

PRIME MINISTER

MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH

You have an hour with the Taoiseach tomorrow afternoon. The only subject is the Anglo-Irish Agreement, though he may raise Irish concern about recent incidents at Sellafield.

Dr. FitzGerald's political position has weakened dramatically in recent weeks, and his fortunes are said to be at their lowest ebb ever. His recent reshuffle misfired. He faces a vote of no confidence on Thursday (which he is expected to survive - just). The only thing which has gone right for him is the Agreement: and his meeting with you therefore assumes great importance for him. He will want it to appear successful. You, on the other hand, need to be seen to have pressed him hard on security co-operation and the SDLP's unhelpful attitude. You will have to cope with Molyneux and Paisley next week.

In short, he badly needs a meeting which signals that all is going well with the implementation of the Anglo-Irish Agreement: you need one which signals that we are not satisfied with the Irish Government's performance under the Agreement. How the meeting is presented publicly will depend on what sort of assurances you can wring out of him in private.

The main points which you will want to get across to him are:

- (i) there is no question of our being deflected from implementing the Agreement; but
- (ii) the situation in the North is very difficult and we badly need the help of the Irish Government in persuading moderate Unionist opinion to look more benignly on the Agreement. You might tell him

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- 3 -

If Dr. FitzGerald raises Sellafield you can point to contacts between British and Irish officials which have agreed improved procedures for notifying incidents; i.e. the new draft Nuclear Emergencies Agreement which we have just tabled and on which we await their comments.

I attach more detailed briefs.

C.D.P.

CHARLES POWELL

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