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ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT: TAOISEACH'S PRESS CONFERENCE

1. DR FITZGERALD GAVE A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE IRISH EMBASSY ON THE EVENING OF 7 NOVEMBER FOLLOWING THE ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT MEETING AT CHEQUERS. HIS REMARKS HAVE BEEN WIDELY REPORTED IN THE BRITISH AND IRISH DAILY NEWSPAPERS AS WELL AS ON RADIO AND TELEVISION. HE AVOIDED REVEALING THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER BUT MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE ATMOSPHERE HAD BEEN GOOD AND THAT ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS HAD BEEN RESTORED TO THE STATE THEY WERE IN FOLLOWING THE LAST SUMMIT MEETING IN NOVEMBER 1981. THE FOLLOWING POINTS ARE WORTH RECORDING.

JOINT SOVEREIGNTY

2. THE TAOISEACH WAS PRESSED REPEATEDLY ABOUT WHETHER HE HAD RAISED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER THE POSSIBILITY OF JOINT SOVEREIGNTY PROVIDING THE BASIS FOR A SOLUTION TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM. HE EMPHATICALLY DENIED THAT IT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AND WHEN ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT JOINT SOVEREIGNTY MEANT SAID THAT HE WAS NOT SURE. DR FITZGERALD POINTED OUT THAT JOINT SOVEREIGNTY HAD NOT BEEN CONSIDERED BY THE NEW IRELAND FORUM, ALTHOUGH HE HOPED THAT THE FORUM WOULD QUOTE IN DUE COURSE TURN ITS MIND TO ALTERNATIVE MODELS UNQUOTE.

NEW IRELAND FORUM

3. THE TAOISEACH SAID THAT HE HAD TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN TO THE PRIME MINISTER HOW THE NEW IRELAND FORUM WAS ORGANISED AND WHAT IT WAS DOING. HE SAID THAT HE HAD NOT ATTEMPTED TO PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF ITS DELIBERATIONS AND HAD NOT

*Dr. Fitz Gerald seems to  
have handled this fairly.*

*A. J. C. 9.11*

*MS*

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ASKED FOR A REACTION FROM THE PRIME MINISTER, WHO HAD SIMPLY LISTENED WITH INTEREST. THERE HAD BEEN NO DISCUSSION ON THE SUBJECT. DR FITZGERALD HOPED THAT THE FINAL REPORT OF THE FORUM WOULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR FUTURE ANGLO-IRISH COOPERATION. NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICAL SITUATION

4. DR FITZGERALD SAID THAT HE AND THE PRIME MINISTER HAD QUOTE REFLECTED TOGETHER ON THE PROBLEM UNQUOTE. HE ADDED THAT THE VALUE OF THE MEETING LAY IN THE OPPORTUNITY IT HAD GIVEN FOR A RELAXED DISCUSSION WITHOUT THE PRESSURE TO REACH DEFINITE CONCLUSIONS. THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY HAD NOT BEEN DISCUSSED. THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP WHICH HE HAD BUILT UP WITH THE PRIME MINISTER SINCE MEETING HER IN 1975 WOULD BE HELPFUL IN RESOLVING THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM THOUGH QUOTE INTRANSIGENT FACTS UNQUOTE WOULD NOT GO AWAY. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE ALIENATION OF THE MINORITY COMMUNITY FROM THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER QUOTE IS AND MUST BE A MATTER OF CONCERN UNQUOTE AND WAS SOMETHING WHICH QUOTE WE MUST APPLY OURSELVES TO UNQUOTE. ASKED WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER WAS PREPARED TO GIVE A HIGHER PRIORITY TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM, DR FITZGERALD DECLINED TO COMMENT BUT SAID THAT WHEN, IN 1973 AT SUNNINGDALE, QUOTE WE ONCE CAME CLOSE TO FINDING A WAY THROUGH THE MORASS UNQUOTE, IT WAS THE RESULT OF BOTH GOVERNMENTS GIVING THE MATTER A HIGH PRIORITY. HE HOPED THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD DO THE SAME IN THE COMING YEAR OR SO.

