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MEMORANDUM

Note of meeting between the Taoiseach and Mr. Edward Heath
on Wednesday, 9th August, 1978

The meeting was arranged at the request of the British Ambassador, Mr. Haydon the previous day. Mr. Heath unexpectedly came to Dublin to conduct the European Community Youth Orchestra through the illness of the Conductor who had been originally commissioned. Mr. Heath was accompanied by the Ambassador and I spoke initially about the success of the previous night's concert and congratulated Mr. Heath. The conversation soon turned to the situation in Northern Ireland and I referred to the comparative lull in activities. I said that we had little if no report in recent weeks of any special activities here but the Ambassador intervened to say that he thought their security authorities were apprehensive about a possible renewed campaign "on the main land". The conversation then turned to the recent statement by Archbishop Ó Fiaich. I said that we were rather uneasy about it because of the delicate situation that obtained in our prisons. I indicated that we got very few requests for comment by the newspapers, which I hoped I interpreted rightly as a recognition by the media of the delicacy of the situation. We then spoke for a short while about the possibility of a new European monetary system and I gave a short outline of the proposal as it emanated from the Copenhagen and Bremen summits. Mr. Heath did not comment on the prospects of Britain joining. Before he left for a meeting with Dr. Garret Fitzgerald I referred to the forthcoming British election saying that we were rather concerned by the recent Conservative statements on the North. Mr. Heath very quickly understood what I meant and said that people like Willie Whitelaw, Lord Carrington, John Prior and himself would ensure that the approach of a Conservative Government to the Northern Ireland problem would not go off the rails.