

Ref: A0598

CONFIDENTIAL

MR. ALEXANDER

Prime Minister.

What matters about the agenda is that the Budget is high on it. But you will I think want to stress the points at

2. The composition of the Party in para 4 would be as for Shabong, Sir R. Amshing, Sir N. Pallone + Lord Bondes (para 5) would be additional. But this is a very important meeting.

European Council Dublin: 29th-30th November

Agree proposals?

The Irish Presidency have indicated that the main items for the European Council at Dublin on 29th-30th November are likely to be:-

Handwritten initials and date: 7/11

- (a) Economic and Social Situation in the Community
- (b) Budget/Convergence
- (c) Social Affairs
- (d) Energy
- (e) The Report of the Three Wise Men
- (f) Structure of the Community in 1990
- (g) Progress towards European Union

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office, in their letter of 6th November to you, have sought the Prime Minister's views on this outline agenda and on the line which the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would propose to take when it is discussed by Foreign Ministers on 20th November.

2. The Prime Minister will recall that in Bonn Chancellor Schmidt suggested grouping social affairs and energy with the discussion on the economic and social situation. This has attractions; but if they were all taken before the budget/convergence item they would crowd out discussion of our budgetary problem on the first day. For this reason it might be better not to go along with this suggestion if the Germans make it, but to stick to the agenda order which the Irish have suggested. In endorsing the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary's suggestions, the Prime Minister will want to underline the vital need to allow enough time on the first day for the discussion of our (and the Italian) problem.

agreed

A.

B.

3. On procedure a full set of briefs will be prepared under the direction of the European Secretariat of the Cabinet Office, and I suggest that these should reach you by midday on Friday, 23rd November. I should be grateful if you would let me know when in the following week the Prime Minister will wish to hold a briefing meeting.

* We have kept the morning of Wed, 28 November free. Handwritten initials and date.

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4. As regards composition, in addition to the personal staffs of the Prime Minister and the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Prime Minister will no doubt wish to include the following official advisers: Mr. Franklin (Cabinet Office); Mr. Fretwell (FCO); Sir Kenneth Couzens (Treasury); and Mr. M. Butler (UKREP). A further official from the Treasury will be needed to assist with calculation of the effects of the various mechanisms which may be offered as a solution of the United Kingdom budgetary problem. As the Presidency will call together one or two working groups to discuss the draft conclusions and follow up points remitted to them by the Council, the team proposed is the minimum we can manage with.

5. This is for various reasons likely to be a difficult and crucial meeting, and I think that on this occasion it would be a good idea if Sir Michael Palliser and I were to be of the party. Sir Michael Palliser would very much like to bring Lord Bridges as well; Lord Bridges has just taken over as the Deputy Under Secretary of State on the "economic" side of the FCO, and quite apart from the contribution he could make it would be valuable to him and to us that he should familiarise himself with the issues and personalities at Dublin. *

RA

(Robert Armstrong)

No - Jan too many. We work better with only a few.
* This would make a total party of.

7th November 1979

including senders, Selectives etc of about 20, a comfortable load for the Andover.

Phred
7/11



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG
CABINET OFFICE

European Council Dublin

The Prime Minister has seen your minute to me of 7 November on this subject. She agrees with the proposals in Mr. Walden's letter to me of 6 November. (I have written to Mr. Walden informing him of this.) She also agrees that we should stick to the agenda order which the Irish have suggested.

The briefing meeting will be held on the morning of Wednesday, 28 November. I will let you know shortly precisely when.

As regards the composition of the party for Dublin, the Prime Minister agrees that all those named in paragraph 4 of your minute should participate. She agrees that you and Sir Michael Palliser should come. She does not agree that Lord Bridges should attend.

12 November 1979

MOBBA

SB