

3 Ireland's first EEC application, 31 July 1961

The decision to join the EEC

On 26 July 1961, Harold Macmillan, the UK prime minister, informally told the taoiseach, Seán Lemass, that his government had finally come to a decision to join the EEC as a full member. With respect to this hotly-debated issue, Macmillan wrote that: 'after weighing all the considerations we have reached the conclusion that the right course for us is to seek to enter into negotiations with the Six'.¹ This move, hardly unexpected, consigned to the past what had been an uncertain period of hypothesising and speculation regarding Ireland's own future role within Europe's integration process. Indeed, as a direct result of this entreaty by London, one of Dublin's central foreign policy dilemmas – over whether or not to establish an explicit relationship with the EEC – suddenly gained the sense of definition that it had heretofore been lacking. As a consequence, the taoiseach formally initiated what has become the single-most important policy development in the Irish state's post Second World War history, forming part of the first concerted attempt by the countries of Europe to build upon the sense of community awakened by the Six some years previously. Unquestionably, the essential ingredient in Dublin's decision was the fact that London had decided to do the same; additionally, it also marked the definitive transition of Irish foreign policy from being decided by political considerations to being determined by economic factors.

Within a week of this remarkable development, Lemass wrote to the EEC Council president, Ludwig Erhard, to relate that Ireland wanted to become a full member of the EEC. Accordingly, the government presented its application to join under the relevant provision in the *Treaty establishing the European Economic Community*. The article specifically dealing with the application of a state for full membership of the EEC (Article 237) read:

Any European State may apply to become a member of the Community. It

shall address its application to the Council, which shall act unanimously after obtaining the opinion of the Commission. The conditions of admission and the adjustments to this Treaty necessitated thereby shall be the subject of an agreement between the Member States and the applicant State. This agreement shall be submitted for ratification by all the Contracting States in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements.²

This formal request, unlike the *aide-mémoire* circulated to the Six by the Irish government at the beginning of July 1961, made no reference to positions that Ireland would subsequently wish to take in any admission negotiations, even though the state obviously continued to have two principal economic interests at heart. These preoccupations concerned:

- the whole question of agriculture;
- the fact that many indigenous Irish industries were not only relatively weak, but that they would also be severely at risk once tariff and trade barriers were eliminated.

As a Council of Europe report from 1961 pointed out, agriculture was the leading determinant in the Irish economy. In fact, as an economic sector, it came well ahead of any industrial concerns.³ Therefore, Ireland's application was kept deliberately brief and was also couched in essentially vague terms, stating that the government 'fully share the ideals which inspired the parties to the Treaty and accept the aims of the Community as set out therein, as well as the action proposed to achieve those aims'. Essentially, Lemass petitioned the EEC Council to facilitate Ireland in its quest for full membership of the EEC.⁴

In an effort to preempt Macmillan, this Irish government overture thus came ten days before London made a similar request and commitment. The regular bilateral and high-level exchange of economic and political communications had, however, left Dublin confident in the knowledge that, in taking such a momentous decision, they would not find themselves out of step with the former.⁵ Ireland's application for full membership was being openly made in the context of an expected corresponding move from the UK government, but was actually received much earlier than envisioned by the EEC Council.⁶ Notwithstanding this particular point, the decision to apply was merely announced to the general public on 1 August 1961, but even this disclosure nearly caused a 'breach of courtesy' as Ireland's application to join the EEC was only read into the records of Dáil Éireann upon confirmation of its receipt by Erhard. In spite of this break with protocol, the taoiseach went on to explain in parliament the wider significance of the move, essentially that it would have been economic suicide to have stayed apart from the momentous

developments in European integration.⁷ Importantly, though this move was overshadowed by similar decisions being anticipated from the Danes and the UK – both of which followed on 10 August 1961 – it was noted in Brussels that, apart from it being dependent upon a UK bid, the Irish application differed significantly from their earlier *aide-mémoire* by not mentioning any exemptions that Ireland might wish to receive during accession negotiations.⁸ No definite reply from the various EEC institutions or the Six regarding this process was expected until the following September, but at least its desire to join was now official and public.

The magnitude, indeed, the momentous nature of this move by the Irish government is difficult to over-emphasise. This formal application for full EEC membership heralded Ireland's reorientation away from economic dependence on the UK and, at the same time, its realignment away from the radical politics it had pursued at the UN. As Dermot Keogh has shown, however, even this move was not allowed to escape from Ireland's perceived need to steal a march on its neighbour, by applying for full membership before the UK.⁹ Obviously, this decision was taken as much for public consumption and gratification as for anything else, mainly in order to demonstrate that it was not as a consequence of a similar move being taken by the UK government, but that it was taken independently. Nevertheless, this new Irish government foreign policy process, the progenitors of which had actually been domestic in form – T.K. Whitaker's *Economic development* and the subsequent *Programme for economic expansion* – had the sound belief at its core, that as a small peripheral economy, Ireland had to become less dependent upon its larger neighbour if it was ever going to thrive. Although tentative moves were made towards GATT membership, for instance, in order to realise its economic independence, Ireland would do so through aligning itself with Europe, deemed to be its 'most realistic alternative' to continuing dependence upon the UK.¹⁰

At the same time, political considerations such as the island's political partitioning and its military neutrality were swept aside, ignored or just paid lip-service as Lemass adopted, what Ronan Fanning terms, a 'more pragmatic approach' to such questions.¹¹ Constitutional objections to EEC membership, though valid, were not initially admitted to publicly, as the Irish government went through its usual practice of expressing information in 'general, vague and even ambiguous terms' and even then only doing so quite grudgingly. A prime example of the government's rather blasé handling of the political implications of Ireland joining the EEC was the taoiseach's stated view that:

The factors which arise in connection with possible membership on our part

of the European Economic Community are primarily of an economic nature. There are, as well, certain political implications which, in my opinion, are not such as to make it undesirable for this country to join the Community on the hypothesis mentioned [the political desirability of membership] ...¹²

Throughout this period, Lemass did not elaborate any further on the implications of European integration, prompting Patrick Keatinge to remark that, for the taoiseach, 'vagueness was his most effective weapon'.¹³ By definition, economics were beginning to come out way ahead of political considerations when related to the question of Ireland's European integration, a theme which would develop throughout the 1960s.¹⁴

Nonetheless, the government decision to apply to join the EEC must be viewed primarily as a pragmatic one. Indeed, Miriam Hederman has pointed to three leading factors that determined, and equally were determined by, the development of a credible and sincere policy towards the EEC, suggesting:

- the relative position of the UK government;
- the influence of domestic interest groups;
- the decision itself to go for full membership.

