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BUDGET SPEECH : MIN / FINANCE

11.5.1965.

Relations with Northern Ireland

To complete this review, and before turning to the budgetary position, I should like to refer to the historic meetings which occurred earlier this year between the Taoiseach and the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. They agreed that there was considerable scope for practical co-operation between the two areas and that the possibilities should be examined further. Since then, a number of meetings at ministerial level, as well as discussions at the level of officials, have taken place on a wide range of subjects. Further meetings and discussions have been arranged or are envisaged.

Already specific results have emerged. A joint committee has been set up to investigate the technical and economic possibilities of co-operation in the field of electricity. On the tourist side there has been a number of developments. It has been agreed to invite the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Bord Fáilte to appoint a joint committee to consult on any improvements that may be desirable and practical to facilitate

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and encourage cross-border tourist traffic in both directions, on the improvement of tourist statistics and on promotional efforts. The joint committee would also make recommendations to the two Ministers on further measures of co-operation.

The Minister for Transport and Power has authorised scheduled flights between Dublin and St. Angelo airfield near Enniskillen. The development of this airport will facilitate tourist traffic in the surrounding areas, including Donegal and Sligo. Four additional cross-border roads have been approved and four new customs posts opened. The requirement of a triptyque on entering Northern Ireland has been abolished.

These initial developments augur well for the new era of co-operation between the two parts of this island. As further discussions take place on the wide range of possibilities for co-operation, we can expect more developments which will, I hope, operate to the benefit of the people on both sides of the border.