010 cc N. Ireland Sec'n

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SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

11th June 1980

Michael Alexander Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

Dear Michael

EEC SUMMIT MEETING, VENICE: NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr Haughey has asked for a short meeting with the Prime Minister during the Venice meeting, perhaps to discuss possible dates for the next Anglo-Irish Summit; Mr Haughey seems to be thinking in terms of the autumn. From the Northern Ireland viewpoint it would be best if the Prime Minister were to avoid any firm commitment at this stage.

More generally, there are some points which the Prime Minister could usefully put across to him:

a. We noted with approval the Taoiseach's repetition in his Panorama interview of commitment to deal firmly with the IRA and to cooperate fully on border security measures. The Taoiseach will be aware, however, that the question of prosecution of suspected terrorists in the Republic for crimes committed in the North, under the extra-territorial legislation, remains a sensitive issue in Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister might mention, while not wishing to encroach on to the judicial domain, that in one case (O'Hare and McNamee) the RUC passed papers to the Garda last summer, and we understand that they have been with the DPP in Dublin for some months now. In another more recent one (McNally and others), papers are still believed to be with the Garda, having been transmitted by the RUC in April. Positive action in these cases would be the best possible proof, in the absence of extradition, that the agreed procedures can be effective. All the men involved in both cases are still at large, except O'Hare (now in prison for a crime committed in the Republic).

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b. We remain determined to make political progress in Northern Ireland, and are moving towards the publication shortly of proposals for new political institutions. We are making a considerable effort to take full account of the legitimate interests of both communities in Northern Ireland; and we shall be looking to all concerned to show a spirit of compromise in the further discussions which will follow publication.

c. A negotiated arrangement based on our proposals would be as much in the Irish interest as ours; and would be a major step towards the new Anglo-Irish relationship foreshadowed at the two Prime Ministers' recent meeting.

Mr Haughey may suggest that it would be useful if his government were consulted on our proposals before they are published. While recognising the Irish interest, the Prime Minister will no doubt remind him that any hint that the Republic had been involved in the formulation of our proposals would destroy any chance of acceptance in Northern Ireland.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Paul Lever in the FCO.

Yours sincerely

Mike Hopkins

M W Hopkins