SUPERGRASSES

5. ASKED WHAT HE THOUGHT ABOUT THE USE OF SUPERGRASSES, DR FITZGERALD GAVE A LONG AND SOMEWHAT CONFUSED REPLY BUT SUGGESTED THAT IT DID RAISE SOME PROBLEMS. IN PARTICULAR HE SAID THERE WAS EVIDENCE THAT SUPERGRASSES HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE ALIENATION OF BOTH COMMUNITIES FROM THE FORCES OF LAW AND ORDER. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT THEY HAD BEEN USEFUL IN CONVICTING TERRORISTS.

HOWE

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MY TELNO 340: ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT: DAIL STATEMENT

1. THE TAOISEACH MADE A STATEMENT IN THE DAIL TODAY ON HIS MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER.

2. HE SAID THAT ITS PRINCIPAL PURPOSE WAS TO IMPROVE AND DEEPEN THE RELATIONSHIP ORIGINALLY DEVELOPED SOME YEARS AGO. THE DOCUMENTS DESCRIBING THE WORK OF THE ANGLO-IRISH INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL WERE A RECORD OF CONSIDERABLE ACHIEVEMENT. HE HAD STRESSED THE VERY REAL DANGERS ARISING FROM ALIENATION AMONG THE MINORITY POPULATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND URGED DEEP AND URGENT REFLECTION ON HOW THIS PROBLEM MIGHT BE TACKLED. THE CHALLENGE TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS WAS TO ASK:

' ' NOT WHAT WE WANT, BUT WHAT WORKABLE ARRANGEMENTS CAN WE DEVISE TOGETHER WHICH WILL GIVE TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND WHAT THEY WANT AND WHAT THEY NEED. THEIR FUNDAMENTAL REQUIREMENT IS FOR STABILITY AND ORDER. THE TEST OF ANY SOLUTION MUST BE THAT IT BE REALISTIC AND ANSWER THE BASIC NEED FOR IDENTIFICATION BY THE PEOPLE WITH THE INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT WHICH IS THE VERY BASIS OF SOCIETY. ' '

3. CONCLUDING, THE TAOISEACH SAID HE HAD GONE TO LONDON WITH THE OBJECTIVE OF LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR DIALOGUE ON WAYS AND MEANS TO ACHIEVE PEACE AND STABILITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND. HE BELIEVED THIS OBJECTIVE WAS ACHIEVED.

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4. MR HAUGHEY IN A LONG BUT SUBDUED REPLY SAID THAT THE SUMMIT WAS A NON-EVENT: NOTHING OF SUBSTANCE HAD EMERGED. THE TAOISEACH HAD MADE A LONG EXPOSITION BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN THAT HE HAD MADE ANY IMPRESSION ON MRS THATCHER, OR THAT SHE REALISED THE COST TO THE REPUBLIC OF SECURITY MEASURES. DR FITZGERALD WAS TOO READY TO PLAY THE ROLE OF JUNIOR PARTNER AND HIS REMARKS CAME CLOSE TO APOLOGISING FOR IRELAND'S STANCE DURING THE FALKLANDS WAR. ON THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, THERE WAS NO SIGN THAT BRITAIN RECOGNISED IRISH CONCERNS. BRITAIN HAD AN ENORMOUS TRADE SURPLUS WITH THE REPUBLIC BUT THE TAOISEACH HAD FAILED TO MAKE ANY USE OF THIS TO OBTAIN CONCESSIONS. ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS WOULD NEVER BE NORMAL UNTIL BRITAIN ACCEPTED THE WISHES OF FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE IRISH PEOPLE AND WITHDREW FROM NORTHERN IRELAND.

FCO PLEASE PASS TO SAVING ADDRESSEES

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