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n.a.

c Sir Robert Armstrong

Mr Haughey and the British

I think you will find the attached article from the Irish "Sunday Tribune" of 25 March worth a glance. Although Vincent Browne, the newspaper's editor and presumed author of the piece, is well known for his IRA contacts and his judgements should accordingly be taken with a large pinch of salt, there is no reason to doubt the general picture which he presents of Mr Haughey's current attitude to Britain - which in turn reflects and influences the large nationalist element in the Irish electorate. The article is an instructive indication of the difficulties which Dr Fitzgerald will have to cope with in his efforts to make constructive use of the Forum's report.

David Goodall

A D S Goodall

29 March 1984

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Dear David,

Pretty hair-raising.

- cc Mr Jenkins
Mr Goodall, Cabinet Office
~~Mr P. ...~~
Mr McCormick, Research Dept.*
- NH
DD
GCos.*

MR HAUGHEY AND THE BRITISH

- You may be interested in the attached article from yesterday's "Sunday Tribune" which ties together the milk battle and the Forum in the person of Mr Haughey. It coincides with Fogarty's remarks to the Ambassador on the previous Saturday (reported in our telegram No.129 paragraph 7 not to NIO).
- Paddy MacKernan commented that the article was probably based on a briefing from Martin Mansergh to Vincent Browne, the editor of the "Tribune", who we believe is "J J O'Molloy".
- Seat-belts fastened for the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis!

*DB
28/3*

*Yours ever,
David Tatham*

D E Tatham

cc: R S Reeve Esq, NIO(B)
S Boys Smith Esq, NIO(L)

CHARLES HAUGHEY's fears of a British intelligence plot to destroy him may not be all that far-fetched. It is obvious that Anglo-Irish relations will take a sharp turn for the worse should he ever regain power. He has become frighteningly frank about his hostility to the Thatcher government. And he has now taken to using the bleakest nationalist rhetoric regarding eternally perfidious Albion.

Garret FitzGerald was visibly shaken by the Fianna Fail leader's Dail outburst: "Will you never learn? Will you never understand that no matter what soft words or protestations are used, the age-old reality prevails? Britain relentlessly and remorselessly pursues Britain's self-interest, no matter whom it hurts or affects. I hope this lesson will be fully understood in another context also."

There was more in the same vein from the shadow Taoiseach. Gestures of appeasement and compliance from FitzGerald to Thatcher in Brussels had gone coldly unreciprocated. She had led the pack against Ireland. It was time to deal with British blackmail, time for an end to sophistry, ambivalence and self-deception in face of such cold, harsh reality. "Ireland's interests are best defended by Irish men and women, and all the appeasement and platitudes and honeyed words mean nothing when the chips are down."

It went deeper than just misguided government. There was a naked Haughey attack upon the competence of the most senior diplomat of the Department of Foreign Affairs. He spoke with particular contempt of the concepts "oozing" out of Iveagh House where his old adversary Sean Donlon directs current strategy. There were repeated references to "appeasement" and failure to understand that the appearance of improved and friendly Anglo-Irish relations amounted to a pure illusion. They had been fooled into offering Thatcher support on the British budgetary problem. And their reward, apart from total rejection of the Irish superlewy position, was Thatcher's public condemnation of FitzGerald's walk-out from the council meeting and the final insult of being denied even the customary brief bilateral meeting between Taoiseach and prime minister on such occasions. Said Haughey: "It represents a complete failure of Irish diplomacy."

FitzGerald stared bleakly across at his adversary. Any lingering hopes he may have harboured for the outcome of the New Ireland Forum surely died then. He must also have realised this was no empty

Next Time Charlie Vows To Remember Perfidious Maggie

POLITICS/J.J. O'MOLLOY

rhetoric from Haughey. And it is vital for everyone else also to understand that. It is several years now since one of his firmest admirers allowed that his only reservation about the FF boss had to do with his gut Anglophobia. And this was even before that cosy era of teapot diplomacy came to an end.

IT was Churchill who observed that the reason for having diplomatic relations is not to confer a compliment but to secure a convenience. And it is a fact that alliances have no absolute virtues, whatever the sentiments on which they are based. But it should not be forgotten that CJ and Maggie, that most unlikely of pairings, went tantalisingly close to forming an historic liaison at Dublin Castle in December of 1980. Haughey had devoted a full year to the courtship. He had not only to overcome his own deep-seated prejudices but to skilfully circumvent the lady's ingrained loathing of the tribe that spawned the murderers of her friend Airey Neave and Earl Mountbatten.

Contrary to popular hindsight, he earned her grudging esteem. And the famous Georgian silver teapot, gift actually went down a treat. The prime minister probably does not yet fully realise what an implacable enemy she created when she eventually spurned him.

But Thatcher was in earnest at Dublin Castle. She came at the head of the biggest delegation from Britain to Ireland since the foundation of the state. Lord Carrington and Sir Geoffrey Howe helped put the finishing touches to a joint communiqué emphasising the "totality of relationships within these islands". The possibility of setting up new institutional structures between Ireland and Britain was described as "extremely significant". It was a personal triumph for Haughey and not even his subsequent indiscretions about the significance of what was achieved or Brian Lenihan's impetuosity

in insisting that "everything is now on the table" could alter that fundamental fact.

