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(4) - 8 JAN 1986

PRIVATE OFFICE

TELEPHONE CALL BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND MR PETER BARRY ON 8 JANUARY

1. The Secretary of State, at 1.00 pm today, spoke to Mr Barry about the proposal to hold a meeting of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on Friday 10 January. The Secretary of State noted that the special meeting of the Conference, held on 30 December, might have been a contributory factor in bringing the INLA hunger strike to an end. However, he did not feel that a meeting on Friday was desirable. There had not been time to complete all the necessary preparatory work and, while the Irish had earlier in the week submitted papers, there had been no time for them to be properly considered by the British side. Furthermore, the meeting between Messrs Brennan and Ryan on the Administration of Justice had only just taken place. If a meeting were arranged for Friday, then the British response to the Irish proposals would have to be merely that they had been noted and would be considered further.
2. If, having considered the above points, the Irish still felt the need for an early meeting, then the Secretary of State said that it would have to take place in London. The situation in the North was sensitive and a meeting at Stormont could exacerbate tensions; and given the demands on the RUC as a result of the by-elections and the fact that they had in recent weeks had to cope with two major demonstrations related to the Conference the Secretary of State did not wish to put them under any further pressure at this stage.
3. Mr Barry noted that there was a full agenda for a Friday meeting, including Flags and Banners, the Irish Language, the Administration of Justice and a report back from the Garda Commissioner on cross-border security. The Irish still wanted a meeting. The RUC had coped very well at Maryfield on 4 January in dealing with the loyalist demonstration and Mr Barry did not wish to put them under any further pressure. However, the understanding in the negotiations leading up to the Agreement was that meetings would take place in Belfast. If Stormont was not possible, what about Aldergrove as a fall back?
4. The Secretary of State said that on reflection he had ruled out Aldergrove as an option for reasons which he would discuss when he saw Mr Barry. He remained of the view that having a meeting on Friday would be of little value; if it had to take

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place, then it should be a Friday morning meeting in London. Mr Barry said that he needed time to think about this and to discuss the position with the Taoiseach. He would telephone this afternoon.

J A DANIELL
Private Secretary

8 January 1986

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10 DOWNING STREET

Charles, ^{AD}

NIO phoned to say that it has been 'amicably' agreed that there will be a ~~future~~ meeting in London on Friday.

SUE

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