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Prime Minister

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We must have a talk with D-H following

You of course spoke in line with Taoiseach. This when you saw the

ANGLO-IRISH TALKS: POLICE AUTHORITY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

What with the Taoiseach

CD 30/6 Attached

I have seen a copy of Geoffrey Howe's minute to you of 26 June about the Taoiseach's reaction to the timing of the appointment of the new Police Authority for Northern Ireland.

2. We cannot go to the extent of announcing at the time of any agreement that the Police Authority will be reconstituted in consultation with the Irish Government. Nor can we now agree that John Hume should be given such an undertaking - on that I agree with Geoffrey Howe. For me to accept the intention of making such announcement would mean that I had decided in advance of appointing the people whom I am fully satisfied are proper persons to become members of the Police Authority for the statutory period of three years, that I would shortly introduce legislation (which would be necessary to terminate their tenure) to appoint new members in consultation with the Irish Government. This would lead to turmoil in the RUC, and in the Police Authority. I would rightly be severely criticised. I do not think we can go along with the Taoiseach's suggestion.

3. In general the temperature among Unionist politicians has risen sharply in the last fortnight, and the Anglo-Irish talks are one main cause of their feverishness. I continue to believe that we can secure enough acquiescence in the arrangements which we have so far put to the Irish. If we were to begin to accept additional substantial proposals in the guise of associated measures, the balance of judgement would have to tip the other way.

4. I realise the seriousness of the Taoiseach's concern, and have considered how within the above limitation we could find some way of alleviating it. I have two suggestions. First, we have not yet filled the final 17th place on the Authority. I shall therefore be announcing 16 appointments, plus the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, at the end of this week. In the normal course I would have continued to approach one or two well-qualified candidates in the coming days,

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in the hope that they might accept. In view of the wider political considerations, however, I am prepared that we should tell the Taoiseach that this final place will be left open for the time being - making four places which might be filled following an agreement with the Irish.

5. Secondly, I think we should draw his attention again to the final paragraph of the note which the Ambassador gave him on 24 June (Telegram No 140 of 24 June, amended by Telegram No 141 of the same date). That made clear that the Irish could put forward views and proposals of the structure, composition and powers of the Police Authority once an agreement was in place. I see no need to tell Mr Hume this now, but it might reassure the Taoiseach if we were to suggest that some reference to this could be made in any agreed statement we issue at the time an agreement is published.

6. It is notable that although I had a full talk recently with Mr Hume he never mentioned the Police Authority although I gave him every opportunity. Nor did he in yesterday's debates in the Commons. He knows of course that the Police Authority of Northern Ireland is at present a more modest body than Dr FitzGerald supposes.

7. I am copying this minute to Geoffrey Howe and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

DH.

27 June 1985

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