With all of these considerations in mind, it is firstly possible to say that there was an explicit government policy, based upon the realities of Anglo-Irish trade, which determined that the UK's actual status for Ireland would not be supplanted, but augmented, by the EEC in an effort to see that a better economic balance could be struck. Secondly, it has been noted that groups representing farmers, federalists and industrialists which, when added to the existing domestic power structures such as the civil service and Dáil Éireann, increased the pressure on the Irish government to act on European integration and, in so doing, helped to empower themselves. Thirdly, the conclusion that full membership was the only real and valid policy option open to the Irish government initially became a self-perpetuating notion, before finally becoming irrefutable dogma.¹⁵ When considered together, these three key components give a clearer picture of the economic and political realities that were facing Ireland, while at the same time constraining the government's *bona fide* room for manoeuvre.

After the UK indicated its intention to adhere to the EEC in July 1961, it should be highlighted that Ireland was left in a relatively unenviable quandary. Indeed, as it had been given no choice about EFTA membership, a position previously clarified in *From the OEEC to EFTA, 1957 to 1959*, it

should also be reasserted that this particular European trading alliance did not meet Ireland's needs anyway. However, the EEC's potential to cater for the agricultural question – aside from industrial issues – put it into a totally different category altogether. It was quickly determined that Ireland could not afford to be outside a powerful integrated economic bloc such as this, especially if it was going to include its most important trading partner as well. Its total national income had been in the order of IR£491 million in 1959; 75% (IR£96½m) of its entire exports, worth IR£131m, went to the UK, while under 6% (just over IR£6m) went to the EEC; furthermore, it also imported IR£110m worth of UK goods, fulfilling 52% of its total needs. Can statistics cloud opinions or enhance them?

A more explicit idea as to how these Anglo-Irish trading arrangements both contained and safeguarded the Irish economic position is depicted in the figures.¹⁶ Barriers to trade were overcome by complex systems of preferences. This obviously worked in reverse as well, with imports from outside the UK subject to harsh measures which did not endear Ireland to the OEEC in the 1950s and did not help to distinguish it to the EEC either. In purely monetary terms, the UK was so much more important to it than the EEC that it fairly beggars belief that successive Irish governments had allowed such a position to endure, that is until the level of Irish tariff preferences in the UK, as compared to the level of the common EEC external tariff, are examined. Ireland's external economic ties thus displayed two dominant traits:

- an extreme concentration and reliance on one market, the UK;
- a system of trading preferences that was, for all practical purposes, the same as, if not better than, that governing the British Commonwealth.

In brief, Ireland exported agricultural products to the UK without restrictions and exported industrial products under a preferential arrangement; in turn, the UK had recourse to cheap agricultural goods and a market for its industrial goods. Of course, if such an agreement was to continue indefinitely, Ireland would have been economically protected, though at the same time, it would also still be in a position of acute, even reinforced, dependence. However, the prospect of losing these arrangements, first to EFTA and now to the EEC, had a remarkably sobering effect upon Irish policy-makers.

Obviously, the Irish government was loath to give up such an arrangement, even if just for an intermediate period – that is while Ireland's trading status came into line with any new UK arrangement with the EEC – as it not only conferred incredible trade benefits to the Irish economy, but it also gave it a high degree of security. Thus, in July 1961, the taoiseach was able to

state conclusively in Dáil Éireann, without the fear of opposition antagonism, that:

... if all the countries of Europe with which we are trading, Britain and the Six, join together in an economic union, we cannot be outside it. That clear simple proposition can hardly be seriously contested. Whatever might be the problems for us of entering into such a union – and there is not doubt these problems would be very considerable – to stay out in these circumstances would be disastrous. We can see no economic future for this country if it were to be cut off by a uniform tariff applying to both agricultural and industrial projects from all our European Markets.¹⁷

In truth, the EEC was literally seen as some sort of economic panacea for all of Ireland's ills, an outlandish feeling which was especially heightened with the prospect of the UK becoming a member. Thus, to state that the 'decision to apply for membership was unwelcome to the Irish government' as Brian Girvin does, indeed that the UK government's decision in 1961 to join 'undermined Ireland's capacity to make policy in an independent fashion, challenging the traditional certainties on which policy had been based', is to miss the point of the matter. In truth, to contend that it was the view of Lemass that it was not to Ireland's advantage to join either major European bloc, that its economic development would not be improved by doing so, is to raise a spurious argument. Ireland had never exercised such independence and, apart from working within the realities of world economics, was always going to be at the whims and mercies of the international economic system, just like nearly every other nation. The application from the Irish government may indeed have been an 'emergency response to external changes over which the state had no control', but it was one for which much in the way of preparation had already been made and it was also part of a 'development strategy' which had been envisioned for some time.¹⁸

The government was not committed to the concept of European integration *per se*, as can quite clearly be seen from the lack of enthusiasm shown by Ireland towards the other two European Communities – the ECSC and Euratom of course – but it was prepared to go to any legitimate lengths to try to solve the country's economic problems. However, within this begrudging attitude lay the seeds of Ireland's subsequent rebuff by the EEC and the Six. The taoiseach repeatedly undermined and, indeed, contradicted the reality of Ireland's explicitly stated desire to join the EEC when he observed that: 'Our accession to the Rome Treaty would involve us in no specific commitments other than those set out in the Treaty'.¹⁹ The Irish government had equated that the cost of EEC membership, between

obligations and opportunities, would ultimately bring a favourable balance to the country. As John A. Murphy has written in his *Ireland in the twentieth century*, Dublin had turned its 'eyes towards the European fleshpots' when it decided to adhere.²⁰ This lack of real enthusiasm for European integration would later make it difficult for Ireland to convince the EEC and the Six that it was indeed applying ready to accept the full implications of the Treaty of Rome, rather than just going through the motions in becoming a member of this trading bloc, one with potential for a myriad of developments, in order to reap its inherent economic benefits.

