

Prime Minister

NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Herewith the text of a speech which was made in the Dail on 15th July by the Foreign Minister of the Irish Republic.
2. For reasons which you will understand this has caused serious concern among Unionists, who believe that this is further evidence that the policy of Her Majesty's Government in regard to part of the United Kingdom is being fashioned as much by Ministers in the Irish Government (which continues to lay claim to the six candidates) as by Her Majesty's Ministers.

21.7.82

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20. 7. '82

Jan.

More on the Dart speech!

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ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS: SPEECH BY IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER

1. MR COLLINS OPENED THE ADJOURNMENT DEBATE IN THE DAIL YESTERDAY (15 JULY 1982) EVENING WITH A PREPARED SPEECH WHICH HAD A LONG SECTION ON ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS. AFTER SUMMARISING THE FIANNA FAIL VIEW OF DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE 1980 SUMMIT, THE MAIN POINTS WERE:

"I REGRET THAT IN RECENT MONTHS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE BEEN LESS THEN WHOLEHEARTED IN THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE APPROACH WHICH THEY HAD AGREED WITH US. EARLIER THIS YEAR THEY EMBARKED ON A MISGUIDED AND UNILATERAL INITIATIVE WHICH IN EFFECT IGNORES THE WIDER ANGLO-IRISH DEMENSION WITHIN WHICH THE TAOISEACH AND PRIME MINISTER HAD AGREED TO TACKLE THE PROBLEM OF THE NORTH - A PROBLEM WHICH AFFECTS BOTH OUR COUNTRIES SO MUCH. MR PRIOR'S FAILURE TO PROPERLY CONSULT WITH THE GOVERNMENT HERE IN THE ELABORATION OF HIS PROPOSALS HAS ALREADY BEEN PUT ON RECORD BY ME - AND INDEED ADMITTED BY HIM IN A RECENT PARLIAMENTARY REPLY IN WESTMINSTER - AND I WISH TO STATE MY VIEW THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH ON THIS MATTER HAS BEEN CONTRARY NOT ONLY TO THE SPIRIT BUT ALSO TO THE LETTER OF OUR NEW ARRANGEMENTS. THE DEGREE OF REASONED OPPOSITION TO THE BRITISH PROPOSALS, AND AS DEPUTIES ARE FULLY AWARE THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN UNABLE TO APPROVE OF THEM, OUGHT TO HAVE MADE MR PRIOR THINK AGAIN. INSTEAD THEY HAVE NOW COMPLETED THEIR PAINFUL PASSAGE THROUGH THE HOUSE OF COMMONS AND MR PRIOR SEEMS DETERMINED TO FOREGE HIS SCHEME ON NORTHERN IRELAND BY WHAT CAN ONLY BE DESCRIBED AS DESPERATE MEANS."

"THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALREADY MADE CLEAR OUR FEAR AT THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH MAY FOLLOW FROM YET ANOTHER FAILED BRITISH GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE. WITH THE ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS OF VOTING IN THE AUTUMN FOR THE PROPOSED NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY, OUR APPREHENSION GROWS GREATER. THIS INSTITUTION IS TO BE IN AND FOR NORTHERN IRELAND ALONE, AND ITS INTENDED ROLE IS TO RESTORE A DEVOLVED EXECUTIVE IN AND FOR NORTHERN IRELAND ALONE. FEW DEPUTIES I BELIEVE WILL NOT SEE SUCH A CONCEPT AS RETROGRADE AND INSUFFICIENT, AND FEW IN THIS HOUSE WILL LIKELIKE FAIL TO DEPLORE THE RETREAT BY THE PRESENT BRITISH GOVERNMENT FROM THE COMMITMENT TO PRESCRIBED POWERSHARING IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THIS COMMITMENT HAS BEEN A CONSTANT IN THE POLICY OF VARTOUS BRITISH GOVERNMENTS SINCE 1973. INSTEAD, THE EVOLUTION OF AFFAIRS WITHIN THE NEW ASSEMBLY IS TO BE LEFT TO THE FREE PLAY OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES. EVERYBODY KNOWS WHICH POLITICAL TRADITION WILL DOMINATE IN SUCH A SITUATION, AND WE HEAR ALREADY THAT DOMINANT UNIONIST INTEREST DECLARE ITS ATTITUDE - AN ATTITUDE WHICH HAS NOT VARIED OVER SIXTY YEARS AND WHICH, NOT SURPRISINGLY, IS MARKED BY CONTEMPTUOUS REJECTION OF THE PRESENT BRITISH PLAN. IRISH NATIONALIST OPINION IS ALERT TO THE DANGERS AHEAD. THEY ARE THE SAME DANGERS NATIONALISTS THOUGHT THEY HAD LEFT BEHIND THEM QUITE A LITTLE TIME AGO."

"I REGRET

"I REGRET THE PRESENT LINE OF POLICY OF BRITISH MINISTERS BUT DESPITE THIS WE ARE DETERMINED TO USE AND TO PURSUE THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK ESTABLISHED BY THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. IT IS STILL THERE AND IN FACT HAS BEEN FUNCTIONING NORMALLY IN RECENT MONTHS WITH FIVE MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEETING SINCE THIS GOVERNMENT CAME TO OFFICE."

"..... WE ANTICIPATE FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE ANGLO-IRISH INTER GOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL IN THIS SPIRIT OF CONSTRUCTIVE CO-OPERATION AS APPROPRIATE AND NECESSARY, AND AT EVERY LEVEL. BUT LET ME MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT CO-OPERATION IS BY DEFINITION A TWO-WAY PROCESS. IN THE FIELDS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SECURITY CO-OPERATION THIS GOVERNMENT IS DETERMINED TO PLAY ITS FULL PART IN BRINGING PEACE, STABILITY AND RECONCILIATION TO OUR PEOPLE. AND WE EXPECT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO DO THE SAME - WHATEVER OUR TEMPORARY DIFFERENCES WE IN THESE TWO ISLANDS HAVE SO MUCH IN COMMON THAT ANGLO-IRISH CO-OPERATION IS VITAL IN OUR JOINT INTEREST. BUT IT MUST BE FULL AND WHOLEHEARTED IN ITS INSPIRATION AND IN ITS WORKING. WE CANNOT ACCEPT A SELECTIVE OR INCONSISTENT APPROACH TO MUTUAL CO-OPERATION."

"..... WE HAVE MADE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN THE UNDERSTANDING OF ALL OTHER CONCERNED GOVERNMENTS FOR OUR OBJECTIVES. .... THERE ARE ENCOURAGING SIGNS THAT OUR POSITION IN GAINING UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS IN THE UNITED STATES....."

"..... IN OUR CONTACTS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTS TOO, PARTICULARLY AMONG OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS, THERE IS INCREASING UNDERSTANDING OF OUR POLICIES ON NORTHERN IRELAND AND IN PARTICULAR A READY SUPPORT FOR A JOINT ANGLO-IRISH APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM."