

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Roderic Lyne
Date: 16 November 1993

MR O'DONNELL

cc Jonathan Stephens (NIO)
Jonathan Rodell (NIO)
Dickie Stagg (FCO)
Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office)
HM Ambassador, Dublin (by
fax)

DATE OF THE ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT: PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

You heard this morning that the Taoiseach was likely to announce the date of the bilateral Dublin Summit when answering questions in the Dail this afternoon.

Although there has been speculation in the press (emanating from Dublin) that the Summit will be on or around Friday 3 December, it is not our practice to confirm the dates for a meeting this far in advance. In this particular case, we do not wish yet to foreclose our options. The timing of the meeting needs to relate to the substance, and we cannot yet be 100 per cent certain that 3 December will be the right date. Nor would we wish an announcement today to enhance speculation that a particular position is being negotiated within a given deadline.

With these points in mind, and having consulted the Prime Minister, I spoke to the Taoiseach's Private Secretary, Calum Butler. I said that we wanted to stick to our normal practice. We also wanted to consider the timing of the meeting in relation to the sequence of preparations which was under discussion with the Irish Government.

After consultation, Butler called back to say that the Taoiseach was being briefed to take the following line:

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"Deputies will be aware of the agreement that the two Prime Ministers should meet twice a year. The next meeting is due to take place in Dublin in early December. In accordance with established practice, the date will be announced in Dublin and in London close to the time of the meeting."

Rm/L

RODERIC LYNE

f\dublin.ec1

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