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Title: Memorandum by [?D Nally], Department of the Taoiseach, regarding the views of the Social Democratic and Labour Party in relation to their entering into an executive in Northern Ireland and the proposed Council of Ireland.

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COUNCIL OF IRELAND

Taoiseach,

Mr. Whelan, Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, phoned to say that Mr. Donlon of that Department who was in the North yesterday for discussions, had phoned him this morning to say that the attitude of the S.D.L.P. to the formation of an Executive is unchanged.

Briefly, this attitude is that they will take part in the formation of an Executive if there is a firm commitment to a Council of Ireland, with executive functions and to a conference to be held on its form and functions within a month after the formation of the Executive. They will not, Mr. Donlon says, go into the Executive, until these commitments are given. They will be saying this in their discussions today with the Secretary of State, Mr. Whitelaw.

A. → Mr. Whelan said that what they would like now is approval to contact London so as to go ahead with the discussions on the draft proposals for a Council which have been submitted to London - or alternatively to seek firm British proposals at an early date.

If this approval is given they can make contact this week or early next week so as to resume the discussions.

(The Minister for Foreign Affairs is in New York and, according to Mr. Whelan, agrees with this course).

25 Meán Fómhair, 1973.

[Mr. Whelan phoned again - to say that at the discussions this morning with Mr. Whitelaw, the SDLP had sought assurances that discussions would proceed immediately between Dublin and London. Mr. Whelan would like to be able to assure them on this point early this afternoon, if possible]