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PRIME MINISTER

ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS: NORTHERN IRELAND

Mr David Crouch telephoned me this morning about his recent visit to Dublin with a delegation of Members of Parliament under the auspices of the IPU. Although he had hoped to be able to see you, he accepted that this would be difficult before the Dublin European Council and therefore asked me to pass you the following message. He and his delegation have seen a large number of leading politicians in the Republic including the Taoiseach and Mr Haughey. The general feeling had been one of frustration and despair. It seemed to them that the New Ireland Forum Report had been brushed aside, the Unionists in the North given an absolute veto over any progress, and the phenomenon of "alienation" dismissed. Mr Crouch emphasised that he and other members of his delegation of all Parties had loyally spoken up for the Government's position. However, he spoke for the delegation as a whole in saying that "some sort of public manifestation of friendship" was required during your visit to Dublin for the European Council. Although he was initially inclined to argue that this should be in the form of a statement dealing both with the Forum Report and with "alienation", when it came down to it, all he really thought necessary was a smile and a warm handshake with Dr FitzGerald in front of the television cameras.

I promised to pass on his message to you. I explained to him that it seemed to us that the Irish had dug a hole for themselves by building up quite unrealistic expectations before the Summit; and that despite all their protestations they were still trying to get joint authority in one form or another. I also told him of your complimentary remarks about Dr FitzGerald in your speech at Avignon.

CDP

C D POWELL

1 DECEMBER 1984

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