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FROM: R W Renwick
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Mr Fairweather

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cc: Private Secretary
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Sir Alan Goodison, Dublin
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Mr Derek Thomas
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ECD(I)
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MILAN EUROPEAN COUNCIL

1. Following the Secretary of State's discussion yesterday with Mr Barry, I had a talk over lunch with Mr Fogarty, who is responsible for EC questions in the Irish Foreign Ministry.
2. Mr Fogarty said that we had to bear in mind that Dr FitzGerald was very European. He wanted something positive to be achieved at Milan. He was open to the idea of a conference and would not exclude Treaty amendment. Dr FitzGerald would agree strongly, however, that nothing was likely to be achieved unless the heads of government themselves gave clear directions. The Irish thought that Andreotti was trying to go too far and too fast with his ideas of discussing a draft mandate at Stresa. The Irish reply had been positive in tone but cautious in substance. The Irish shared our impression that the French were now taking a less advanced position and that Kohl was much more cautious than Genscher and the German Foreign Ministry. But there would be a strong desire to see something positive come out of Milan; and the majority there would be arguing for a conference.
3. I asked Mr Fogarty whether he really thought that treaty amendment was likely to be agreed. He said that he did not. He agreed that it was not possible to amend most of the unanimity provisions in the treaty and very difficult to amend Article 100. He thought it more likely that some formula might be agreed of the kind we had in mind. The Irish agreed that the ultimate right to invoke the Luxembourg compromise must be maintained; but it must be made more difficult to invoke it.

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4. I took Mr Fogarty through our points on decision-taking ie the idea that heads of government might aim for agreement on the basis of:

- (a) the need for more majority voting ;
- (b) greater use of the abstention procedure (Article 148);
- (c) any country insisting that discussion should continue until a unanimous decision is reached should be required to explain in a special procedure of the General Affairs Council why very important national interests were in fact at stake;
- (d) when it was agreed, in particular by the European Council, that specific objectives should be achieved, it could be agreed at the same time that member states should not insist on unanimity in relation to measures of implementation.

5. The main Irish concern, as Mr Barry had made clear, was in relation to our ideas on political cooperation. Mr Fogarty accepted that there was pressure from several member states to enter into a formal agreement. I said that this being so, we had worked out our own ideas. We wanted to ensure that this was done in such a way as to enable all Twelve member states to continue to participate. We did not envisage any reference to defence issues, but only to the political aspects of security already discussed in POCO; and to the cooperation on armaments production which already existed between some member states. It would not be in Irish interests to see consultation on some of the more important subjects being conducted instead in WEU. We were working on a text which we should be able to make available before very long. It was written in such a way as to enable the Irish to enter into such an agreement while reserving entirely their position in relation to any provisions which they judged capable of affecting their neutrality. Mr Fogarty emphasised how sensitive this point was in Irish domestic political terms. I said that the Germans might come up with more ambitious ideas. Our own ideas did no more than formalise what was already happening in

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POCO. Mr Fogarty said that it would be great help if we could let the Irish have our ideas if possible just before the Stresa meeting.

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