

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

CONFIDENTIAL

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

WHITEHALL

LONDON SW1A 2AZ



A J Coles Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

1st December 1983

Prime Minister.

A.S.C. 1/12

Dear John,

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND NORTHERN IRELAND

You should be aware that Mr Haagerup is about to finalise his report to the Political Affairs Committee of the Parliament on a group of motions which touch on the political situation there. He has (in strict confidence) given us a copy of the draft report. It has been possible so far to study only the draft resolutions. This is the part which matters most since it will form the basis of future discussions of Northern Ireland in the Parliament; it is subject to amendment as it proceeds through the Political Affairs Committee and ultimately, the full Parliament.

.... On political matters the resolution (of which I attach a copy) is by and large acceptable. Mr Prior believes that we can be reasonably satisfied with how it has turned out; we had feared something a great deal less comfortable. Though there are some awkwardnesses for the United Kingdom, like a call to join the EMS, he believes this is to a considerable extent due to the effort Mr Scott was able to make to explain to Mr Haagerup the complexities of Northern Ireland and the importance in his report concentrating on the economic and social matters which are the proper concerns of the Parliament.

Mr Haagerup has said he is willing to look at textual comments. We will pass some to him in the next few days, though it is not certain how far he will be ready to make changes. He will undoubtedly be subject to counter pressures.

Mr Prior hopes to be able to meet Lady Elles of the EDG on 8 December to discuss the attitude the EDG might adopt over the report and resolution.

CONFIDENTIAL

The/

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The Report will be presented to the Political Affairs Committee on 12 December but there is a possibility that it will leak before then. The Prime Minister may therefore wish to know the position before going to Athens. We believe that the Irish Government has received a copy on the same confidential basis (though we would of course dispute the assumption, which this move implies, that the Irish Government has an equal interest with us in the affairs of Northern Ireland) and the Brussels press corps is already aware that the report is in virtually final form. If the report does leak before 12 December and it appears necessary to express a view, we will reassert that the European Parliament has no business to discuss the internal political affairs of a member state; say the United Kingdom Government would welcome reaffirmation by the Parliament as in the terms of the draft resolution that it is not competent to make proposals for changes in the constitution of Northern Ireland; say that the Government's current policies in Northern Ireland are directed to securing peace, political stability and economic recovery; and say that it is glad to note the emphasis given in the resolution to the EC's role in helping the economy of Northern Ireland, the support for those who promote the welfare of its people by peaceful means, and the clear condemnation of violence. When we have had the opportunity to examine the full report we will consider if this needs any refinement.

We will consider separately whether a fuller statement is called for, perhaps over a Minister's name, when the report is formally published.

A copy of this letter goes to Brian Fall.

Yours ever,

John

J M LYON

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

The European Parliament,

- A. conscious of the responsibility of the European Parliament by deciding to draw up a Report,
- B. recalling its resolution of 7 May 1981 "strongly opposing all forms of violence and expressing its determination to condemn acts of terrorism in whatever circumstances they are committed" and "recognising that the European Community has no competence to make proposals for changes in the Constitution of Northern Ireland",
- C. taking account of the European Community's involvement in economic and social affairs of Northern Ireland,
- D. recognising and supporting the efforts made for several years by the Commission and endorsed by the Council to ameliorate the situation of the peoples of Northern Ireland by a number of projects already implemented or in the process of being implemented including the recently adopted measure for urban renewal in Belfast;
- E. recalling the Martin Report of 4 May 1981, doc.
- F. bearing in mind the direct responsibility of the United Kingdom in maintaining law and order in Northern Ireland,
- G. realising the potential threat of terror which is not limited to Northern Ireland, but has claimed the lives of people in the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, as well as in other parts of the Community,
- H. concerned that the estrangement between the two communities in Northern Ireland has prevented the normal democratic process of changes of government, thereby alienating the minority from the political system,

- I. recognising the legitimate Irish interest in the achievement of lasting peace and stability in Northern Ireland,
- J. aware that improvement in the situation requires the closest possible co-operation between the British and Irish Governments, taking inspiration from the resolution of conflicts already achieved in other parts of the Community,
- K. aware that the conflict, deeply rooted in British-Irish history, is less one of religious strife than of conflicting national identities in Northern Ireland,
- L. having regard to the motions for a resolution:
Doc. 1-630/82, Doc. 1-637/82, Doc. 1-752/82,
Doc. 1-1264/82/rev. and Doc. 1-113/83.

