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DRAFT LETTER TO PS/FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH SECRETARY FOR  
SIGNATURE BY MR HOLMES

VISIT OF THE TAOISEACH, 8 MAY: EAST/WEST ISSUES

One of the main themes discussed when the Taoiseach called on the Prime Minister <sup>on 8 May</sup> [today] was East/West issues - ie matters of common interest between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, outside the context of Northern Ireland. I attach a copy of the statement on these matters which the Taoiseach made earlier in the week.

The Prime Minister ~~made it clear to the Taoiseach that he~~ strongly welcomed the strengthening of bilateral links, particularly between respective departmental <sup>officials and</sup> Ministers, ~~and~~ members of their departments. The Prime Minister hopes that ~~all departmental Ministers will find opportunities to~~ establish personal contacts with their opposite numbers in the Republic of Ireland with a view to taking forward practical ~~measures of bilateral co-operation.~~ He would like <sup>to</sup> departments <sup>should</sup> ~~to~~ look at opportunities for co-operation across the whole range of government activity, and not only those points highlighted in the Taoiseach's statement. [The Cabinet Office will ~~seek to give a framework to this work by~~ calling an early meeting of members of the Official Committee on Anglo-Irish Relations <sup>to coordinate its exercise.</sup>

I am coping to Private Secretaries of other members of the Cabinet, to the Private Secretary to the Minister without Portfolio, and to Sir Robin Butler.

Early meeting  
between  
British and  
Irish officials  
and  
ministers,  
to  
establish  
personal  
contacts,  
which  
could  
be helpful.

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