

PRIME MINISTER

Anglo-Irish Bilateral - Press Conference

We are arranging for you and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to give a press conference in No.12 Downing Street at 5.00 pm when we shall release the Communique.

The Irish, off their own bat, have decided to hold their press conference at the Irish Embassy in London at 6.00 pm.

This will be most convenient for journalists. It means that you will control presentation, but that the Irish will have the last word.

Dr. FitzGerald, however, shows considerable anxiety to avoid media wedge driving and his Press Secretary tells me he would welcome a chat with you after lunch on presentation. We shall need to leave Chequers at 3.30.

Mechanics

No.12 will be very crowded and hot. Consequently, we have cut down TV cameras to 3 - BBC, ITN and RTE, Ireland.

The press conference will be filmed and recorded. I propose to end it at 5.45 pm at the very latest to allow journalists to cross the park to the Irish Embassy.

Since the press conference will be filmed and recorded, I see no reason why you should give news interviews. You are, in any case, very tight for time in view of the Kyprianou visit.

Moreover, a single press conference will minimise presentational difficulties in advance of a possible statement to the House tomorrow.

/ Issues

Issues

Presentation will, of course, be governed by the Communique and I attach at Annex I a draft speaking note prepared on the basis of the latest draft Communique.

It is however clear that there are likely to be two main questions:

- have you agreed to continue the dialogue, and if so how frequently and at what levels?
- have you reached, or do you see any prospect of reaching, an agreed analysis of the Northern Ireland problem? [A BBC commentator said this morning that this was crucial and the only basis for making progress.]

Other points which will arise in questioning are:

- tone of discussions; health of relationship?
- how much pressure do you feel under for fear of Sinn Fein progress at next May's elections?
- has Brighton bomb had any effect on the talks other than venue? [I have said that Dr. FitzGerald suggested the change in the aftermath of Brighton as a gesture to you which you much appreciated.]
- are you planning a joint security commission, cross border links between police and armies, strengthening of Anglo Irish Council, Parliamentary tier?
- how much time did security occupy? Was Glenholmes case mentioned?

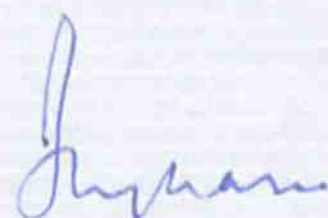
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- have you discussed or considered the idea of a Belfast-based department of the Irish Government?
- do you see the need for a political initiative, or are you just content to soldier on, keeping the lid on Northern Ireland?
- when are you going to respond formally to the New Ireland Forum report?
- in reiterating the commitment to a majority in the North, do you acknowledge the Nationalist aspiration?
- any common view on, and campaign against, NORAID?
- any reaction to the IRA's threat today of a new wave of trouble?

These questions could form the basis for a pre-press conference briefing.

I think you will agree that we should try to confine the press conference to Anglo/Irish affairs. But you ought to have in your mind the possibility of questions (which I shall discourage) on:

- the Muburak disclosures and an attempt to link them with Scargill
- the pit situation
- Animal Rights poisoners
- the row with the Bishops.



BERNARD INGHAM

19 November 1984



For my part I have made it clear that the British Government would not stand in the way of a change in Northern Ireland's constitutional status if a majority of the people were in future to wish for and consent to such a change.

Against that background we have had <sup>the fullest and frankest</sup> ~~a full~~ exchange of views on developments in relations <sup>to</sup> ~~with~~ Northern Ireland, taking into account all that has happened and been published since our last formal bilateral a year ago. *We agreed that our discussions should continue.*

Our conversation was in part reflective and analytical and you will see from the Communique that we are agreed on a number of things:

- *that security cooperation between the two governments must be maintained and strengthened*
- the need to diminish the divisions between the two sections of the community in Northern Ireland *and to reconcile the two major traditions that exist in the two parts of Ireland.*

- that we should reject utterly the promotion of political objectives by violence, or by threats of violence *and reject those who adopt or support such methods*

- <sup>respecting</sup> the importance of / the identities of the two communities in Northern Ireland ~~in the process of~~

/ government

~~government there~~, and of giving the people of Northern Ireland confidence that their rights will be safeguarded, and

- to pursue our discussions of these questions through the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council.

We also agreed on the importance of creating a political framework in Northern Ireland in which both the majority and minority communities would participate. We recognised that the responsibility for bringing this about lay principally with the Northern Ireland political parties themselves; and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will be pursuing this in discussions with them.

The Taoiseach and I have agreed to meet again in the New Year to take stock of progress and to pursue our shared aim of lasting peace and stability in Northern Ireland.

I cannot obviously at this stage indicate what, if any, ~~common measures~~ <sup>steps</sup> might come forward then. But I can assure you that we intend to pursue the aim of lasting peace and stability - and also the shared aim of reconciliation - with goodwill and determination.