



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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NO 12



Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

20 May, 1988.

CONFIDENTIAL

M. Jacques Delors,  
President of the Commission of the  
European Communities.

Dear Jacques,

As you will be aware, the International Fund for Ireland was established in 1986 by the British and Irish Governments as an international body, independent of the two Governments and managed by an independent board. Its aim, as set out in the international agreement under which it was established is "to promote economic and social advance and to encourage contact, dialogue and reconciliation between nationalists and unionists throughout Ireland".

The International Fund has benefitted from support of the United States, where the Fund has enjoyed widespread support in the US Congress; and the United States will have donated a total of \$120m. by the end of this year. The Governments of Canada and New Zealand have also committed themselves to the support of the Fund and are making contributions to it.

I believe that, if the Fund is to continue and develop its important work, it is essential that it should include a specifically European dimension. A Community contribution would be important not just in terms of helping to advance and achieve the Fund's objectives but also, and very importantly, in ensuring continued support for it by the other donors.

When the Tanaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Brian Lenihan, met with you in Luxembourg in April last year, he raised with you the question of a possible Community contribution to the Fund. At that time you responded very positively and you indicated that the Commission had been prepared for some time to include in the Budget a provision for such a contribution but that it would await a joint approach from the British and Irish Governments before it took the matter further.

Oifig an Taoisigh, Tithe an Rialtais, Baile Átha Cliath 2.  
Office of the Taoiseach, Government Buildings, Dublin 2.

22/5  
1. Mr O'Keefe  
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Mr [unclear] 20/11/88  
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Mr [unclear]  
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24/5/88

Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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I am very glad to be able to inform you, that following consultations our two Governments have now agreed on such a joint approach. We both consider that it would be timely and important to seek a direct Community contribution to the work of the International Fund which has now been in operation for a little more than a year. This will help to ensure continuing international backing for the Fund and will contribute to practical projects on both sides of the border in Ireland (the North/South distribution of funds at present is 75% - 25%).

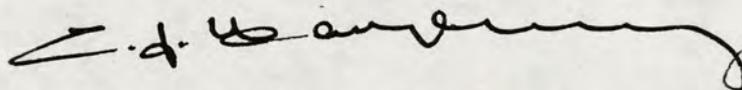
The Government very much appreciate and value the active interest in, and concern about, the situation in relation to Northern Ireland which has been consistently expressed by the institutions of the Community. We also recognise the value of the contribution which has been made in both North and South by the Community's Structural Funds and we are hopeful that vital work can be undertaken in the coming years through increased assistance from the enlarged Funds. In parallel with the programmes assisted by the Community's Funds, the International Fund is engaged in projects which are not only of intrinsic economic significance but are also serving the important aim of reconciling the two Communities in Northern Ireland and increasing cross-border understanding.

I very much hope, therefore, that in the light of the common commitment of the British and Irish Governments to the achievement of political, economic and social progress in Northern Ireland, it will now be possible for the Community to give early and sympathetic consideration to underpinning the work of the two Governments, and of our American and other friends, by supporting directly the International Fund.

I understand that Sir Geoffrey Howe is writing to you in similar terms. I very much hope that we can count on your understanding and support. Our Permanent Representative, John Campbell, will be very happy to let you and your colleagues have any further information which you may require.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely,



Charles J. Haughey, T.D.,  
Taoiseach and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.