This chapter – *Ireland's first EEC application, 31 July 1961* – thus aims to consider the lead-up to Dublin's decision to apply for membership of the EEC in the summer of 1961 and to introduce subsequent developments. It achieves this by linking with the previous chapter and by extending some of the questions and themes raised there so that there is a greater sense of continuity. This third chapter does not aim to eulogise the role played by Lemass in this process, but to analyse it. Therefore, it does not necessarily agree with Brian Lenihan, a junior minister in the early 1960s, who has commented that:

Lemass in my view is best described as a pragmatic visionary. I saw this demonstrated during the General Election of 1961, when he made speeches up and down the country explaining our early application for membership of the European Community, and the benefits that would accrue from it. All this was done 12 years before we actually joined. He predicted that the Community would evolve a political character, and that Ireland would develop more fully, when its people worked within a European dimension, free from the psychological malaise of living in the shadow of Britain. This is as relevant [today] ... as it was when Lemass pioneered the nation towards Europe ...²¹

Of course, this particular point of view is highly misleading and terribly simplistic. In 1961, the taoiseach was paying tacit lip-service to political issues such as partition and neutrality, when what he was really endeavouring for was the economic transformation of the country at any reasonable price. Lemass was by no means a European prophet. This chapter presents a far less fatuous view of Ireland's integration process; instead, it appraises and chronicles the whole experience, extending beyond the particular subject at hand – the first application and historic decision in July 1961 to try and join the EEC – to the decision taken in October 1961 by the EEC Council to seek more information from Dublin regarding its application and to when the government was offered the chance to state its case in Brussels in January 1962. It begins, however, by

outlining the various external and internal forces that contributed to the decision to apply before moving on to the substance of the application itself.

Determining factors – Part I: external forces

In coming to their decision to apply to join with the Six, the Irish government went through a complicated and in-depth analysis of what the EEC actually had to offer Ireland and, more importantly, how it would affect and be affected by Anglo-Irish relations. Evidence for the critical nature of this last point is substantial, but it is sufficient at this stage to note one of Lemass's earliest remarks on how the UK government's position regarding the EEC would impact upon Ireland. In March 1961, the taoiseach declared in Dáil Éireann that:

The question of the British position in relation to the Common Market and the possible repercussions of that position on this country has been the subject of frequent exchanges with the British authorities, and we shall continue to follow these matters with the closest possible attention, bearing carefully in mind our very material interest in any arrangements affecting British relations with the European Economic Community and our own situation in regard both to the British market and to the Community.²²

Indeed, the taoiseach repeated this message many times. In May 1961, he stated in a foreign newspaper interview that 'a decision by Britain to join the European Economic Community would immediately raise the question of Irish membership of the Community also'.²³ The importance of UK opinions and deeds upon Ireland's determining process is self-evident. Nevertheless, the primary purpose of this particular section is to bring to light the influential nature of views and positions taken by other external parties – the Six and the institutions of the EEC – and to assess their impact upon the decision-making process. Thus, it evaluates the extent to which each of these European players impacted upon the Irish government and, in doing so, leads into a detailed appraisal of the pertinence of Anglo-Irish relations, but only after domestic considerations are dealt with in an intermediate section.

As early as July 1959, a conference held in Dublin attended by distinguished European federalists outlined the choices that Europe – and Ireland – faced. The political implications of joining the EEC were laid out in full. Indeed, Walter Hallstein began by stating that:

... the reasons for establishing the Common Market are largely political. We

are seeking to develop a new strength, a new political factor in the free world, which will, by its very existence, strengthen the camp of freedom. We want to make our contribution to the cause of the free world in the great struggle, which is dividing East from West. For our part, we intend to take up a position of our own choice, not merely to stand somewhere between the camps. No responsible person in our Community has ever toyed with the idea of our being a 'third force'. Our idea is to strengthen the defence of liberty. We can best help here through the new strength we produce in Europe and by at last creating genuine peace for all time between European States in the Community of the Six.

This assertion was next followed by Maurice Fauré, the former French foreign minister, who reiterated these words by stating that the latter:

... has already stressed the living reality of the European Community. He emphasised the first steps that have been taken towards achieving a common social policy and a common agricultural policy, as well as a common transport policy. We are not purely concerned with economic policies; our interests are wider and deeper ... Thus the Community is not only a living reality as an economic organisation; it is also a psychological and political reality. Those of us who are concerned with political life in our different countries realise how true this is: we realise that this new driving force, the psychological and political concept of a united Europe, has changed the thinking of our peoples, and has brought them to think in terms of working in the interest of the European community and not purely in the interest of their own nation.

Thus, from these speeches alone, it is clear that it is not as if Ireland was so out of touch or so peripheral that it should not have known exactly what was happening in Europe.²⁴

With direct reference to these pressures on the Irish government, it is crucial to note what Ireland was actually telling its European neighbours. Irish diplomats abroad constantly communicated the view that, to all extents and purposes, Ireland's membership of the EEC was dependent upon the direction taken by the London government; they stated that:

... if Britain joined or became associated with it, we should in all probability have to follow suit ... having regard to the overwhelming importance of the British market for our products, we had really no alternative to basing our action on the British.

Of course, the EEC was basically of 'great interest' for Ireland because it offered to it a vast potential outlet for Irish goods, specifically agricultural

produce.²⁵ In return, considerable dangers were posed to native Irish industries, especially those which were not economically viable, even if there were substantial rewards in store for those which were. However, if that is what the Irish government felt and was saying, the question must be asked: in what way did the Six actually interpret Ireland's posturing on European integration?

