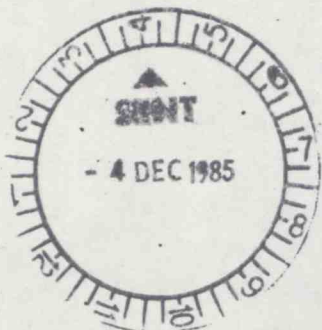


ADVANCE COPIES

22

NORTHERN IRELAND

PS (2)  
PS/LADY YOUNG  
PS/PUS  
MR GOODALL



PS/ S of S  
PS/MR R ANDREW, OAB 1/56  
MR BRENNAN  
MR BURNS  
MR PN BELL

NIO

HD/RID  
P. HD/FUSD (2)  
HD/INFO DEPT  
HD/NEWS DEPT

SIR R ARMSTRONG)  
DIO } CABINET OFFICE  
MR MALLABY }  
PS/ NO 10 DOWNING STREET (3)

UNCLASSIFIED  
FM DUBLIN  
TO IMMEDIATE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 847  
OF 041200Z DECEMBER 85  
INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON BIS NEW YORK

MY TEL 854: ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT: DUBLIN MEDIA COMMENT ON MR KING'S BRUSSELS SPEECH

SUMMARY

1. REPORTS OF MR KING'S REMARKS IN BRUSSELS AND SUBSEQUENT EFFORTS BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND TAOISEACH AT DAMAGE LIMITATION OCCUPY THE MASTHEAD POSITION IN ALL DUBLIN NEWSPAPERS.

DETAIL

2. "KING'S BRUSSELS GAFFE" IS THE IRISH PRESS HEADLINE: THE IRISH TIMES, "KING SAYS DUBLIN ACCEPTS PARTITION IN PERPETUITY"; AND THE IRISH INDEPENDENT "THATCHER RUSH TO REPAIR KING'S 'NO UNITY' GAFFE". ALL NEWSPAPERS FOCUS ON THE EFFORTS BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND TAOISEACH TO LIMIT DAMAGE TO THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT. THE PRIME MINISTER'S INTERVIEW ON THE MATTER WAS CARRIED ON RTE RADIO THIS MORNING. IT WAS NOTED THAT THIS IS THE FIRST INTERVIEW SHE HAS EVER GIVEN TO IRISH RADIO.

DR FITZGERALD IS SAID TO BE BAFFLED AND ANGRY, AND HIS STATEMENT THAT MR KING HAD MADE REMARKS 'WHICH WERE SINGULARLY INAPPROPRIATE AND INACCURATE' IS WIDELY REPORTED.

3. THE IRISH PRESS LEADER SAYS THAT MR KING HAS DROPPED DR FITZGERALD IN THE SOUP. "IT CERTAINLY PUTS THE SDLP IN A DIFFICULT POSITION PARTICULARLY MR SEAMUS MALLON WHO HAS BEEN GIVEN FOOD FOR THOUGHT BY MR KING". THE IRISH PRESS SAYS, "MR HAUGHEY CAN LEGITIMATELY TAKE PRIVATE SATISFACTION FROM THE FACT THAT WHAT WAS SAID IN BRUSSELS HAS ENHANCED HIS POSITION ON THE AGREEMENT". COMMENTATORS ON TV AND RADIO HAVE ALSO EMPHASISED THIS, AND THE IRISH TIMES REPORTS THAT ALTHOUGH FIANNA FAIL WOULD MAKE NO OFFICIAL COMMENT ON MR KING'S STATEMENT, PARTY SOURCES SEIZED ON HIS WORDS AS JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR EARLY REJECTION OF THE AGREEMENT ALTHOUGH "FIANNA FAIL IS NOT EXPECTED TO MAKE ANY

HIS WORDS AS JUSTIFICATION FOR THEIR EARLY REJECTION OF THE AGREEMENT ALTHOUGH "FIANNA FAIL IS NOT EXPECTED TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT UNTIL DR FITZGERLAD REPORTS TO THE DAIL LATER THIS WEEK ON THE EUROPEAN SUMMIT".

4. THE IRISH TIMES LEADER 'NEVER SAY NEVER' DESCRIBES MR KING AS MAKING A GAFFE OF A VERY AWKWARD AND EMBARRASSING KIND. "THE GOV GOVERNMENT 'S OPPONENTS ON THE NATIONALIST SIDE NORTH AND SOUTH WILL SEIZE ON MR KINGS STATEMENT AS PROOF OF A SELL-OUT" AND "NOR IS IT LIKELY TO DO MUCH TOWARDS ACHIEVING THAT CURRENT PRIORITY REASSURING THE UNIONISTS. THE WAY TO REASSURE THEM IS NOT TO CLAIM THE ABANDONMENT OF NATIONALIST ASPIRATIONS, BUT IN THE SHORT TERM TO BRING ABOUT A DIMINUTION IN VIOLENCE AND IN THE LONGER TERM TO SHOW THEM THAT, IN THE NEW ARRANGEMENTS UNDER THE HILLSBOROUGH AGREEMENT AND UNDER ANY FUTURE CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS THEIR RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES WILL BE GUARANTEED". THE IRISH INDEPENDENT REFERS TO MR KING'S "UNFORTUNATE DEPARTURE FROM A PREPARED SCRIPT TO OPINE THAT FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES AND IN PERPETUITY THE RECENT AGREEMENT MEANS THAT THERE WILL NEVER BE A UNITED IRELAND, CRASH LANDED ON A STATEMENT FROM MRS THATCHER AND DR FITZGERALD THAT THE HILLSBOROUGH AGREEMENT WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED AS PLANNED. THE TIMING OF THIS COMMENT WAS BAD", AND "BOTH DR FITZGERALD AND MRS THATCHER ARE DOING WHAT THEY CAN TO PROVE THAT THEY DO INTEND TO IMPLEMENT THE AGREEMENT".

GOODISON

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