

NATIONAL ARCHIVES**IRELAND**

Reference Code:	2002/8/508
Title:	Note of discussions at the Department of Foreign Affairs between Labour Party leader Harold Wilson, Taoiseach Jack Lynch and several members of the Irish government and senior civil servants, regarding his proposals for British withdrawal from Northern Ireland, the ending of partition and the re-admission of Ireland to the Commonwealth.
Creation Date(s):	26 November, 1971
Level of description:	Item
Extent and medium:	1 page
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Access Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

SECRET

Note on discussion at dinner in Iveagh House on Thursday 18th November, 1971, given by the Taoiseach in honour of Mr. Harold Wilson, M.P.

Present, in addition to the Taoiseach and Mr. Wilson, were Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Transport and Power, Minister for Labour and Minister for Finance, the undersigned, Mr. M.F. Doyle, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of Finance, Mr. Eason Gallagher, Principal Officer, Department of Foreign Affairs, together with Mr. J. Haines and Mr. J. Field who were accompanying Mr. Wilson.

The discussion was agreed to be strictly off the record.

Mr. Wilson said that he now accepted that his Downing Street Declaration of 1969 had been rendered out of date by events since then. He had been for some time of the opinion that the present serious situation in the North of Ireland could only be ended by the production of a new magic formula designed to effect a political solution to present difficulties. He had discussed the situation with all shades of political opinion in the North and intended to meet all political parties here. In the main he would adopt a listening role. The magic formula would have to be produced not at a meeting between Governments but at a special conference representing all political parties in Great Britain, Northern Ireland and Southern Ireland - and indeed possibly taking account of political opinion not represented at the moment in the three parliaments.

Being a conference designed to produce a political solution all parties involved will have to accept the necessity to make sacrifices. The sacrifices which will have to be made by the parties in Southern Ireland, with a view to effecting a political solution envisaging the unity of Ireland, will be agreement to return to membership of the British Commonwealth and to accept the Oath of Allegiance. When Mr. Wilson was informed that neither of these suggestions was politically possible here he continued to emphasise the desirability of acceptance of the suggestion that we should rejoin the British Commonwealth.

He dismissed with acerbity the suggestion that the entry of the two islands into the E.E.C. would have any bearing on the political solution to the partition question.

Mr. Wilson suggested to the Taoiseach that he had nothing to gain from further visits to Chequers.

Mr. Wilson mentioned to the Taoiseach that Mr. Kevin Boland had asked to see him and inquired whether the Taoiseach would object if he acceded to that request. Mr. Wilson assured the Taoiseach that he would merely listen to what Mr. Boland had to say. The Taoiseach informed Mr. Wilson that he had no objection to Mr. Wilson's seeing Mr. Boland.

At the end of the discussion the time-table of Mr. Wilson's talks on the following day was mentioned and arrangements were made for Mr. Wilson to come to the Taoiseach's office in Government Buildings at 10 a.m. for discussions with the Taoiseach and, for part of the time, with the other Ministers.

SECRET

26/11/1971