The Dutch government, for instance, thought that the general impression of the Six was that there existed a 'lack of any very great interest' on the subject of Ireland's views upon or intentions regarding the EEC. Obviously, it is possible to deduce from this opinion that Ireland's wish to establish a more intimate relationship with the EEC was evidently not being communicated properly. Although it was felt that there was an 'obvious Dutch desire to get us in', it was clearly going to be up to the government to make its wishes both more compatible with the general trends inherent in European integration and also better known to the constituent members of the Six and to the EEC's apparatus. Indeed, the Irish ambassador to London, Hugh McCann, reported that Ireland faced two major problems in this regard:

- he held that newspapers on the European mainland were giving a lot of prominence to pronouncements on the EEC by countries such as Austria, Denmark, and Norway, but not to Ireland;
- McCann added that reports from the various diplomatic missions of the Six in Dublin to their superiors were comprised of information that was either of 'no help at all or contradictory'.²⁶

This report from London actually prompted the taoiseach into arranging what subsequently turned out to be a critically important meeting with the ministers and secretaries from all the major government departments on 8 June 1961. Crucially, this meeting was convened in an effort to determine what action Ireland must take regarding the EEC.²⁷ Ireland's ambassador to the Netherlands, B. Gallagher, meanwhile added that, although the Dutch government was rather anxious to expand the EEC so as to have the widest possible membership, Ireland's candidature had not been examined by them in any great detail. Nevertheless, it is possible to remark that the Dutch did not view Ireland's non-participation in NATO as an obstacle to participation at this early stage and that EEC membership would not be denied because of neutrality.²⁸ A similar situation existed with regard to Belgium, but this was not, however, necessarily the same case with the West German government.

The Irish ambassador to Belgium, Frank Biggar, revealed that, as far as the Belgian government was concerned, an Irish application for membership of the EEC would be judged under two principal criteria; the

Belgians would ask:

- whether Ireland would be able to fulfil European commitments from the economic point of view;
- if Irish participation in the EEC would 'help or hinder' the Six to attain their ultimate aspiration of European unity.

An interview with Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian deputy prime minister and foreign minister, had revealed Belgian government surprise at a report – Biggar presumed that it had emanated from the Belgian embassy in Dublin – that Ireland's intention to join the EEC had the solution of the partition question as one of its foremost aims.²⁹ The Irish ambassador told Spaak that there was no formal connection between the two issues as such, but that while Ireland was considering EEC membership very carefully it was at the same time 'by no means indifferent to the possibilities of solving Partition which the E.E.C. offered'. However, Biggar stressed that Ireland's position *vis-à-vis* the EEC was ultimately dependent anyway upon what London decided to do. Indeed, he stated that, while he saw obvious difficulties confronting the UK government over whether or not to join up with the Six, he did not see the UK as having any other choice, especially in the long-run, a point with which Spaak readily concurred. The Irish ambassador tried to emphasise during their meeting that, economically-speaking and especially in the context of EEC membership, Ireland felt itself to be competitive with regard to agriculture, but that the Irish government believed that domestic industry posed a problem. Biggar also stated that Ireland was not necessarily an underdeveloped country – especially in comparison to Greece or Portugal – but that it would want a voice in the formulation of EEC agricultural policy particularly and that it would also need help in bringing industry into line with the other Six. Therefore, he said that Ireland would seriously have to consider applying for full membership on these terms only.³⁰

However, as a former secretary-general at NATO, Spaak was clearly more interested in an issue such as Ireland's neutrality and how it might impinge upon the ultimate political direction that the EEC was taking. Biggar was thus at pains to point out that Ireland was not neutral in the same sense as Austria, Sweden or Switzerland were, for example. It was not, he said, a member of any military alliance, as all the members of the EEC were, and only held onto this position of neutrality for reasons related to partition. Indeed, it was his view that Ireland remained 'profoundly European and perhaps the most anti-Communist country in Europe'. The Dublin government's foreign policy position was still independent, he held, and, furthermore, it had been able to

utilise this stance in helping to foster world peace at the UN. The Irish ambassador told Spaak that he knew that the Treaty of Rome imposed no political obligations upon its members, but he also emphasised that the Irish government fully realised what the ultimate objectives of the EEC literally were. Indeed, these are implied in the preamble to the Treaty of Rome which states that members are: 'Determined to lay the foundations of an ever closer union among the peoples of Europe'.³¹ Therefore, he accepted that these aspirations would, in time, have defence and foreign policy implications. However, while Spaak agreed that NATO membership was not *sine qua non* for participation in the EEC, Biggar 'could detect no signs of enthusiasm for a new member who did not conform to the existing pattern'. Nonetheless, as with the Dutch, the Belgians were not felt to have given any profound consideration to the Irish position regarding the EEC anyway and, thus, that they were not necessarily prejudiced against its membership.³² On the other hand, the West German's actual attitude towards Irish membership was, nevertheless, far more complex and entangled.

While serving as West German deputy prime minister, Ludwig Erhard had seemingly made an emphatic statement that only those members of EFTA which were also members of NATO could join the EEC. Consequently, on 25 May 1961, Lemass proceeded to speak on this subject in the Irish parliament. In the process, the taoiseach repudiated Erhard's reported remarks by saying that there was nothing specific or substantial in the Treaty of Rome which was expressly related to the question of defence. As a result, he believed that there could be no good reason why membership of NATO would be a determinant in Ireland's ability to subscribe to the EEC.³³ On a subsequent visit to Ireland, the West German foreign minister, Heinrich von Brentano, pointed out that what Erhard had said should not in fact be taken literally, because he had probably meant to say that only NATO members were likely at that juncture to want to join the Six. Nevertheless, the whole issue of neutrality was becoming entangled in the general question of whether Ireland should apply for full or associate EEC membership. Indeed, a subsequent report from the UK Foreign Office on the West German foreign minister's placatory statement further maintained that, in the context of the possible UK accession to the EEC, the Irish government had 'more or less implored' von Brentano:

... to see that their interests should be safeguarded ... that while they were most anxious to maintain their neutrality and did not want to march in line with the U.K., in view of the great consequences to their economy they might have to consider any step that might be necessary.³⁴

There were, of course, conflicting views within the UK government structure

about the Irish position. On the one hand, the Irish government was seen as being 'typically remiss' in its efforts to try to make its position clear and stated that it was not by 'whining to the Germans' that they were ever going to safeguard their economic interests.³⁵ On the other hand, a more considered view held that the Irish government had in fact stayed in close contact with the UK and that they would ultimately have much less difficulty than, for example, Portugal in accepting the obligations of full EEC membership.³⁶ Indeed, Ireland would not necessarily have to be another 'millstone' – certainly not a solicited one – around the neck of the UK in entry negotiations, even if that was one of the fears held by those in London.³⁷

