

Ref A05414

PRIME MINISTERIreland

I submit Mr Wade-Gery's report on his negotiations in Dublin yesterday. I do not think we need take this any further until Mr Nally and I meet in the Joint Steering Committee, probably in September, when I will seek to resolve the square bracketted passages in our favour.

2. If the Taoiseach's office suggest a Summit on 23 September, your office will no doubt reply in accordance with your convenience and your assessment of the political advantages and disadvantages. It looks as if we could be ready by then; but the period between 21 September (when the Taoiseach is back from his holiday) and 25 September (when you leave for Melbourne) is going to be busy enough without this. In political terms it might be preferable to put the meeting off until after the Party Conference. These considerations point to late October; and, if that is what you suggest, the Taoiseach's officials are likely to advise him to settle for that.

3. In preparing briefs for the Summit the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Northern Ireland Office will no doubt wish to consider whether it or the one after should be regarded as the meeting devoted to "special consideration of the totality of relationships within these islands" to which the December 1980 communique looked forward; and how we should handle the continued Irish hankering after the notion of at some stage holding an Anglo-Irish "conference".

4. I am sending copies of this minute and of Mr Wade-Gery's report to the Home Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, Lord Privy Seal and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

Robert Armstrong

6 August 1981

10p copy with pm. p.a.

Prime Minister
 Ireland 12/8
 As Sir Robert says, the period
 21 to 25 September is extremely
 busy. Agree that we
 should steer the Taoiseach
 towards a meeting in late
 October after Mexico, though
 even that will not be simple?

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Robert Armstrong

6 August 1981

Ref: B06258

RA
SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONGIrish Studies

I met Mr Kirwan of the Taoiseach's Department in Dublin on 5th August, to discuss the Joint Study on Institutional Structures. He was accompanied by Mr Sean Whelan of the Department of Foreign Affairs; I by Mr L B Smith of our Embassy.

2. On the basis of my agreed instructions (your second submission to the Prime Minister of 30th July and Mr Rickett's minute to you of 3rd August) I was able to agree the attached Report ("draft D") to the Joint Steering Committee. No further discussion of the Report is envisaged before the Steering Committee meets in September. But either side has the right to reopen any part of it in the interval if they so wish. I also expressly reserved our right, if we so wished, to decide at Steering Committee level that the attitudes of the two sides are too divergent to be sensibly encapsulated in a single document and that two rival documents (ie drafts A and B attached to your submission under reference) should be put to Heads of Government instead. The Irish were clearly anxious to avoid this; so the threat of it should prove useful at Steering Committee level, as a means of resolving some of the outstanding divergences.

3. You will see that these divergences are expressed in two different ways. In the case of the possible parliamentary structure - the one area where I think we shall not be able to push the Irish much further before the Summit, because they regard it as a King Charles' Head of Dr FitzGerald's - I have settled for a "labelled" divergence: paragraph 14 sets out the British view and paragraphs 15-17 the Irish. Elsewhere, divergences are represented by passages in square brackets; "B" in the margin of such passages indicates words we want but the Irish don't; and "I" indicates words they want but we don't. In these cases I think we have a reasonable chance of getting our version adopted at the Steering Committee. If we fail, it will not be difficult to replace the bracketted passages with "labelled" wording.

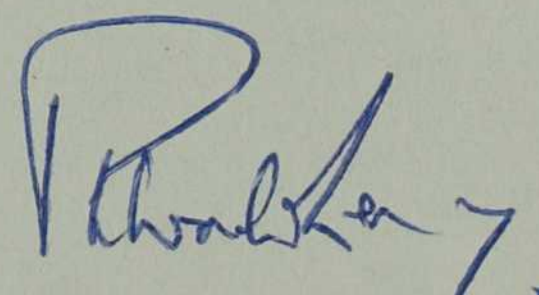
4. Subject to minor editorial changes, all the passages identified as unacceptable in the latest Irish text (draft C attached to your submission under reference) have been eliminated, "labelled" or square bracketted; and all but one of the essential passages in our latest text (draft A) have been included. The one exception is the first sentence of paragraph 8 of draft A, the thought in which is I think adequately reflected in paragraph 14 of the Report as it has now emerged; but I have warned Mr Kirwan that we may need to return to the charge on this.

5. Informally, in the margins of our meeting, Mr Kirwan made two points about the next Anglo Irish Summit.

i. Dr FitzGerald's reaction to Mr Nally's report of his discussion with you about dates (paragraph 2 of your first submission to the Prime Minister of 30th July) had been to say he would prefer 23rd September. His officials thought this misguided: he would be too newly back from holiday, it would be hard to have completed staff work on the Joint Studies by then and there was a greater risk of still being in the shadow of the hunger strike. When he returns to his office in a couple of days' time (he is at present away sick) they will have another go at persuading him that late October would be better. Therafter they will be in touch with No. 10. The clear implication of all this is that if at that stage they suggest 23rd September they will not be sorry if No. 10 turn them down. I made clear that I had no information on what might or might not suit the Prime Minister.

ii. Nearer the Summit we would need to consider whether it is to be presented as the meeting devoted to special consideration of the totality of relationships within these islands which the December 1980 communique said it would be; or whether the fact that we now have a new Taoiseach should be used as an excuse for indicating publicly that that stage would be reached at the following Summit, which might indeed "take the form of a conference". I made no comment.

6th August 1981


R L WADE-GERY