

SUBJECT
cc Master

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File

to Sir PC

DA
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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

15 November 1985

Dear Sir,

ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT

I should record that the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach met for 45 minutes before the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement at Hillsborough Castle on 15 November. Sir Robert Armstrong and Mr. Nally were also present.

As it turned out, the meeting was devoted exclusively to practising answers to likely questions at the subsequent press conference. There was no discussion of substance. The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach decided to forego the Plenary Session altogether.

While the Prime Minister was at Hillsborough, a letter to the Prime Minister from Mr. Molyneux and Dr. Paisley was delivered (I do not have a copy to hand but David Goodall has one). You will wish to consider with the Northern Ireland Office whether a reply is appropriate and if so from whom it should issue. I am inclined to think that it would be best for the Northern Ireland Secretary to reply.

I am copying this letter to Jim Daniell (Northern Ireland Office) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

(Charles Powell)

L.V. Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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ANGLO-IRISH DEAL SIGNED

THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT ON NORTHERN IRELAND WAS FORMALLY SIGNED INTO EXISTENCE AT EXACTLY 2PM TODAY.

MRS MARGARET THATCHER AND IRISH PREMIER DR GARRET FITZGERALD SEALED THE PACT WITH A HANDSHAKE AND A SMILE IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS.

THE SIGNING TOOK PLACE BEFORE A HOST OF PHOTOGRAPHERS, TELEVISION CAMERAMEN AND JOURNALISTS IN HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE, 12 MILES FROM BELFAST.

THE PRIME MINISTERS WERE SEATED AT A POLISHED WOODEN TABLE FOR THE CEREMONY, WHICH WAS COMPLETED IN SECONDS.

BEHIND THEM STOOD SENIOR MINISTERS FROM THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ATTENDING THE HILLSBOROUGH SUMMIT - FOREIGN SECRETARY SIR GEOFFREY HOWE AND NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY TOM KING AS WELL AS IRELAND'S DEPUTY PREMIER DICK SPRING AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER PETER BARRY. LATER, THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS WERE HOLDING A PRESS CONFERENCE.

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