agreed that it would be important to reach conclusions at the Athens Summit. On the budgetary question, the Foreign Secretary said that they had discussed the UK "safety net" proposal and the recent German proposal. On the CAP, the discussions suggested that proposals for legally binding guidelines could create problems. The Foreign Secretary said that the Irish Ministers had stressed the importance of equitable proposals in relation to milk surpluses. The Foreign Secretary commented that these surpluses could not be allowed to continue and that a strict price regime was necessary. He said that neither side had found the super-levy proposal to be attractive. The Ministers had also touched on the recent problems in relation to sheep meat and in particular, the common difficulties being posed for both parts of Ireland. Sir Geoffrey Howe said that there should be an attempt to recognise this and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland had undertaken to look at the matter.

3 Continuing his summation of the ministerial discussions, the Foreign Secretary said that the Tanaiste had raised Irish concerns about discharges from the nuclear reprocessing plant at Windscale. The British Government recognised the problem here and would keep in touch with the Irish Government on it.

*Dec 1983
to S23134
9/11/83
U
The Hon. Mr. Keating
file in cabinet
with other papers
relating to the
Summit.
17/11/83*

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On international affairs, the situation in Grenada was dealt with and the possibility of restoring democratic government to the island as soon as possible. On the forthcoming UN Resolution in relation to the Falklands, the Foreign Secretary said that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had indicated that Ireland would be abstaining as it had done last year.

4 The Minister for Foreign Affairs pointed out that new Community policies were also discussed at the ministerial session where there was an emphasis on the need for the Athens Summit to take decisions in this particular area.

5 The Prime Minister suggested at this stage that it would be useful to have a general discussion about the Community, about which she was becoming somewhat alarmed. The Taoiseach said that the Irish Government had also been pessimistic about the situation. Referring to the Prime Minister's recent meeting with President Mitterand, the Taoiseach enquired about the French attitude to progress on the contentious issues and to the possibility that they may be waiting for their Presidency before adopting a positive attitude so that they would have something to show for their Presidency term. Responding to this, the Prime Minister said that the French had adopted a much stronger position than she expected. They felt it would be difficult to make compromises in Athens but it was her view that the French were overestimating the problems. When Papandreou came to see her, he gave the impression that all was well for the Athens Summit but the problems were fundamental ones and you had to do a lot of work beforehand if you wanted to get decisions at a European Summit. The Taoiseach said that following his recent visit to Athens he had formed the impression that the Greeks had worked out a framework. The Foreign Secretary commented that Papandreou recognises that

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the solutions have to be acceptable to all Ten members and he may be looking for a compromise. The Prime Minister said that the agreement of the Ten had to be obtained to certain lines of action. There were some issues however, on which the British Government could not compromise. The reality was that the money will run out unless something is done. The Foreign Secretary commented that the problems can be solved if each Member State applied itself to them.

6 Referring to Irish problems in relation to curtailment of milk production, the Taoiseach said that there had to be a solution to this which was acceptable to his Government. He hoped that the British Government could be sympathetic to our position. We, in turn, recognised that the British Government also had their problems.

7 On enlargement, the Prime Minister said that it was politically important to have Spain and Portugal as Members of the Community so as to keep democracy alive in those countries. The length of the transitional period would be important and it had to be borne in mind that the southern states of the Community would wish to apply the same surplus arrangements for agricultural produce as was applied to the northern countries of the Community. The Taoiseach said that the Irish Government shared the concerns expressed on this matter and were anxious that Enlargement would be accompanied by an increase in resources. Ireland was prepared to pay its share but if, after Enlargement, you ended up with inadequate resources to cover the reformed CAP, there would be a problem. The Taoiseach said he wondered whether the proposed increase of "Own Resources" to 1.4% would be adequate for a reasonable period ahead, given Enlargement, new policies and the proposed doubling of existing Community Funds. You could end up in a situation in three years time where you would be going back to Member States seeking a further increase in the Own

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Resources level. This would bring National Parliaments into the arena and would lead to confrontation. The Prime Minister commented that VAT and the levies were bouyant taxes and that coming out of recession, it should be possible to get more from them. If you were one of the two main contributors to the EEC budget, you had to look askance at an increase in the level of Own Resources which would be soaked up by agricultural expenditure. The Taoiseach said that the 1.4% level did not mean that in a few years time there would be no problem. This was an area of concern for us. The Prime Minister said that the problem for her was that while we get a lot from the Community budget, Britain gets very little.

