

F411

Dec. 1994 18:49

S OF S PRIVATE OFFICE 0712106722

GN 1355/94

No. 5092

A/1576/94

SQ 13525/94 9/12/94

Mr. Bingham
Mr. J. G. ...

cc: copied
5/13/12

Mr Hewitt - F
PA lease dividend - Vol 3
1576/94 Mr Fitzgerald

McQuinn
-15-12
Green
15/12

DRAFT PRESS STATEMENT FOR ISSUE BY NO 10 ABOUT THE EUROPEAN AID PACKAGE

The following statement was issued by the Prime Minister today in response to yesterday's/today's announcement at the Essen Council on the European Union aid package to Northern Ireland.

"I very much welcome the European Union aid package announced by [President Delors] at Essen today [yesterday].

The European Union's action is a significant addition to the Government's own initiative in taking forward with the Irish Government the peace process in Northern Ireland. The European Union already has a large investment effort in Northern Ireland through the Structural Fund Programmes, and this additional package is to be much commended. I am most grateful to President Delors for his swift response to my invitation to the European Union to contribute to the peace process in Northern Ireland.

This new package will serve to underpin the unique opportunity which now exists for reconciliation and social and economic recovery in Northern Ireland. The Community has already increased its contribution to the International Fund over the next 3 years, and this additional, and complementary package of support of [300 mecu] will be of particular help to those in Northern Ireland who have been particularly badly affected by the violence. As I said in Belfast on 21 October, the European Union's programme will be in addition to the British Government's own expenditure plans for Northern Ireland.

The purpose of this new package will be to focus on issues which arise from the peace process - measures to address the problem of long-term unemployment, help to support urban and rural regeneration, promote cross border co-operation, community reconciliation and social inclusion so as to help those most damaged by the conflict of the last 25 years. I greatly

appreciate this positive commitment by President Delors and the European Union in support of the peace process."

JOHN MAJOR