

cc RB



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
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LONDON SW1A 2AZ

Roderic Lyne Esq CMG
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London

20 September 1993

1. cc Lyne (for diary meeting please)
2. Ryd 07/10
JM

Dear Roderic,

NEXT BRITISH-IRISH SUMMIT

Thank you for your letter of 2 September regarding the timing of the next British-Irish summit.

We are not currently being pressed by the Irish for an early date for this meeting and would see December as a much more natural timing for it. As you know there are currently a number of straws in the wind, in terms of political development, none of which are likely to have come to fulfilment by the beginning of November but which may come to a head, for good or ill, by the beginning of December. There is, in any case, merit in maintaining the link between the timings of these meetings and those of the European Council. This has provided useful cover on a number of occasions in the past and may do so again.

Our view, therefore, is that you can safely rule out 3 and 5 November as possible dates for a bilateral summit and focus instead on 2 or 6 December. Although these dates are not convenient for the Foreign Secretary we understand from the Foreign office that it might be possible for him to be represented by one of his junior Ministers.

I am copying this letter to John Sawers (FCO) and to Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office).

Your ever

JONATHAN M. RODELL