1. Solemnly declares its readiness to assume a greater responsibility for the economic and social development of Northern Ireland to the limit of the financial capacity and legal obligations of the European Community;
2. asks the Commission and the Council of Ministers of the European Community to undertake a major review of all current and planned projects in Northern Ireland and in the Border areas of the Republic, to present an integrated plan for a lasting contribution to the development of Northern Ireland, and especially its most backward areas, in conformity with the overall objectives of the Regional Policy and the Social Fund of the European Community and to report to the European Parliament on the progress achieved as part of this plan;
3. asks the competent Community bodies to establish that all current and future EEC efforts be made additional, in so far as practically possible, to the already existing United Kingdom schemes to further the development of Northern Ireland and asks the Government of the United Kingdom to co-operate fully in such an endeavour to allay all fears that the principle of additonicity is not being strictly adhered to;
4. encourages the elected representatives of Northern Ireland to continue to co-operate with the Commission of the European Communities in matters related to the economic development of Northern Ireland, to stimulate additional foreign investment, taking advantage of the remarkably good record of industrial relations in Northern Ireland and to expand the economic and commercial links with the rest of the European Community as well as with the United States of America and other parts of the world;

... / ...

5. expresses its support for and appreciation of the work carried out by the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council since its establishment in November 1981, following the meeting with the then Irish Prime Minister and the British Prime Minister and since continued and expanded;
6. expresses its support for the growing British-Irish co-operation in exploiting resources on both sides of the border in Ireland with a view to creating additional employment and to promote better understanding through a larger number and wider range of personal contacts. In this connection, the recent agreement for a 22 year period, on the supply of natural gas to Northern Ireland from a field in the Republic is welcomed;
7. recognising the significance of the recently completed studies by the Economic and Social Committee of the European Community of a number of border co-operation projects and urging the Institutions of the EEC as well as the two most directly affected Governments to implement these plans as yet another important contribution to the economic development of Northern Ireland;
8. urges the United Kingdom to join the European Monetary System, thereby lessening the obstacles to trade created by uncertainty over the fluctuating British exchange rate and stimulating the exchange of goods and services between the UK and the Republic of Ireland in general and between the Republic and Northern Ireland in particular;

... / ...

9. strongly condemns all acts of violence and terrorism in Northern Ireland and elsewhere and expressed its support for all individuals and parties who unreservedly work for the welfare of the peoples of Northern Ireland solely on the basis of peaceful and democratic means;
10. encourages and supports the existing co-operation between the British and the Irish Governments in combating terrorism irrespective of its source and strongly urges all other member governments to underwrite these efforts thereby reinforcing the joint European efforts against terrorism;
11. impresses upon the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland their individual and collective responsibility for expanding and enlarging the mutual co-operation not only in matters related to security North and South of the present border, but also to use their influence with the two communities in Northern Ireland to bring about a political system with an equitable sharing of government responsibilities, so upholding the ideals and the concept of tolerance vis-à-vis minorities practised in the two countries and in other EEC Member States;
12. urges the setting up of a joint Anglo-Irish parliamentary body with representatives of the parliaments of the two countries and of any elected body truly representative of Northern Ireland, and offers to have members of the European Parliament take part in such a body in so far as it meets with the unanimous support of the British and Irish members;
13. Instructs its President to forward this Resolution to the Commission, the Council, the Governments and Parliaments of the Irish Republic and of the United Kingdom.