

[FRAME GENERAL] CONFIDENTIAL

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FM DUBLIN 230900Z FEB 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 91 OF 22 FEBRUARY 1984

INFO PRIORITY PARIS, UKREP BRUSSELS, OTHER EC POSTS

MY TELNO 67: POST STUTTGART NEGOTIATIONS: PRESIDENT MITTERAND'S VISIT

1. PRESIDENT MITTERAND VISITED DUBLIN ON 21 FEBRUARY FOR TALKS WITH THE TAOISEACH. M DUMAS HAD PARALLEL DISCUSSIONS WITH MR BARRY. THE TANAISTE (DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER) JOINED THE FOUR FOR LUNCH.

2. AT A NEWS CONFERENCE MITTERAND SAID THAT HE COULD NOT COMMIT HIMSELF TO SUPPORTING IRELAND'S DEMAND FOR EXEMPTION FROM THE PROPOSED SUPER-LEVY ON MILK. FRANCE WAS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES CLOSEST TO IRELAND ON THE MILK PROBLEM BUT IF IRELAND WERE ACCEPTED AS A SPECIAL CASE, GREECE AND ITALY WOULD REQUEST SIMILAR TREATMENT. HE WARNED THAT A COMPROMISE WOULD REQUIRE CONCESSIONS FROM ALL.

3. AN IRISH GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN SAID THAT MITTERAND ALSO EXPLAINED THE FRENCH PROPOSAL FOR A MILITARY PRESENCE IN BEIRUT AND THE TAOISEACH SPOKE ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND.

4. IRISH LORRY DRIVERS OBSTRUCTED TRAFFIC TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE PLIGHT OF THEIR COLLEAGUES IN FRANCE.

5. I ASKED THE TANAISTE LAST NIGHT WHETHER THE PRESIDENT HAD COME TO NEGOTIATE OR WHETHER HE HAD MERELY LISTENED TO AN ACCOUNT OF THE IRISH POSITION. HE SAID THE FRENCH HAD NOT PRODUCED A PLAN TO MEET THE COMMUNITY'S DIFFICULTIES. THE PRESIDENT HAD LISTENED TO WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY. I ASKED WHETHER HE THOUGHT PRESIDENT MITTERAND COULD ACHIEVE A SOLUTION AT THE BRUSSELS COUNCIL WITHOUT NEGOTIATIONS IN ADVANCE. HE REPLIED EVASIVELY. HE GAVE NO IMPRESSION THAT THE IRISH HAD BEEN ENCOURAGED BY THE VISIT.

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6. MEANWHILE, FOGARTY (DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS) SAYS THAT THE TAOISEACH IS WELL SATISFIED WITH THE VISIT. PRESIDENT MITTERAND DID NOT JUST CONCENTRATE ON IRISH PROBLEMS. HE DID, HOWEVER, SAY THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THEM, EVEN THOUGH HE COULD NOT TAKE UP ANY SPECIFIC ATTITUDE ON THEM WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH OTHERS. HE HAD EMPHASISED THE IMPORTANCE OF BUDGETARY DISCIPLINE AS NECESSARY TO SATISFY BOTH THE GERMANS AND HMG. HE HAD WELCOMED THE COMMISSION PAPER ON THIS TOPIC WHICH COREPER WERE TO CONSIDER AND REFER TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COUNCIL. HE HAD ALSO RECOGNISED THE IMPORTANCE OF SOLVING THE QUESTION OF BUDGETARY IMBALANCES AND HAD SAID THAT THE SOLUTION MUST LAST AS LONG AS THE DECISION ON OWN RESOURCES LASTED. HE SAID THE FRENCH WERE INCLINED TO BASE THE CALCULATION OF THE IMBALANCES ON VAT CONTRIBUTIONS ONLY. (HE RESPONDED FIRMLY ON THIS POINT.) NO FIGURES HAD BEEN MENTIONED. THEY HAD RATHER TAKEN THE VIEW THAT WHAT WAS REQUIRED WAS TO REACH A FIGURE POLITICALLY ACCEPTABLE TO ALL MEMBER STATES. ON PROSPECTS FOR THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, PRESIDENT MITTERAND HAD BEEN "QUITE OPTIMISTIC" FOR SUBSTANTIAL AGREEMENT, PROVIDED THE AGRICULTURE AND OTHER SPECIALIST COUNCILS WORKED HARD ON THE BASIS OF THE INPUT BY THE PRESIDENCY. IT WAS CLEAR THAT PRESIDENT MITTERAND WAS PUTTING HIS PRESTIGE ON THE LINE AND THE TAOISEACH WAS RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC.

7. I TOLD HIM THAT THE TANAISTE HAD SAID THE FRENCH HAD NOT REVEALED ANY DEFINITE PLAN OR ATTEMPTED TO NEGOTIATE. HE CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS SO.

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