

NATIONAL ARCHIVES**IRELAND**

Reference Code: 2002/8/487

Title: Note from the Department of Foreign Affairs reporting a call by Ambassador of Ireland to Great Britain D O'Sullivan on Thomas Brimelow of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in order to discuss the forthcoming meeting between Taoiseach Jack Lynch and Prime Minister Edward Heath.

Creation Date(s): 31 August, 1971

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Extent and medium: 2 pages

Creator(s): Department of the Taoiseach

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*opt*NOTE

The Ambassador called on Sir Thomas Brimelow at 10 a.m. this morning. Following the Minister's instructions he asked what was the likely result of the meeting between the two Prime Ministers, the date of which the British now proposed to advance. What would the nature of the result be. Our public would expect some worthwhile outcome of the meeting. The Taoiseach was anxious to have a reaction on this question of the likely outcome before he committed himself to advancing the date of the meeting.

The Prime Minister was consulted this morning following a message received from the British Ambassador in Dublin. The view of the Prime Minister is that it is too early yet to talk on specific subjects. Four points are however to be made.

1. People allege we do not understand each others problems. The prime purpose of the forthcoming meeting is to ensure that we understand each others ~~xxxx~~ problems.
2. The Prime Minister understands the Taoiseach's problems and how acute they are. The Prime Minister has equally acute problems and both sides should try to find ways and means of dealing with them.
3. We cannot expect all problems to be solved but the ~~sooner~~ sooner we make a start the better.
4. Once the meeting has been agreed the ~~date~~ ^{organisation} and agenda can be settled through the Ambassadors.

A further point made was that the Prime Minister's preference would be for a meeting at the beginning of next week, Monday or Tuesday. He could manage Friday of this week but there would be advantage in letting one or two days elapse after the ^{latest} Border incident. The Ambassador pressed Minister's points but ^{Brimelow} ~~Bigelow~~ said he was not in a position to be oncoming on these. Brimelow stressed that the Prime Minister

is clearly of the view that both sides must be seen to be in touch to avoid any increased tension. If there is to be an early meeting it will only be the first and there will be others. It is on the cards, in that event, that the meeting in October would not take place, but they could meet again in November or say in March next. The Ambassador commented that this would be too far away in view of the urgency of the problem. What they want now is a working meeting with a minimum of formal entertain~~ment~~. The meeting would probably last just one day. It is not quite clear where ~~where~~ the meeting will be held probably in London but the possibility of having it in Chequers is not altogether excluded. If the Taoiseach wants to bring other Ministers they will be welcome. They feel, finally, that it is desirable that a decision should be reached on this as quickly as possible and that a simple press release should issue simultaneously here and in Dublin and this is the sort of text they have in mind:

The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach who had arranged to meet on 20th and 21st October have agreed that there would be advantage in bringing forward the date of their meeting. The two Prime Ministers will therefore meet on X September.

They thought it would be a good thing if both would take the line that the advanced date of the meeting is not because of the Border incident and ~~we can~~^{could} say that this matter was under consideration before this latest incident. But on the specific points, which the Minister mentioned to the Ambassador last night Brimelow was not in a position to go any further than the points mentioned in the Prime Minister's instructions.

31st August 1971