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*I fear there  
is a  
already out of hand  
The work done in conference  
should not  
have got  
into the  
level.  
Mr*

FM DUBLIN 311600Z MAR 1981

TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY F C O (010800Z )

TELEGRAM NUMBER 91 OF 31 MAR

ANGLO/IRISH JOINT STUDIES

1. I HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING ALEXANDER'S LETTER OF 19 MARCH TO WALDEN ABOUT PROGRESS IN THE JOINT STUDIES. I QUITE SEE THE DIFFICULTIES ON OUR SIDE IF THE PACE OF EVENTS SEEMS TOO SWIFT. BUT AS THE LETTER POINTS OUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO MAKE SUFFICIENT PROGRESS TO ENSURE THAT MR HAUGHEY DOES NOT FEEL FORCED TO BREAK OFF THE JOINT STUDIES.
2. I AM AFRAID THAT IF WE SUGGEST TO THE IRISH AT THE NEXT MEETING THAT REFERENCE TO A COUNCIL OR A CONFERENCE BE REPLACED BY REFERENCE TO A COMMITTEE, THIS COULD WELL BE TAKEN BY THEM AS A STEP BACKWARDS. THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON ANGLO-IRISH COOPERATION SOUNDS TOO MUCH LIKE THE ANGLO-IRISH COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC COOPERATION WHICH WHILE ACCEPTABLE AT A WORKING LEVEL HAS NO IMPACT POLITICALLY.
3. IT COULD BE DANGEROUS FOR US TO MAKE THIS CHANGE OF EMPHASIS WITHOUT BEING SURE IN ADVANCE THAT IT WOULD NOT CAUSE TOO MUCH DAMAGE AT THIS EARLY STAGE. AT THE NEXT SET OF MEETINGS THE IRISH WILL EXPECT TO PURSUE THE DISCUSSIONS OF IDEAS ABOUT AN ANGLO-IRISH COUNCIL. IN THE LIGHT OF MR HAUGHEY'S PRESENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES IT COULD MAKE LIFE VERY DIFFICULT FOR HIM IF HE HEARS THAT AN ANGLO-IRISH COUNCIL OR SOMETHING SIMILAR IS NOT A POSSIBILITY. IT IS WORTH RECALLING THAT HE SEES A CLEAR CONNEXION BETWEEN SECURITY COOPERATION WITH US AND POLITICAL ADVANCE.
4. RECENTLY THE THEME OF THE EXTRA FINANCIAL COST OF SECURITY MEASURES WHICH RELATE TO THE BORDER HAS RE-EMERGED IN THE PRESS. THESE COSTS REPRESENT 15% OF THE TOTAL PROJECTED IRISH BUDGET DEFICIT THIS YEAR WHICH MUST BE WORRYING FOR MR HAUGHEY ON PURELY ECONOMIC GROUNDS. IT IS LIKELY THAT THE ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC WILL BE HELD IN MAY/JUNE AND IT SEEMS ESSENTIAL THAT WE KEEP THE MOMENTUM OF THE JOINT STUDIES GOING TILL AFTER

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*/ THEN.*



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THEN. IF WE CANNOT AT THIS STAGE MATCH THE IRISH MINIMUM DEMAND ON INSTITUTIONS WE SHOULD TRY AND PLAY FOR TIME. REFERENCE TO APPREHENSIONS IN THE NORTH WOULD BE WELL UNDERSTOOD AS A REASON FOR TAKING THINGS MORE SLOWLY. WHAT WE MUST AVOID IS OFFERING SOMETHING THE IRISH CANNOT ACCEPT AND NOT BEING ABLE TO IMPROVE ON IT.

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