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*Richie Smith*



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

30 November, 1984.

*[Handwritten signature]*

*Dear Charles,*

European Council (Dublin): ETUC Meeting with the Irish  
Prime Minister

The European TUC has had its traditional pre-European Council meeting with Dr Fitzgerald. I enclose a copy of their paper setting out their views.

The ETUC's paper follows familiar lines. It will not be discussed at the European Council, though Dr Fitzgerald may allude to it since he envisages a discussion on unemployment.

I am copying this letter and its enclosures to the Private Secretaries to the Secretary of State for Employment and Sir Robert Armstrong.

*Yours ever,*

*Colin Budd*

(C R Budd)  
Private Secretary

C D Powell Esq  
10 Downing Street



## ETUC MEETING WITH IRISH PRIME MINISTER

The ETUC believes that the most urgent items on the Community's agenda are the following:

### 1. The fight against unemployment

The ETUC considers that continually growing unemployment and the widening gap between the performance of most European countries and that of our major competitors makes it imperative that a major reappraisal by governments and European institutions of their economic strategies be undertaken without further delay.

The ETUC welcomes the fact that the EC Commission has now accepted, at least de facto, the case for a policy review. In its Annual Economic Report for 1984/85 it has abandoned its previous, essentially passive, stance and is now calling for concerted policies to ensure that the Community realises its potential to grow, without provoking inflation, at 3.5 to 4.0% per annum - instead of by only 2.3% without policy changes in 1983. However, there are a number of proposals in the Commission's document, notably with regard to reducing working people's rights in the name of "flexibility" which the ETUC cannot accept.

The ETUC also welcomes the fact that under the Irish Presidency the conclusions of the October 1984 Standing Employment Committee "underlined that in the context of such a strategy (to combat unemployment) it is essential that the stronger Member States consider, in conjunction with other measures, a controlled reflation of their economies".

All governments must now also accept the case for a policy appraisal. If this shows, as we believe it would, that with the current stance of economic policies there is no prospect in the short to medium term of unemployment problems diminishing and that, on the contrary, they are likely to continue to get worse, then we believe there would be an unanswerable case for policies being changed.

### 2. A true European social dimension

The measures designed to give Europe a social dimension must be deblocked. In particular, the EC Recommendation on the reduction and reorganisation of working time must be approved without further delay. And it is high time that the proposals for Directives on temporary employment and proposals for a limited period of employment, part-time employment, noise, micro-waves and the elimination of certain toxic substances were adopted. In this context, existing sectoral committees should be given a real role to play, and new sectoral committees should be created to cover all sectors of activity.

Lome III

The ACP-EC negotiations on the renewal of the Lome Convention must be concluded in time in the spirit of solidarity through which ACP-EC cooperation can be boosted and strengthened. In the implementation of the future Convention the ACP-EEC trade unions' proposals which aim at developing the social dimension of EC-ACP cooperation must be taken into consideration as far as possible.

4. EC enlargement

The target date of January 1986 for the accession of Spain and Portugal to the EC must be respected; this formal process must substantiate the political determination to ensure that both countries are integrated fairly and to give more impetus to the necessary accompanying measures to boost European solidarity.

5. Vredeling Directive

Discussions on the Vredeling Directive which have been going on for a number of years, must now be brought to a successful conclusion. It is unacceptable that the adoption of the Directive should be blocked by a strong pressure group.

6. Decision-making procedures

The present functioning of the institutions does not enable efficient decision-making; their reform is therefore essential and should be seriously pursued.