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CALL ON MR NALLY: 19 JUNE

Mr Appleyard, accompanied by HMA, called on Mr Dermot Nally (Secretary to Government) at the Taoiseach's Office on 19 June. The following is a summary note of the main points raised.

Political Development in Northern Ireland

2. Mr Nally said that the main concern for the Taoiseach was that, if there was any question of negotiating an agreement to transcend the Anglo-Irish Agreement, then the Irish Government should be a party to the discussions throughout. There was room for legitimate debate about how this could best be assured but the issue was fundamental. On present plans there seemed to be some danger that the end of the gap would be reached without the North/South talks getting off the ground. The Taoiseach was concerned at the slippage from the "Concordat" of 19 April and about the attenuation of the Liaison Group. There was great domestic pressure on this last issue.

3. Mr Appleyard said that the British Government were alive to these Irish sensitivities. The Prime Minister and her senior colleagues were kept fully in the picture by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. They were grateful for the flexibility which the Irish were showing on an issue of fundamental importance to them. Mr Brooke would have no difficulty with the Irish requests but he could not deliver the Unionists to North/South talks against their will and was constantly looking for arrangements which would work in practice. Hence his stress on the pattern of the talks developing "organically".



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4. In reply to a question, Mr Nally confirmed that "domestic pressure" over the Liaison Group came from the Opposition and not from Fianna Fail. The architects of the Agreement on the Fine Gael benches were determined that the Irish Government should not resile from what they had achieved; and were inclined to forget that they had made this achievement through secret negotiations. HMA said that Mr Barry and Mr Brooke had been saying that the Irish Government could not be present at the table for the internal talks; Mr Barry had thought that he was denying their right to submit views and proposals under Article 4(c) of the Agreement. It was striking how statesmanlike Mr Barry had become by the time his Dail Question had been reached.

5. Mr Nally stressed the importance of relationships of mutual confidence between Ministers. Mr Brooke had established excellent working relations with Mr Collins and also with the Taoiseach. Mr Haughey liked and trusted him. Without this we would not have got as far as we had. Mr Nally thought that the relationship between the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister was also steadily improving. The last meeting at Downing Street had been just like a neighbour dropping in for a cup of tea - which was as it should be. HMA hoped that the "Gulliver" piece in the Sunday Press for 17 June did not reflect some suspicion of Mr Brooke. Mr Nally thought not.

6. Mr Nally stressed the Irish anxiety that the Unionists, having secured suspension of the Conference, would then break off the talks and use them to demonstrate the



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fragility of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Mr Appleyard and HMA said that we did not share this anxiety. Unionist claims would soon be shown to be as hollow as the Agreement, the Conference and the Secretariat were seen to be proceeding with business as usual. On the contrary, the Agreement would be strengthened by the fact that we were seen to have been listening; and because it would be seen to have survived the experience. No-one could guarantee the talks would succeed. Mr Brooke's notion of "camping on the race course" was the right way to handle them.

7. Mr Nally recalled that at Sunningdale the question of format and timing had been solved by having all the talks take place in separate rooms in the same building. On a personal basis, he wondered whether this device might prove useful again. Mr Appleyard took note. He did not think Mr Brooke had yet considered modalities of this kind. They would be discussed bilaterally with the parties, in the first place.

Anglo-Irish Diner

8. Mr Nally suggested Friday 13 July in Dublin. Mr Appleyard agreed to broker this date with his colleagues in London. Mr Nally said that 13 July was the only Friday that the Irish side could manage before the summer break. If this date was not suitable then it would either have to be a day other than Friday or postponed until September.

Prime Minister/Taoiseach

9. Mr Nally and Mr Appleyard agreed that, since the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach had so recently had their amicable discussion at Downing Street, it would not be