However, a report on a conversation with a senior West German official from the UK ambassador to West Germany, E.M. Rose, gives the most balanced and unbiased view of the Irish government's position by being able to report more precisely upon the discussions held between Lemass and von Brentano during the latter's Irish trip. On the question of Erhard's comments on Ireland and the EEC, the UK ambassador recounted that the Irish leadership had told von Brentano that they wanted to join the EEC, but that they had been 'disturbed' by the statement attributed to Erhard that membership of NATO was a necessary qualification. The taoiseach was reported to have told von Brentano that it was impossible for Ireland to join NATO because of partition, but the West German foreign minister was able in turn to tell Lemass that membership of NATO was not necessarily a condition for EEC membership. More importantly perhaps, Rose also recounted that, on the question of the UK's entry into the EEC and its impact on Ireland, Lemass had told von Brentano that his government could not take any decision regarding EEC entry until they knew what the UK government intended to do. Obviously, von Brentano could not shed any real light on how London proposed to act, but he stated that he hoped that they would join even though it would be at least a year before the UK could formally accede. Finally, on the question of agriculture, it was disclosed that Lemass had told West Germany's foreign minister about Ireland's special interest in a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the Six and about the Irish fear that such a CAP might already be in place before Ireland had time to accede and to incorporate its own point of view into the process. However, von Brentano went on to assure the taoiseach that his government intended to keep 'potential' members of the Six informed about any progress on the CAP negotiations and to discuss the issue continually and fully with them.³⁸

The NATO matter did not rest there in the Irish media, though, with one *Irish Times* article in particular inducing the Department of External Affairs secretary to say that:

I am afraid that this is one of these 'canards' which Muray [the journalist involved] has been trying to keep alive, despite the very definite statement of the Taoiseach in the Dáil on the 25th May ... It is a pity that he should show such irresponsibility on a matter of such current importance, and that the Irish Times should continue to publish his remarks. Dr.von Brentano was, of course, very categoric in denying Muray's thesis at his press conference on the afternoon of 31st May – even more categoric, I gather, than the newspaper reports on the interview.³⁹

In point of fact, the *Irish Press* reported the West German foreign minister as stating that:

Economic and political cooperation within the European Economic Community has nothing whatever to do with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, and I am convinced that a number of countries which pursue a neutralist policy today can participate in the Common Market, and that this would have no effect on membership of NATO either directly or indirectly.⁴⁰

Indeed, upon von Brentano's return to West Germany, the *Irish Times* itself hinted at Irish membership of the Six and made no mention of any NATO dimension within the equation.⁴¹ This implies that European politicians did not view Irish neutrality as being an obstacle to its membership of the Six necessarily, though it remained problematic. However, EEC officials would prove to be more pedantic upon this issue. In the meantime, though, what about the views of the other members of the Six and their influence upon the determining process for Ireland regarding the choice to be made between full or associate EEC membership, indeed, in relation to participation at all?

The French government's position on the issue was much more 'enigmatic' than the West Germans were. In fact, it was much more a question of the continuous 'uncertainty' of France's attitude towards the idea of the UK and EEC membership, thus leaving Ireland in the unenviable position of remaining only a secondary consideration within the process.⁴² Anyway, the French were not particularly interested in having the UK as a member of the EEC, certainly not on the UK government's own economic or political terms.⁴³ In truth, its whole attitude to the admission of new members was possibly best put by the French foreign minister, Maurice Couve de Murville, who said: 'we do not think about it'.⁴⁴ The French government did not view Ireland's case for membership in an antagonistic way but, because of its dependence upon the UK, it was always going to be a rather minor factor in the wider process of European integration, as well as in the more specific context of Anglo-French

rivalry. In July 1961, for instance, the Irish ambassador to France, D.R.McDonald, reported on a meeting that he had with a French foreign office official. This source indicated that:

Ireland's position relative to the E.E.C. seems to be well understood ... it was felt here, generally speaking, that Ireland's attitude was more favourable to the E.E.C., especially in the setting of European unity, than that of the Commonwealth countries. He said this with an expression of satisfaction and said our position seemed most like that of Denmark.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, the reality of the Irish situation was that the UK was still a decisive factor in its relative position on EEC membership, but that France also had an ardent role to play.

Additionally, although there is strong evidence to suggest that the Italian government understood the Irish situation, Italy was no more central to Ireland's situation than Belgium or the Netherlands. The Irish ambassador in Rome, Thomas V.Commins, was informed that the Italians 'fully appreciated' Ireland's position regarding both the EEC and the UK, and that they were determined to see that a 'fair deal' was sorted out, whether this was taken in the context of either full or, interestingly, associate membership of the EEC.⁴⁶ Moreover, the position of Luxembourg on the Irish question also appears to have been similar to that of the Belgian and the Dutch governments. However, the respective positions of the French and West German governments remained crucial, because as long as they were unclear, either regarding Ireland or the UK, obviously enough the wider question of EEC membership also remained in the balance. Ireland's position was beginning to appear invidious.

The outlook of the EEC institutions was not as positive in relation to Ireland, but has to be seen in the light of the Irish government *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961 and the actual application to join itself to be fully appreciated. Considering that these were the general and pertinent views of the Six in the first half of 1961, it would be more beneficial at this stage, however, to ask what sort of questions and pressures were being brought to bear on the Irish government in more domestic terms and to see whether and how government decisions and actions were influenced as a result. The next section on domestic considerations in the determining process thus proposes answers to such queries, before moving on to assess the role played by London in Dublin's decision-making process.

Determining factors – Part II: domestic considerations⁴⁷

There were, obviously enough, some serious indigenous concerns for the Irish

government to take into account in the determining process over whether or not to join up with the Six. Lemass had frequently made clear what he expected from EEC entry negotiations and from the resulting trade arrangements, but he did not hide legitimate Irish fears. He said that:

In all negotiations and discussions on the future trade arrangements of Europe and the world in which we have taken part we have been drawing attention to the unfairness of a situation which, while helping to widen the market for industrial goods, does not at the same time provide a corresponding improvement for countries who rely largely on agriculture.⁴⁸

However, an opinion poll for the *Irish Press*, taken around this time, found that 65% of those polled considered that the UK was the single-most important foreign consideration for Ireland, whilst 29% replied that it was the US and only 1% that it was Europe. In addition, 95% of those sampled attached significance to continued close international relations with the UK, with 89% assigning similar prominence to the US, but only 62% giving such value to Europe. Of the people that were tested, 76% of those surveyed still said that they approved of Irish entry into the EEC; the corresponding figure was only 44% in the UK. Interestingly, if the London government decided not to join up with the Six, it was shown that such a decision would have a major impact on Irish public opinion regarding membership, with 38% of those polled against entry as a result and only 36% still in favour. In any event, the fact that only 10% of Irish people were worried about any loss of sovereignty resulting from membership demonstrates that economic priorities overrode any other consideration.⁴⁹

