

CONFIDENTIAL

FM DUBLIN

TO DESKBY 250900Z FCO

TELNO 082

OF 241750Z FEBRUARY 92

INFO DESKBY 250900Z NIO(L), NIO(B)

PS/N²L₀
24/ii
ADVANCE COPY

ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT, 26 FEBRUARY: TAOISEACH'S LIKELY VIEWS

SUMMARY

1. POINTERS FROM NALLY ON THE LINE THE TAOISEACH IS LIKELY TO TAKE.

DETAIL

2. NALLY (SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT) TOLD ME TODAY THAT, THOUGH HE HAD DISCUSSED NORTHERN IRISH ISSUES WITH THE TAOISEACH SEVERAL TIMES OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS, THE LATTER'S VIEWS WERE LITTLE CLEARER TO HIM. HE EXPECTED THE TAOISEACH WOULD WANT TO USE THE MEETING ON 26 FEBRUARY TO RE-ESTABLISH A GOOD RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, TO DISCUSS NORTHERN IRELAND (AND TO A LESSER EXTENT EC ISSUES) IN BROAD TERMS AND NOT LEAST TO HEAR THE PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS AT FIRST HAND. THE TAOISEACH BELIEVED THAT THE EC CONTEXT MIGHT BE OF HELP IN MOVING TOWARDS A SOLUTION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND IN THAT IT WOULD ALLOW RELATIONSHIPS TO BE REDEFINED NORTH/SOUTH AND EAST/WEST, FOR EXAMPLE THROUGH REGIONAL DEVOLUTION: BUT THESE IDEAS WERE NOT DEVELOPED. THE TAOISEACH ALSO BELIEVED THAT BY ENCOURAGING CO-OPERATION BETWEEN PEOPLE NORTH AND SOUTH IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO BYPASS THE POLITICIANS IN THE NORTH, WHO WERE STUCK IN OLD MOULDS. NALLY THOUGHT THE TAOISEACH WOULD, FOR EXAMPLE, LIKE TO WORK THROUGH SUCH BODIES AS THE INSTITUTE OF DIRECTORS, THE CBI/CONFEDERATION OF IRISH INDUSTRY, AND CO-OPERATION NORTH. HIS CONTACTS WERE WITH BUSINESSMEN: AS A BUSINESSMAN, HE EXPECTED PROBLEMS TO HAVE SOLUTIONS, AND WOULD NOT EASILY ACCEPT THAT NONE EXISTED TO THE PROBLEMS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. NALLY ALSO EXPECTED THE TAOISEACH TO WANT TO DISCUSS HOW THE PRIME MINISTER INTENDED TO TACKLE NORTHERN IRELAND AFTER THE ELECTION, AND IN THE GAP BEFOREHAND.

3. NALLY SAID THAT JOHN HUME AND OTHER SDLP LEADERS HAD SEEN THE TAOISEACH THIS MORNING. IT HAD BEEN A GOOD MEETING AND THE

SDLP HAD LEFT SATISFIED. NO TAOISEACH COULD DISREGARD SDLP VIEWS, AND HE EXPECTED THE TAOISEACH ON WEDNESDAY TO ECHO THEM. THE TAOISEACH HAD ALSO LOOKED FOR ENCOURAGING SIGNS FROM THE SINN FEIN CONFERENCE IN DUBLIN ON 22/23 FEBRUARY, BUT FOUND NONE.

4. NALLY SAID THAT THE IRISH WERE STILL NOT READY TO ANNOUNCE THE UPGRADING OF THE BELFAST/DUBLIN RAIL LINK, THOUGH THE TAOISEACH WOULD BE READY TO TALK ABOUT IT IF THE PRIME MINISTER WISHED. THEY WANTED TO USE MONEY FROM THE EC COHESION FUND, WHICH WAS NOT YET IN OPERATION: EVEN THEN, THE GOVERNMENT WOULD WANT TO LOOK AT ALTERNATIVE USES FOR THE 42 MILLION OR SO INVOLVED, FOR EXAMPLE LIGHT RAIL LINKS BETWEEN THE AIRPORT, THE WESTERN AND SOUTHERN SUBURBS AND THE CENTRE OF DUBLIN. AS TO THE PROPOSAL FOR AN IRISH SEA SCIENCE CO-ORDINATOR, NALLY WONDERED WHETHER THIS WAS APPROPRIATE FOR A MEETING AT PRIME MINISTERIAL LEVEL. (COMMENT: NALLY IS RIGHT. I SEE LITTLE POINT IN DISCUSSING EITHER TOPIC ON 26 FEBRUARY.)

5. SEE MIFT

BLATHERWICK

YYYY

DISTRIBUTION

14

ADVANCE

14

.NORTHERN IRELAND

PS

PS/PUS

HD/RID

HD/INFO D

HD/NEWS D

PS/SEC OF THE CABINET, CAB OFF

MR CHILCOTT NIO(L)

PS/S OF S NIO(L)

PS/LORD BELSTEAD NIO(L)

MR THOMAS NIO(L)

MR BELL NIO(L)

MR COOKE SIL NIO(L)

RESIDENT CLERK

NNNN