MR INGHAM PRIME MINISTER'S PRESS CONFERENCE: NORTHERN IRELAND There will inevitably be a number of questions on Northern Ireland at the press conference. They are likely focus on the New Ireland Forum report and on the Prime Minister's alleged rejection of 'alienation'. In response to questions about her remarks on the New Ireland Forum report at the press conference following the quality Anglo-Irish Summit, I suggest she should reply that she is in the habit of answering the questions which she is asked. On that occasion she was asked for her views on the three specific models put forward by the New Ireland Forum unification, federation and joint authority - and repeated what the Government had already said several times, namely that none of these models would have been compatible with the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as a part of the United Kingdom which a majority of people in Northern Ireland wish to preserve. Since the Forum was dominated by parties committed to an Irish nationalist viewpoint, it was inevitable that there would be much in the report which the British Government would find unacceptable. But there were also other elements in the New Ireland report which the Cabinet have already described as helpful for instance its condemnation of violence, its emphasis on the need for peace and stability, its effect to identify common ground between unionists and nationalists. We continue to regard these as positive, and they were reflected in the Communique of the Anglo-Irish Summit. As regards alienation, the Prime Minister might say that it is important not to exaggerate the problem. The fact is that many members of the minority community work positively with or within the system. Equally she recognises - and this again is nothing new and was said by Mr Prior - that there are many other members of that community who do not have s12aar

confidence in that system and look more to the Republic. That is precisely the problem which both the British and Irish Governments are committed to trying to allieviate. If the Prime Minister is asked directly whether she has sent the Taoiseach a message, I suggest she confirms that she has but decline to be drawn on the content of a private communication. I attach a copy of the communique of the Anglo-Irish Summit. C D POWELL 2 December 1984 s12aar

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach exchanged views on European Community matters, including enlargement to admit Spain and Portugal, progress in creating the internal market, the economic and social situation, including employment trends, and the future development and financing of the Community.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach also reviewed current issues in international affairs, including the efforts to relieve famine in Ethiopia and other countries in Africa.

/ The Prime Minister

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach reviewed the work done under the auspices of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council at both ministerial and official levels on political, economic, security and cultural matters. They noted that much detailed work was continuing at official level, and looked forward to further meetings of the Council at all levels.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach had an extensive and constructive exchange of views on developments in relation to Northern Ireland since their last major bilateral meeting a year ago. In their discussions they took fully into account the position of the British Government as set out in the debate in the House of Commons on 2 July 1984; the report of the New Ireland Forum; and the proposals of constitutional democratic parties in Northern Ireland as set out in documents published in recent months.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed that it was a major interest of both their countries, as well as of both the majority and minority communities in Northern Ireland, that there should be lasting peace and stability in Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed on the need for efforts to diminish the divisions between the two communities in Northern Ireland and to reconcile the two major traditions that exist in the two parts of Ireland.

The Taoiseach also reaffirmed that it remained the wish of the Irish Government that the two parts of Ireland should come together by freely negotiated agreement and in peace, but recognised that any change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed that Northern Ireland was part of the United Kingdom and that the majority in Northern Ireland wanted it to remain so. At the same time she confirmed that, if in the future the majority of the people of Northern Ireland clearly wished for and consented to a change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom Government would put forward and support legislation to that end

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed that:

in the British Parliament.

- (i) any attempt to promote political objectives by means of violence or the threat of violence must be rejected, as must those who adopt or support such methods;
- (ii) the identities of both the majority and the minority communities in Northern Ireland should be recognised and respected, and reflected in the structures and processes of Northern Ireland

in ways acceptable to both communities;

- (iii) the process of government in Northern Ireland should be such as to provide the people of both communities with the confidence that their rights will be safeguarded.
  - (iv) co-operation between their two Governments in matters of security should be maintained and where possible improved.

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed that in the light of their discussion there should be close and continuing dialogue on these subjects between the two Governments in the framework of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council, with a view to a further meeting between them within the coming months.