It was clearly evident, both from what the taoiseach said and from the views of the general public, that even if opinion over Europe was divided, other factors had to be taken into account by the Irish government, especially emanating from those most intimately and vocally involved in lobbying for or against EEC membership. This begs the understandable question: which sectors of Irish life were putting pressure on the government over whether or not to join? In fact, these representative sections of the community can be divided into three main categories, the first of which will be dealt with in detail here because the other two groups are continuously analysed throughout the central chapters. The groupings were:

- native Irish federalists versus those hostile to the EEC;
- backbenchers and the opposition in the Dáil and Seanad;
- indigenous farmers and industrialists.

It is also possible, within the context of evaluating the role played in the determining process by Irish federalists and those skeptical of European integration, to assess the sort of feedback that the government was receiving from the various institutions and members of the EEC and how they in turn affected Irish foreign policy.

The federalist Irish Council of the European Movement played what was considered by T.K. Whitaker, Department of Finance secretary, to be a 'valuable' role in informing the government about European integration in the run-up to Ireland's decision to apply for EEC membership. For instance, this lobby group's chairman, Garret FitzGerald, reported to the Irish government on a visit paid by an Irish Council of the European Movement delegation to the EEC Commission in the middle of April 1961. Indeed, in expressing their views on the question of whether or not the government should apply for full or associate membership, this account also detailed various meetings with a diverse and informed group of European officials, a comprehensive appraisal of which is necessary to determine its role in impacting upon domestic considerations in the determining process. FitzGerald's central advice to the Irish government was that the advantages and disadvantages of associate and full membership would obviously need to be fully assessed and considered, certainly before any informed action could be taken. Earlier that month in Dáil Éireann, Lemass had already said: 'The best situation possible for us would be association with the Common Market, if Britain were also a member of it, on a basis which satisfactorily took account of our economic circumstances'. In a relatively short space of time, this position advanced rather rapidly, indeed quixotically, so that, when Ireland finally applied, Lemass chose to request full membership. Questions that were being asked included: why had the government's position changed, indeed had its membership status changed? Therefore, in the context of the lobbying pressures put on the government by domestic interest groups, such as the federalists, each of the choices facing Ireland in the summer of 1961 have to be reviewed in turn.

Although not explored thus far, the government could have chosen a different sort of relationship with the EEC, one which was also provided for in the Treaty of Rome. Indeed, the article specifically dealing with the application of a state for associate membership of the EEC (Article 238) read as follows:

The Community may conclude with a third State, a union of States or an international organisation agreements establishing an association involving reciprocal rights and obligations, common action and special procedures.⁵⁰

The problem with associate EEC membership as a policy option for Ireland was in relation to the place of agriculture and the question of assessing what benefits the country could hope to accrue as a result. Free access for agricultural products to the EEC was, of course, viewed as problematic at the very least. Indeed, this measure was possibly only going to be extended to existing member states, despite the fact that the EEC Commission officials insisted that associate membership would open up many possibilities for Ireland, while full membership of the EEC would require an as yet uncertain, but probably stringent, compliance with the Treaty of Rome. As an associate member, the Irish government would have been looking for a transitional period to be in place for tariff reductions on industrial products, just as Greece had received in its arrangement for associate membership.⁵¹

According to the Irish Council of the European Movement assessment, Ireland was should be prepared to harmonise its agricultural policies with those of the EEC, but would obviously want to balance allowing the free access of EEC agricultural produce into Ireland in return for its own free access to the Common Market. As an associate member, however, the EEC Commission could not guarantee that Ireland would be able to participate fully in any agricultural arrangements while it was at the same time negotiating temporary derogations in relation to industrial trade. Although FitzGerald felt that detailed negotiations would have to be undertaken before further clarification could be received, it was becoming obvious what choice he advocated most. The disadvantages of being accepted as an associate member were considerable and varied. Indeed, these handicaps, according to the report, included:

- the uncertainty related to agricultural product concessions;
- the fact that Ireland would have no direct control or influence over the policies that were to be adopted and, thus, it would be committing itself 'blindfold' to the EEC;
- Ireland would not have free access to the European Social Fund;
- unlike Greece, Ireland was also unlikely to be in a position to receive any European Investment Bank money if not a full member.

Therefore, the relative advantages of associate membership appeared to figure rather poorly in comparison to the disadvantages. The question FitzGerald thus asked was: what were the corresponding benefits and drawbacks then of full EEC membership for Ireland?

As was previously explained, Ireland had the further possibility of

applying for full membership of the EEC, also provided for under the Treaty of Rome (Article 237). However, FitzGerald reported that the EEC Commission was loath to give any significant concessions away to Ireland on this provision, primarily because it would create an 'undesirable' precedent which could lead, in effect, to the watering down of the original treaty. Nevertheless, it was apparent that if Ireland was prepared to accept the whole treaty in principle, it was assured of 'sympathetic treatment', as was instanced by the case with the protocol accorded to Italy in relation to the underdevelopment of its Mezzogiorno region. Additionally, full membership would clearly entail accepting the transitional period for the dismantlement of tariff and quota restrictions – 1970 was the stipulated date, perhaps even earlier if unilaterally agreed – as the Commission was clearly looking to strengthen posthaste the whole idea of a common market. FitzGerald recognised that, despite some possible transitional derogations, in addition to more definite benefits such as access to the European Social Fund and European Investment Bank, full membership would still 'impose a considerable strain on the Irish economy'. In fact, there was little room for doubt about its obligations; any concessions granted would remain limited and temporary only. However, the agriculture situation was very uncertain, basically because the Commission had not fully thought through this particular problem. Nonetheless, it had to be weighed against the fact that the terms related to agriculture would be extremely important in the case of associate membership, because Ireland might find itself with limited policy-making influence if it only had a confined role. Associate status paled in comparison to the prospect of full membership in terms of possible benefits and drawbacks.

