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FROM J W THORP, BRITISH EMBASSY DUBLIN

COMMENTS TEXT OF PRESS NOTICE ISSUED FOLLOWING THE PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH THE Taoiseach, 4 DECEMBER 1991

BY FAX
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Meeting between the Taoiseach, Mr. Charles J. Haughey, T.D.,
and the Prime Minister The Rt. Hon. John Major, M.P.

1. The Taoiseach and Prime Minister met in Government Buildings in Dublin on Wednesday, 4 December, 1991. They discussed a range of issues including the negotiations, within the European Community, to prepare for the forthcoming European Council at Maastricht, and issues in Anglo-Irish and International relations.
2. The Taoiseach was accompanied at the meeting by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Gerard Collins, T.D. and the Minister for Finance, Mr. Bertie Ahern, T.D. The Prime Minister was accompanied by the Rt. Hon. Peter Brooke,

M.P., Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Mr. Tristan Garel-Jones, M.P., Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with particular responsibility for European Community affairs.

European Community

3. The Taoiseach and Prime Minister were in agreement as to the benefits of membership of the Community for Ireland and Britain, both economically and in their international relations. They will work for a successful outcome of the European Council in Maastricht next week and for agreement on a Treaty on European Union. Among the matters discussed in this context were issues in relation to economic and monetary union, the development of a common foreign and security policy, European Parliament, cohesion, social policy, competence and majority voting.

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Northern Ireland

4. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister had a full discussion of current issues in Anglo-Irish relations, with particular reference to Northern Ireland. They confirmed the unique character of the relations between the two islands, and affirmed the intention of both Governments to continue developing closer mutual understanding and cooperation, in line with the intensive human contacts between the two peoples, the importance to both countries of their economic links, their role as partners in the Anglo-Irish Agreement and their common membership of the European Community.
5. They re-affirmed their determination to do everything possible to promote agreement and reconciliation and their support for a process of political dialogue. They appealed to all parties concerned to continue the search for a solution which would address relationships within

Northern Ireland, within the island of Ireland and between the peoples of these islands. They expressed the determination of both Governments that efforts to help find a solution would be fully commensurate with the gravity and complexity of the problem and reaffirmed their commitment to do everything possible to ensure that an agreement is reached on fresh political talks addressing these three relationships.

6. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister had an exchange of views on the current security situation in Northern Ireland with particular reference to the recent escalation in the level of violence and in sectarian murders. They reiterated their condemnation of violence and emphasised the appalling human suffering and the unemployment and social and economic damage it causes. They re-affirmed the

commitment of their Governments to build on the high level of security co-operation already existing and ensure by all lawful means that those who resort to terrorism will not succeed.

7. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister discussed a range of bilateral economic issues. They are conscious of the opportunities and challenges which will open up for both countries and both parts of Ireland with the removal of economic barriers throughout the Community, and progress towards European Union. They underlined the potential for North/South cooperation in areas such as services, energy, trade, tourism, health, agriculture, planning and transport and other infrastructure.

8. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister agreed that the special nature and depth of the Anglo-Irish relationship make it desirable for Heads of Government to meet

regularly. They have found their meetings in London and Dublin very valuable. With this in mind, they have decided to hold half-yearly meetings alternately in London and Dublin at which they would review progress in all aspects of relations.

4th December, 1991.