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Ref. A084/2949

MR POWELL

Anglo-Irish Relations: Forthcoming Summit

↓ will occur if required.

As I reported briefly to you in the telegram which I sent to New Delhi, I put to Mr Nally the proposal that the forthcoming Summit meeting between the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach should be held at Chequers. They had no problem with this: indeed, my strong impression was that they welcomed it, on the grounds of the strains which a visit to Ireland would have imposed upon the Irish security forces.


2. I said that the Prime Minister proposed that the arrangements should be similar to those which were envisaged if she had visited Ireland. If the Taoiseach would like to come over on the Sunday evening, she would welcome him to a working dinner at Chequers and to stay the night. There could then be discussions on the morning of Monday 19 November, followed by a working lunch, which would conclude the proceedings. I presumed that there would be no joint press conference, though I recognised that the Taoiseach might wish to give his own press conference.

3. I said that the Prime Minister would be accompanied by the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and that the officials present (apart from Private Secretaries) would probably be me and Mr Goodall, and Mr Andrew or Mr Brennan from the Northern Ireland Office. Mr Nally said that the Taoiseach would be accompanied by Mr Peter Barry, the Minister for External Affairs, and probably also by the Tanaiste, Mr Dick Spring. His officials would probably be Mr Nally, Mr Donlon and Mr Lillis. No doubt the two Ambassadors would also be present.



4. Mr Nally said that the Taoiseach would undoubtedly hope to spend as much time as possible tete-a-tete with the Prime Minister (tete-a-tete including Mr Nally and me and you). We thought that European Community matters might be discussed mainly between the two Foreign Ministers, and that the two Secretaries of State should meet Mr Spring and Mr Barry while the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach were holding their tete-a-tete meeting. Mr Nally said that for domestic political reasons the Taoiseach might ask that the Tanaiste should be present for the first five or ten minutes of his tete-a-tete with the Prime Minister (this has happened once or twice before); but it might well be that Mr Spring would not insist upon that.

5. I suggest that the organisation of the visit might now be put into the usual channels. The Prime Minister will no doubt wish to decide whether she wishes to entertain anybody else at Chequers besides Dr FitzGerald. Mr Donlon indicated to me that they would probably like to put up those who did not stay at Chequers at hotels nearby; but there could be security difficulties about that, I suppose.

  
Approved by  
ROBERT ARMSTRONG  
and signed in his absence.

5 November 1984