The Irish Council of the European Movement document reported that the general drift of views in Brussels was that Ireland should ultimately apply for associate EEC status, essentially because they considered that Ireland would not be able to undertake the rigours required by full EEC membership. Furthermore, FitzGerald had the feeling that the EEC Commission did not actually want another country complicating the decision-making process at that stage. Thus, their report recommended that the Irish government should be looking:

... to adopt in full the common agricultural policy with its advantages and corresponding obligations, while at the same time having a limited participation in industrial trade with significant concessions along the same lines as those accorded to Greece.

Their key finding and subsequent main advice was that the associate versus full membership debate should be entered into as fully as possible. Indeed,

FitzGerald noted that this avenue might potentially offer the opportunity for the status issue to be used by the Irish government as a bargaining chip in return for concessions being granted as an associate member.

The opinions of the various EEC functionaries interviewed by FitzGerald are worth exploring in the context of the membership debate, as well as on the classification that was being accorded to Ireland and the standing that was being given to agriculture. Together, they offer an insight into the lack of cohesion with which the Irish position was actually viewed. Much of the meeting conducted with Richard Mayne, a member of the official spokesman's group representing the EEC Commission, was limited to the subject of the UK government's relationship with the EEC, reflecting the actuality of Ireland's relative lack of importance. However, on the subject of agriculture, this spokesman said that he felt that Ireland would be 'more complementary than competitive' in the EEC framework, mainly because the effects of the agricultural production of beef and dairy products, though they would affect the EEC countries as a whole, would be spread out amongst all the members. Indeed, on the formal attitude of the Commission towards Irish membership as a whole, this particular official was able to inform the Irish federalist delegation that:

Any application from Ireland would of course be seriously considered and when association was being negotiated every effort would be made to take into account the special needs of the potential associate.

Of course, this statement clearly shows that it was felt in Brussels that the Irish government would be applying for associate membership, as it was thought possible for Ireland – as was the situation with Greece – 'to negotiate much more flexible and wide-ranging concessions' within this scenario. Ireland's relative status had already been formulated in Brussels.

Nevertheless, a later meeting with an EEC Commission official from the directorate-general dealing with agriculture was particularly illuminating because this functionary was, in reality, firmly opposed to the opinion which classified Ireland as an 'undeveloped country'; however, this particular official also recognised that this was not necessarily the view of the EEC Commission itself. Notwithstanding personal beliefs, it was apparent to FitzGerald that the division between Commission officials on issues such as agriculture did not auger well for the completion of any subsequent membership negotiations for Ireland, whether it was for full or even for associate membership status. Obviously, there were other views emanating from the Commission regarding European integration which this delegation of Irish federalists was able to

bring to bear upon the Dublin government.

The report from the Irish Council of the European Movement also detailed a meeting with Jean Deniau, who was officially Director for Association of Non-Member Countries in the Directorate-General for External Relations at the EEC Commission. Deniau showed that he was firmly of the opinion that associate status was the answer for Ireland with regard to the EEC, with the possibility of full membership being accorded to it only being considered apt at some later undefined stage. In truth, though he did actually perceive Ireland to be an 'undeveloped country' in the European context, Deniau could not envisage how the country would be able to adhere fully to the Treaty of Rome, something which he was not prepared to see watered down. As far as he was concerned, any concessions granted in the Irish case would have to be limited and specific, as was the position with Italy. Of course, the Greek government had been able to gain considerable concessions as an associate member, according to Deniau, which was regarded as demonstrating the 'suppleness of the Association formula'. However, the Treaty of Rome was clearly going to be interpreted in a very strict manner, as the Commission wanted to maintain the treaty totally intact and did not want to create any 'dangerous precedents'. The fact was that full EEC membership was considered to be very difficult, if not impossible, for Ireland to undertake at that time, because it would have had major difficulties, for example, in keeping pace with the required tariff reduction levels. Nonetheless, although unable to satisfy the Irish deputation fully on the specific issue of agriculture, Deniau did think that a position could ultimately be negotiated. What about other views within the Commission?

It is true to say, however, that the discussion conducted with Columb de Daumont, who was the Head of the Division for West European Countries in the Directorate-General for External Relations at the Commission, did not give the Irish delegation much grounds for optimism either. Other than conveying the view that negotiations with the EEC would have been simplified by Ireland's adherence to the GATT – it only joined at the end of 1967 – de Daumont did not have much to offer by way of compensation and, in particular, he was not prepared to see any negotiations for full membership taking a more flexible turn. The Irish argument that the country had an adverse trade balance with the EEC did not, for instance, cut any ice. Indeed, as far as these officials at the Commission were concerned, although the issue of Ireland's economic status was up for in-depth discussion – indeed, the very nature of any future relationship that it might conclude with the EEC – the Treaty of Rome was very definitely not on any negotiations agenda. Ireland could adhere completely as a full member or not at all.

FitzGerald followed up this report for the government, on behalf of the Irish Council of the European Movement, by outlining the difficulties that Ireland would encounter either way. A letter to the taoiseach stated that it was the unanimous view of his organisation that Ireland should approach the EEC Commission with the objective of achieving some form of participation with the EEC. He restated his organisation's view that the establishment of Irish membership should coincide with or follow a similar move when it was made by the London government. Indeed, he also declared the hope that his group's point of view would help the taoiseach 'in formulating policies consonant with the evolution of public opinion'.⁵² But, of course, the pressure being applied to the government regarding the formation of its foreign economic policies and its role in the process of European integration was also considerable from other native sources, most notably from those voices in Dáil Éireann both dissenting and in favour, as well as from economic sectors, which basically meant farmers and industrialists. The federalists were thus only one branch in a tripartite series of pressure groups trying to influence the Irish government's ultimate decision. Thus, there were other eminent domestic voices, other than the federalists, for Lemass to have to consider as well.

