

*Subject: Ireland - Meetings
with the Taoiseach.*

Ref. A084/2035

PRIME MINISTER

Mr Goodall and I visited Dublin on 16 July. I shall be reporting in detail on the conversations which we had with our counterparts on Anglo-Irish business.

2. While we were in Dublin I was invited to go and see the Taoiseach, and had about half an hour with him. He made the following points:

1. On Anglo-Irish affairs, he thought that it would be useful to take advantage of the Irish Presidency of the European Community to arrange meetings between himself and you which, while ostensibly to deal with Community business could also extend to Anglo-Irish affairs. Specifically, the Taoiseach said that he was going to Strasbourg from 24 to 26 July, and could come and see you in London either on his way to or on his way back from Strasbourg (for instance on 27 July). I said that I would report this to you. This was, however, a very busy time of year for you, and I said that my impression was that there was room for one or two further discussions between Mr Nally and me before matters were taken to a higher level. The Taoiseach accepted that it might well be appropriate to leave a contact until (say) very late August or early September, but he clearly remains anxious to have a further opportunity of talking to you privately before very long.

2. The Taoiseach hoped that you might be able to find an opportunity to receive Mr Dick Spring, the Leader of the Irish Labour Party and the Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister). He thought that it would be useful to hear at first hand Mr Spring's commitment to the kind of policies which the Taoiseach was himself following in relation to Northern Ireland. It would not surprise me if domestic Irish politics had something to do with this: there are

suggestions that the Fine Gael - Labour coalition has been under strain, and Dr FitzGerald may feel that your receiving Mr Spring would help to buttress it.

3. The Taoiseach emphasised that the new Irish Ambassador, Mr Noel Dorr, enjoyed his total confidence and could be regarded as speaking with his authority on Anglo-Irish affairs.

4. The Taoiseach was clearly worried about the resolution of European Community budget problems (having just had a meeting with Monsieur Ortolli), and hoped that we should be playing a constructive part at the Budget Council later in the week.

5. On the Presidency of the European Commission, Dr FitzGerald said that the enquiries he had been making suggested that there would be a consensus around the Community in favour of Monsieur Delors (the only outstanding country being Greece, which still supported Monsieur Cheysson). It was clear that other countries would not accept Monseieur Cheysson, and would prefer Vicomte Davignon to that. The Taoiseach said that he had noted your strong support for Vicomte Davignon; but he had also noted that you spoke warmly in personal terms about Monsieur Delors, and he hoped that you would be willing to support Monsieur Delors's candidacy.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

16 July 1984