But Republican prisoners were already on hunger strike in the H-Blocks of Long Kesh. Ten days after the Dublin summit they ended their fast on the basis of British settlement proposals. Soon afterwards, however, they announced the British had reneged on their commitment and that they were forced to resume the hunger strike. Bobby Sands refused food on 1 March, 1981.

HAUGHEY will never forgive Thatcher for what followed. Sands, Francie Hughes, Ray McCreesh and Patsy O'Hara died during the course of an emotive general election campaign. All the while, Haughey resolutely refrained from any public criticism of Thatcher, confining himself to increasingly desperate behind-the-scenes pleas for flexibility. He nevertheless managed to win 78 Dail seats, a considerable achievement, but two short of the combined Fine Gael/Labour total. H-Block prisoners Kieran Doherty and Paddy Agnew made the difference in Cavan/Monaghan and Louth. FitzGerald became Taoiseach and immediately began to criticise openly Thatcher's handling of the hunger strike. That was the final straw for Haughey. Next time.

He had only to wait seven months for the restoration. Within days of resuming office, he was calling for British withdrawal from Northern Ireland. He scathingly rejected James Prior's creation of the new Northern Ireland Assembly and when Margaret Thatcher launched her Falklands armada he personally dictated the dramatic *volte face* from the position in which Ireland had agreed to EEC economic sanctions against Argentina and Noel Dorr had strongly condemned Argentina's breach of international law. After the British sank

Department of Social
On another occasion, Planning, or at least a separate has been held over.

the cruiser *General Belgrano*, he ordered Ireland's derogation from the EEC sanctions and instructed Dorr to make a *démarche* at the United Nations with a view to obtaining a ceasefire.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of that decision, it precipitated the worst crisis in Anglo-Irish relations since World War II. Then a few months later, already maintaining he was the target of an orchestrated British smear campaign, Haughey again lost power and FitzGerald took over with a promise to restore "normality" to Anglo-Irish relations.

FORMALITY? FitzGerald's misfortune is that his conciliatory softly-softly approach has met with precious little response from Downing Street. Indeed, Thatcher has dealt him one public rebuff after the other right across a range from the New Ireland Forum to the EEC. It is difficult to believe that the kind of provocative remarks made by Michael Heseltine and Prince Philip when visiting Northern Ireland are not symptoms of a prevailing British attitude.

FitzGerald has repeatedly warned Thatcher that the rise of Sinn Féin is no temporary phenomenon, that unless realistic concessions are made to the nationalists of the North the constitutional minority politicians will be engulfed in a Republic. She has sweetly complimented him on his enlightened attitude, his transcendence over the dreadful "Mr. Hockey" and his achievements in improving security co-operation along the Border. There is a nagging suspicion in some government quarters that all FitzGerald's painstaking propitiation is wasted on the lady.

Peter Barry tried to strike a balance at one stage. It is almost a year to the day since he said in Limerick: "I am an Irish nationalist. I resent the political division of this island and I regard the long-term British presence in Ireland as an obstacle to the reconciliation of the two Irish traditions and to the achievement of peace and stability in this island."

Soon afterwards, he was asked on RTE if he would be prepared to debate on Northern Ireland with Gerry Adams: "I think not at the moment, no; I think yes after the Forum. There wouldn't be much point at the moment because I don't want to sort of pre-empt any discussions that take place in the Forum, or any conclusions that it may come to. I shouldn't even be saying it on this programme, saying what may come out of it in the future. But after that, yes, I would. I'm quite convinced, you see, that

he represents virtually nobody. I represent virtually 80 per cent of the Irish people, my point of view." That was as much of the Barry iceberg as broke surface. He submerged immediately afterwards and the placatory FitzGerald influence again settled over the Irish Sea.

TWO considerations have dictated the hardline Haughey approach. He candidly admits that harsh experience was his first eye-opener. He says he now firmly believes that even if an Irish government were to fully comply with every cross-Channel request on the North, the British would never move until it suited their purposes; national self-interest dominates every other consideration for the British and, as he says, throwing steaks at the lion will not make it a vegetarian.

On a more quantifiable level, Haughey and his closest adviser Martin Mansergh believe southern Irish politicians cannot afford to disassociate themselves for hardening northern nationalist attitudes, even if they so wished. They maintain it had been the vaguely apologetic school of Irish diplomacy that drove the northern minority to vote so massively for Sinn Féin in the first instance and that an unbendingly adversary role to present British policy is the only way to stop the rot.

It would be a mistake to regard Haughey's outburst in the Dail as mere bombast. Shortly before that speech, he had been ruled out of order after demanding to know why Dominic McGlinchey had been extradited before he could have been dealt with by the Irish courts. There is no doubt that, were CJ Haughey still Taoiseach, McGlinchey would have been tried in the Republic's jurisdiction. He remarked afterwards that all FitzGerald got in return for handing him to the Brits was a kick in the teeth at Brussels.

The report of the New Ireland Forum will eventually reflect this collapse of a bipartisan Irish approach to the northern problem. Hapless officials at Dublin Castle have been told to prepare a "dolly mixture" camouflaged with a coating of green icing. It will be launched with the greatest solemnity — even Fianna Fail will ritually proclaim its consequence. And then it will be consigned to oblivion. Charles Haughey covets power in order to tackle the problem in a completely different way. And it is imperative to understand that his professed hostility and distrust of the British is a true reflection of his present political convictions.

29 MAR 1984