8 In response to a question from the Taoiseach, the Prime Minister said that her Government's position in relation to participation in the EMS had not evolved yet. She remarked that they were glad at times that they were not tied to the Mark. A lot of horse trading went on in the EMS when devaluations were under discussion and she was horrified at the extraneous matters which were brought into the bargaining.

9 The Prime Minister welcomed the conclusion of the agreement for the supply of Kinsale gas to Northern Ireland, describing it as a reasonable deal.

10 Dealing with the Lebanon, the Minister for Foreign Affairs said that UNIFIL forces in the south of the country were not fulfilling their original role. We would have to await the outcome of the Geneva talks to see if they would be given a new role. The UNIFIL mandate had been renewed for another six months and a replacement contingent of Irish troops was on its way to the area. The Minister said that the forces there were providing security to the local population and this

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was an important factor. Commenting on the question of appointing observers to monitor the situation in the northern part of Lebanon, the Prime Minister said that in her discussions with Papandrea he was clear that there could be no observers until there was agreement at the Geneva talks. The Foreign Secretary said that the rest of the world was paying a price because of the presence of the multi-national force in Beirut and this message would have to be driven home. In response to a question from the Taoiseach, the Foreign Secretary said that they had cautioned against the use of the term "retaliation" to describe what action the US might take in the Lebanon. US activity should concentrate on rooting out terrorists in the area but their actions should not be retaliatory. The Prime Minister said that the terrorists always have the element of surprise on their side and that in the circumstances of suicide attacks on the MNF, self defence was warranted. The Taoiseach said that the Irish Government was unhappy about the fact that UNIFIL was unable to carry out the most important part of its mandate i.e. overseeing the withdrawal of Israeli forces.

11 The Prime Minister then invited the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to report on the Northern Ireland content of the ministerial discussions. The Secretary of State said that both sides expressed their deep concern at the continuing violence and the difficulties being placed in the way of maintaining support for constitutional nationalism. The alienation of the Catholic community as reflected in the support for Provisional Sinn Fein was a serious anxiety. The Secretary of State said that he was very concerned about some recent reports from journalists which raised issues not yet discussed in depth. He mentioned the "Weekend World" programme the previous day which dealt with the question of joint sovereignty. There were grave dangers in allowing this type of premature discussion. The Taoiseach replied

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that this type of development was not helpful to the Irish Government either. The joint sovereignty issue was not discussed in the New Ireland Forum and to say that he was putting forward such proposals was a gross distortion. The Taoiseach said that it was necessary for both sides to reflect on ^{the} widespread alienation of the minority community in the North. A way would have to be found to sustain constitutional nationalism. In this context, the Forum would, he hoped, provide a consensus on the analysis on the problem and a consensus as well on the range of possible long term structures. He felt that the Forum was going well but this did not mean that there would be agreement among all the parties. It was having a good educational effect in Ireland and was helping to get some new thinking into the situation. The Prime Minister inquired as to whether an agreed report would be produced by the Forum. The Taoiseach explained its method of working and the Chairman's role in preparing analyses. The Taoiseach said that, in principle, the procedures exclude a minority report from the Forum. The work to date had, on the whole, being conducted in a constructive atmosphere.

12 The Prime Minister said that both she and the Taoiseach had approved the reports which were before them reviewing co-operation between the two countries.

13 During a discussion on the text of the Communique, the Taoiseach enquired of the Prime Minister as to when the next meeting between them might be arranged. The Prime Minister said that she would prefer not to be pressed on a date. There would be considerable pressure on her diary in the first half of 1984 but she suggested that, at this stage, they could plan for a meeting around the middle of next year. It was important not to communicate this to the media as it would only give terrorists an excuse for intensifying their campaign of violence. Agreeing with this,

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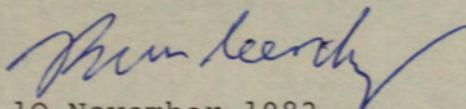
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the Taoiseach said that it would be essential to keep the arrangements highly confidential. The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that in deciding on a date for the next Summit meeting, it would be as well to bear in mind that when the Forum reported, it would be important to keep up the momentum which it would generate. The Taoiseach said that he presumed the Prime Minister would come to Dublin for their next meeting. The Prime Minister did not respond directly to this but commented that the extent of the security necessary on the occasion of her first visit to Dublin left her somewhat unhappy.

14 The attached Joint Communique was agreed and the meeting concluded at 1.05 p.m. approximately.



10 November 1983

✓ C.C. Mr M. Lillis, Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs