

Ref: A05896

MR ALEXANDERAnglo-Irish Joint Studies

In my minute of 2 November to the Prime Minister (A05881) I said that the texts for publication, as finally agreed with the Irish, of the summary and four of the actual studies (ie all except security) would be submitted shortly. They have now been circulated as corrigenda to VMV(81) 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8. These texts take account of all the changes agreed upon by OD(AI) and subsequently approved by the Prime Minister, plus a small number of further changes suggested by the Irish. On one point we did not get all that we wanted: the Irish agreed only to the deletion of the second part, not the whole, of the last sentence of paragraph 5 of the structures study. But we had earlier accepted that, since the sentence in question was a description of Irish views, we could not absolutely insist on its deletion.

2. One noticeable but unimportant change has been made to the citizenship study at Irish request. This is the omission of two paragraphs expressing Irish hopes that their legislation to allow United Kingdom citizens to vote in Dail elections would not be found unconstitutional.

3. Now that the security study is unlikely to be published, the summary has been slightly changed to gloss over the fact that security did not, as many Unionists might have wished, cover questions of operational cross-border cooperation. Paragraph 10 of the summary also now excludes any reference to the gathering of evidence as a subject for special official attention. This excision was made at Irish request, on grounds of discretion.

4. As regards the mechanics of publication, provisional arrangements have been made for the texts of the four studies to be issued here as a White Paper at 2.30 pm on 10 November. The Irish will publish them simultaneously in Dublin. The summary will be published with the communique on 6 November and will also be included in our White Paper.



5. I am sending copies of this minute to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, the Lord President, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Secretary of State for Energy.

*REA*

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

4 November 1981

conqueror

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Prime Minister *Mr. Ingham*  
You will wish to discuss  
this at your briefing  
meeting tomorrow.

Ref. A05895

MR. ALEXANDER

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Anglo-Irish Summit

In my minute of 2nd November to the Prime Minister (Ref. A05881), I discussed in paragraph 5 the arrangements for a press conference.

2. Since I wrote that minute, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has stressed the importance of having a joint press conference: only a joint conference will avoid the danger of wedge-driving.

3. Accordingly I spoke to Mr. Nally this morning, to say that on further reflection the Prime Minister remained very much of the view that it would be desirable to hold a joint press conference, so that failure to do so was not misinterpreted as a sign of failure (or relative lack of success) of the Summit meeting itself. Mr. Nally promised to report this view to the Taoiseach.

4. When he came back to me this evening, Mr. Nally said that the Taoiseach remained nervous about what was proposed. If the Summit was (from his point of view) successful, he would welcome a joint press conference and it would be valuable to him at home. If it was not successful (in his terms), then a joint press conference could be damaging to him at home. Mr. Nally thought that the Taoiseach would be prepared to agree that there should be a joint press conference, if he could be told that the Prime Minister would be willing to see the sentence at the end of paragraph 9 of the draft communique, or something on similar lines, included in the final version of the communique.

5. I did not have any intention of being drawn into a bargaining discussion with Mr. Nally on these lines. I said, therefore, that I thought that it was not possible to anticipate in that way the discussion which the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach would be having on Friday morning. I would, however, see whether it might be possible to defer a decision, so that the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach could consider jointly towards the end of their tete-a-tete meeting on Friday morning whether to hold a joint press conference.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

6. It would clearly be disastrous to schedule a joint press conference and then in the event not to hold it. If we cannot get ~~the~~ commitment in advance out of the Irish, without making concessions which we do not want to make, the only possibility of holding a joint press conference will be to arrange it at relatively short notice on Friday. That would mean taking a decision shortly before lunch, and setting up the arrangements for a joint press conference at 4.00 pm. I have had some discussion of this with Mr. Ingham. It would just be practicable, provided that it was acceptable in security terms not to insist upon full accreditation. But I am afraid that Mr. Ingham would have the problem of explaining to the press why no arrangements were being made for a joint press conference before then, given that joint press conferences had become the norm for the Prime Minister's meetings with other European Heads of Government.

7. I expect that the Prime Minister will want to discuss this at her briefing meeting tomorrow afternoon. I incline, however, to the view that, given that we cannot arrange a joint press conference in advance, we should try to arrange one on the day: we should hope that the Prime Minister's meeting with the Taoiseach goes sufficiently well to encourage the Taoiseach to agree, and we should take a decision shortly before lunch to hold a joint press conference at 4.00 pm or thereabouts.

RA

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

4th November, 1981