

**RESTRICTED**

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DUBLIN

TO DESKBY 181300Z FCOLN

TELNO 105

OF 181115Z FEBRUARY 86

INFO PRIORITY NIO (B)

*Ps/N°10 Downm's Sli*

OUR TELS 99 AND 103 - SELLAFIELD: PRESS COMMENTS

## SUMMARY

1. PRESSURE BUILDS ON IRISH GOVERNMENT TO SEEK ACTION ON SELLAFIELD. TODAY'S (18 FEBRUARY) NEWSPAPERS REPORT LEADER OF OPPOSITION'S (MR HAUGHEY) CALL FOR CLOSURE OF SELLAFIELD AND CASTIGATION OF GOVERNMENT FOR THEIR HANDLING OF THE ISSUE OVER PAST TWO YEARS. ALSO SPECULATION THAT THE TAOISEACH MAY RAISE SELLAFIELD WITH PRIME MINISTER TOMORROW. AND THE TAINISTE/MINISTER FOR ENERGY IS REPORTED TO HAVE SAID THAT IT WAS NOW IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN BNFL'S STATEMENTS ON SELLAFIELD.

## DETAIL

2. MR HAUGHEY LAST NIGHT TABLED A SPECIAL NOTICE QUESTION IN THE DAIL ASKING THE TAOISEACH TO MAKE AN URGENT REQUEST TO HMG TO CLOSE DOWN SELLAFIELD. HE ALSO ISSUED A STATEMENT (COPIES BY BAG) IN WHICH HE SAID THAT THE MINISTER OF STATE AT ENERGY'S (MR COLLINS) RECENT CALL FOR THE TOTAL ENDING OF ALL DISCHARGES FROM SELLAFIELD WAS A "COMPLETELY INADEQUATE RESPONSE TO AN OMINOUS AND THREATENING SITUATION". THE GOVERNMENT MR HAUGHEY SAID, HAD BEEN "GROSSLY NEGLIGENT" IN THEIR DEALING WITH THE ISSUE OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS.

3. REPORTING THAT DR FITZGERALD MIGHT RAISE THE SUBJECT OF SELLAFIELD WITH MRS THATCHER, THE IRISH TIMES SAYS THAT SINCE THE IRISH SIDE MADE REPRESENTATIONS IN 1984 IN RELATION TO SELLAFIELD "THE FLOW OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE OPERATION OF THE PLANT HAS IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY". HOWEVER THE PAPER SAYS THAT THERE ARE SOME DOUBTS ABOUT THE RELIABILITY OF THE INFORMATION. A "SOURCE" IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT "OUR DIFFICULTY IS THAT BNFL... DON'T SEEM TO BE TELLING THE TRUTH TO ANYONE".

4. THE CORK EXAMINER AND IRISH INDEPENDENT QUOTE MR SPRING AS SAYING THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN BNFL'S STATEMENTS ON THE OPERATION OF THEIR PLANT 'PARTICULARLY IN RELATION

4. THE CORK EXAMINER AND IRISH INDEPENDENT QUOTE MR SPRING AS SAYING THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO HAVE CONFIDENCE IN BNFL'S STATEMENTS ON THE OPERATION OF THEIR PLANT 'PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO MALFUNCTIONS'. HE ALSO SAID THAT THERE WAS A HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY ON HMG TO ENSURE THAT SAFETY STANDARDS AT THE PLANT WERE MAINTAINED. 'BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON THE REPUBLIC AND NORTHERN IRELAND THE ISSUE HAD AN ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT DIMENSION'.

COMMENT

5. THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAVE CONFIRMED THAT SELLAFIELD WILL BE DISCUSSED IN CABINET THIS MORNING. BUT WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH WHETHER DR FITZGERALD WILL RAISE THE SUBJECT WITH MRS THATCHER. WE SHALL ADVISE RID BY TELEPHONE WHEN WE HAVE A STEER.

FCO ADVANCES PLEASE TO GOODWIN NED, MORRIS RID, MISS MCINTOSH MAED, MISS NOWAK D/ENVIRONMENT, CHALLIS D/ENERGY, HATHAWAY MAFF/FISHERIES, SAUNDERS DHSS (HANNIBAL HOUSE) AND SILL NIO (L).

GOODISON

LIMITED.

NED

RID.

MAED

NEWS D

INFO D

RES D

PLANNING STAFF.

PUSD

PS

PS/MR RENTON.

PS/LADY YOUNG.

PS/MR EGGAR

MR GOODALL

MR DAUNT.

COPIES TO:  
AS ADDRESSEES.

PS/W.10 Downing St. ✓