



10 DOWNING STREET

4

*From the Private Secretary*

SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG

ANGLO/IRISH RELATIONS: NORTHERN IRELAND

The Prime Minister has seen your minute of 3 October to which you attached Mr. Goodall's report on his latest talk with his Irish opposite number, Mr. Lillis.

The Prime Minister agrees that the implications of the Irish initiative should be considered in the way you propose in your paragraph 7.

But Mrs. Thatcher has commented that now that she has had an opportunity to reflect on the Irish initiative she believes that the chances of it leading to an increase in rather than a reduction of violence are high. If the Irish Government committed themselves to acceptance of Northern Ireland being part of the United Kingdom, this could well result in an increase in IRA activity.

As to the suggestion that Irish security forces might be given some role in Northern Ireland, the Prime Minister has raised the question of what would happen if a member of those forces was shot by a Unionist para-military group.

BF | It would be helpful to have your considered assessment of the Irish initiative so that the Prime Minister can discuss it with the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in good time before the Anglo-Irish Summit.

I am copying this minute to Brian Fall (FCO) and John Lyon (Northern Ireland Office).

A. J. COLES

SPK

7 October, 1983