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Remarks by the Taoiseach and President of Fine Gael,
Dr. Garret FitzGerald, T.D., at a meeting of
Longford/Westmeath Constituency, Mullingar,
7th March, 1986 at 8.30 p.m.

The speech by the Leader of the Opposition in New York last night is deplorable. At a time when our friends in the U.S. are putting together a \$250m. aid package in support of the Anglo-Irish Agreement, nothing could be more damaging than to attempt to sabotage the Agreement in the United States. For an Irish political leader to call in aid of his attack on the Agreement a statement by a British Minister which, when made, was repudiated instantaneously by the British Government, is to employ a tactic unworthy of any honourable Irishman.

Moreover, for Mr. Haughey to suggest that one of his concerns about the Agreement was that its signature would enable Britain to tell Ireland's friends in the United States that there was no longer any need for them to be concerned about Ireland is palpable hypocrisy.

It is Mr. Haughey's words in this speech, following the mission on which he sent Brian Lenihan to the United States to undermine U.S. support before the Agreement itself was signed, that is giving the impression that aid is not needed. The British Government has in fact been working closely with us to promote U.S. support and direct financial aid for the restoration of peace and stability in Northern Ireland.

Against this background of national sabotage, which will create revulsion in the border counties and amongst nationalists in Northern Ireland is it any wonder that part of Fianna Fail has broken away to form a new party ?