



BF
SUBJECT CC MASTER

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 March 1986

**ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS
PRIME MINISTER'S TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH THE TAOISEACH**

The Taoiseach telephoned the Prime Minister this morning shortly before his departure for a visit to the United States. Because of a technical failure I was only able to hear one side of the conversation but have reconstructed the remainder from the Prime Minister's subsequent account.

The Taoiseach expressed concern about an advertisement in the Belfast Newsletter today placed by Mr. Molyneaux and Dr. Paisley saying some very damaging things about the RUC. The Irish Government were not proposing to make any comment. The Prime Minister said that she was not aware of this but welcomed the Irish Government's restraint.

The Taoiseach then went on to express rather greater concern about remarks made by the Northern Ireland Secretary in a television interview on 6 March in which he had apparently said words to the effect that the Anglo-Irish Agreement was a bulwark against a united Ireland. This was causing a considerable furore in the Republic. The Taoiseach said that such remarks caused him difficulty. He recalled that both sides had earlier agreed to avoid any references to Irish reunification. However he would once again show restraint and decline to make any comment. The Prime Minister said that the form of words which she normally adopted was that she hoped and expected the Union to continue. The fact of the matter was that the Unionists at present desperately needed reassurance. She was grateful for the Taoiseach's restraint in avoiding a public dispute about this.

The Taoiseach then said that he was much exercised by a request apparently made to the White House by "your people" to treat his forthcoming visit to the United States, and in particular to the White House itself, in a low profile way. Mr. Haughey was apparently also in the United States and had made a damaging speech to which the Taoiseach wanted an opportunity to reply. He could hardly do this if we were telling the Americans to treat his visit in a low key. The Prime Minister said that she was not aware of any such request to the White House. She had not instructed that any such message should be sent and wondered whether there had been a misunderstanding. She would look into the matter.

Naturally she hoped that the Taoiseach would avoid saying anything while in the United States which would cause further difficulties with the Unionists. She thought that both Governments should convey an impression of calm and determination. The Agreement had been signed, approved by both Parliaments and would be implemented.

The Taoiseach started to say something about the next meeting of the Inter-Governmental Conference. The Prime Minister urged him not to mention this on the telephone. The Taoiseach proposed that there might be a meeting between Mr. Nally and Sir Robert Armstrong on 10 March. The Prime Minister agreed to this.

I should be grateful to know whether you are able to throw any light on the alleged representations to the White House. Perhaps Sir Robert Armstrong could provide any necessary explanation to Mr. Nally on Monday. It would also be helpful to have from the Northern Ireland Office a note on what the Belfast Newsletter carries by the Unionist Party leaders about the RUC.

I am copying this letter to Jim Daniell (Northern Ireland Office) and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

CHARLES POWELL

Colin Budd, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Personal and confidential

A 086/767

MR POWELL ^{COO} 7B

The Taoiseach will come through to speak to the Prime Minister at about 1.00 pm.

2. Mr Nally was very guarded when I asked about the agenda, but I think that the Taoiseach may talk about two things:

1. He may suggest that there should be a meeting between Mr Nally and me to consider "where we go from here" on the Anglo-Irish Agreement.
2. He may want to have a word about political aspects of his forthcoming visit to the United States; he will not talk about money.
3. The Taoiseach may also mention one or two little local issues.

RTA

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Mr Powell



PP agreed
Smith table
N.L.W.

7.3

10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

Dr Fitzgerald wants
to talk to you on
the telephone before
he leaves at
2.30 pm for the
U.S.A. Subject
unknown, but
RTA will try to

found out.

Shall we tell
his office that he
can telephone about
1.00 pm.⁷

N. L. W.