



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

29 April, 1985

Dear Charles,

Pine Minister
 This might just be
 mentioned in the
 House tomorrow

COP 29/4

Visit by the Taoiseach to Northern Ireland

May I draw your attention to telno 229 from Dublin, which records that Dr FitzGerald will be making a brief visit to Londonderry during the morning of 30 April at the request of Mr John Hume, to lend his prestige to the inauguration of a new air service between Dublin and Londonderry.

Visits by the Taoiseach to Northern Ireland in the past have been rare. Dr FitzGerald has been less inhibited than some of his predecessors. He last visited Northern Ireland in January 1983 when he attended a dinner at Queens University arranged to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the enlargement of the European Community. The only other visits in recent times that we have been able to identify are Mr Sean Lemass' historic trip in 1965 at the invitation of Captain O'Neill, Mr Jack Lynch in 1967 and Mr Haughey's visit to Armagh in 1980 for the enthronement of the Archbishop of the Church of Ireland. Irish Ministers have been known to visit the North without even informing us, but courtesy (and no doubt security considerations) make it the norm that when the Taoiseach make a foray of this kind, they inform us in advance. It would have been preferable to have more notice but it is obvious from Dublin telno 229 that the decision to make this visit was probably taken on the spur of the moment, some time last Friday.

Yours ever,

Colin Budd

(C R Budd)
 Private Secretary

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