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From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



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J Coles Esq
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Dear John

ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS: MR SPRING'S VISIT TO LONDON

The Secretary of State thinks that the Irish would appreciate it if the Prime Minister were able to find time to meet Mr Spring while he is over here. If other pre-occupations make a meeting difficult, it might be tactful to offer a meeting with Sir Geoffrey Howe or Mr Prior rather than a simple refusal.

Mr Spring is not only Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the minority Labour Party in the Coalition; he is as Minister of Energy responsible for Kinsale Gas. Any Ministerial discussions he has in London on 19 June are likely to deal with the difficulties described in Mr Prior's minute of 7 June. The Irish learned of the difficulties only at the end of last week and may react quickly. A meeting with a Cabinet Minister around 19 June is likely to be useful in minimising recriminations.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

Yours ever

Dave

D A HILL