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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 April 1985

Anglo-Irish Relations: Briefing for HM Ambassador
Washington about the Dialogue

The Prime Minister has noted the suggestion in the Northern Ireland Secretary's minute of 3 April and the Foreign Secretary's minute of 15 April that we should provide tailor made written briefing on our negotiations with the Irish Republic to HM Ambassador in Washington.

The Prime Minister would prefer to avoid any written briefing, which she considers would carry an unnecessary risk. But she agrees that Sir Oliver Wright should be given an oral briefing on his next visit here.

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

(C.D. Powell)

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



PM/85/29

PRIME MINISTERAnglo-Irish Relations: Briefing HM Ambassador Washington aboutthe Dialogue

1. I have seen a copy of Douglas Hurd's minute to you of 3 April about his visit to the United States last month. I fully take the point which he makes at the end of his paragraph 2 about the need to keep HM Ambassador, Washington, fully informed about the state of play. The views of the Americans about the Anglo-Irish relations are an important factor which we have to take into account. Douglas Hurd is quite right to say that if we do not reach agreement this could have damaging effects on our relations with the Americans. I think we are all aware of this as an additional - though not, of course, a decisive - reason for wanting to reach agreement if we can.

2. We have until very recently kept knowledge of the detail of the dialogue confined to a very small group of people. Douglas Hurd rightly points out that the time has come to include HM Ambassador in Washington in that circle. We may need to consider adding one or two other of our overseas representatives as and when the current talks approach their conclusion.

3. I would still be reluctant to circulate the papers directly related to the dialogue outside the United Kingdom, but I think that we have reached a stage where we could make available to Sir Oliver Wright a short tailor-made piece of briefing as the dialogue progresses. It would also be useful for him to be briefed personally as opportunities present

Prime Minister
I would be very cautious
about providing written
briefing. Once the Embassy
have it, they will want
to use it.
Agree to oral briefing

with COP? Yes

for Oliver Wright personally
next time he is over here?

COP
15/4.



themselves. Perhaps this is something which we could discuss at the forthcoming meeting of OD(I), when we have finalised our instructions to officials for the next round of the dialogue.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'G. Howe', written in a cursive style.

GEOFFREY HOWE

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
15 April, 1985



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