In Dáil Éireann, for example, the opposition continually sought information about the government's position on European integration, eventually forcing out of it the publication of a White Paper entitled *European Economic Community* on 30 June 1961.⁵³ It has to be said that the government was finally pressurised into taking this affirmative action despite its general unwillingness to be open about foreign policy issues and only came about as a result of its propensity to take such decisions for political gain. Dating from the establishment of EFTA, there was a 'steady stream' of questions in Dáil Éireann regarding the government's actual policy towards European integration, in reply to which the taoiseach continuously gave limited answers, lacking in any meaningful detail. On 2 March 1960, for example, in reply to a question specifically asking for some elaboration on the type of alignment that Ireland could be expected to have with the EEC, Lemass said:

Among the questions at present under examination by the Government in connection with our external trade policy is that of our future relations with the European Economic Community. I am not in a position to say anything more on the subject at the present time.⁵⁴

Indeed, this was to be the usual form of reply given to such questions during this period in time. Once the UK government began to indicate that it was considering joining the EEC, Lemass was able to expound upon the issue a little further. One year later, he stated:

It is the Government's view that, if Britain should take this step, we should consider establishing a link with the Common Market and endeavour to secure terms of membership or association which would satisfactorily take account of our economic circumstances.⁵⁵

However, the usual lack of lucidity in Irish government statements on official policy towards European integration resumed soon after this atypical relapse; explicit answers on issues such as this were a relatively rare occurrence.

Due though to the increasing preponderance of questions being posed in the Dáil and Seanad regarding the government's policy, Lemass was eventually forced to announce that a White Paper was being issued forthwith on the subject. J.J.Lee's comment in relation to the government's continuous reticence, indeed opprobrium, to giving out useful information is particularly appropriate here; it was, he maintains:

... merely a species of the wider genus of the furtiveness that often seemed to characterise the official mind in Ireland, where 'the general lack of openness in public administration' remains striking.⁵⁶

This analysis of the lack of interaction between the government and the general public on any issue, including European integration, is especially appropriate when the resulting White Paper on the *European Economic Community*, in itself rather disappointing because of the lack of analysis and content presented, is considered and especially as it might otherwise have offered a valuable opportunity for debate. In truth, the government, although regularly pressurised by various members of the Dáil and Seanad to outline its policy and to indicate clearly its intentions, acted in a peculiarly furtive fashion on the EEC membership question, despite the varied informed inputs from groups and individuals concerned by the whole issue. Indeed, even with secret confirmation of the fact that the UK had decided to attempt to join the EEC, the Irish finance minister categorically declared in the Seanad that Ireland had not ruled out seeking entry into the EEC if the UK elected not to apply; this was a clear misrepresentation of the facts of the situation.⁵⁷

Irish farmers and indigenous industrialists, represented by a myriad of groups such as the National Farmers' Association (NFA) or the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), were also applying considerable pressure on the Irish government regarding its integration policy. Indeed, throughout this time, they continually tried to influence policy in an effort to protect their own interests, but the fact remained that the future course of Irish policy was more or less known and understood if the UK joined the EEC. However, despite efforts by

the NFA to suggest that Ireland should join the EEC before the UK and, in fact, that it should pursue its application whether the UK joined or not, Lemass, in assessing the wider Irish economic situation as well as the real position of Irish agriculture, asked: 'If Britain finally decides not to join, or if her application is repulsed because her conditions are unacceptable, what then?' The starkness of such an eventuality would obviously leave his government with no other reasonable option but to try to enhance existing Anglo-Irish trade relations in the realisation that associate or full EEC membership for Ireland would not then be practical.

In truth, the Department of Agriculture was able to argue cohesively that there were major disadvantages as well as advantages to the EEC for Irish agriculture, that it would be 'unrealistic' to suppose that there would be the 'necessary degree of support and stability ... in the absence of some special economic understanding with Britain, whatever solution may ultimately be found' within the European context.⁵⁸ In his correspondence with the NFA, the taoiseach still remained hopeful though that this would not have to happen and that both countries would be admitted without exigencies arising.⁵⁹ It should also be noted that over-riding this debate was the knowledge that the previous Anglo-Irish trade agreement dating from 1960 had not exactly been what Dublin had wanted or hoped for, even if they had been 'glad to conclude' it at the time of asking because the agreement at least reaffirmed bilateral trade links.⁶⁰ It was Lemass's considered view that the UK remained an essential economic concern for Ireland within any future economic integration scenario.

At the heart of the problem facing the Irish government regarding domestic lobbying groups was the fact that Irish farmers and industrialists were not in agreement about what to do if the UK decided not to join the EEC. The former grouping was strongly pro-European even if the UK did not become a member of the EEC. Indeed, the farmers had been openly calling for membership for Ireland since the middle of 1960 because they felt that – within the EEC – the 'CAP offered guaranteed high prices, access to an expanding consumer market and new trading opportunities'.⁶¹ Although there were exceptions, usually depending on the industry concerned, Irish industrialists were, generally speaking, not so enthusiastic. It was certainly felt that the free trade blocs were starting to cause job losses, but there was also a fear that, even in joining, even more redundancies would be incurred. What was most clear were the implications and 'effects of the higher rates of duty Irish goods have to bear to enter EFTA countries' and, by extension, the EEC as well.⁶²

Nevertheless, the continual flow of information between the Irish government and the various farming and industrial organisations, especially

the various meetings held before any decisions were taken, did at least give the impression that the government had the country's fate in its own hands. Indeed, the fact remained that, even though London had not taken a final decision regarding the EEC, Ireland was proceeding on that assumption that it would apply to enter.⁶³ The truth of the situation was never far away, however. In reality, in what was interpreted as a major speech on the industrial implications of EEC membership, Lemass definitively stated that:

... [if the UK joins] then this country will go along with that Community and we will have to accept with membership a dismantling of our industrial tariffs and quotas over a period of years.⁶⁴

By definition, Dublin's priority was to ready the economy for the tremendous implications that these changes in European trading circumstances were incurring, departures which would soon be intensified. How it would actually deal with this situation was another issue entirely.

Each of these domestic considerations – native Irish federalists, the backbenchers and opposition in the Dáil, indigenous farmers and industrialists – had an important input into the final government decision, even though none of them would be the primary influencing factor in the act itself of applying for full EEC membership. That would be done by the UK. At this stage, therefore, the unique role played by the London government within Ireland's European integration process has to be considered more fully, before completing this introduction into the determining process and analysing exactly how the country's definitive position in relation to the EEC was finally formulated.

Determining factors – Part III: the UK

Generally speaking, the available archival material shows that Ireland's position was not of fundamental concern to the UK in its own EEC negotiations, certainly little regard was paid to its needs for economic advancement in the formulation of EFTA in 1959 or in the signing of the Anglo-Irish trade agreement the following year. Notwithstanding this, the UK still had an enormous impact in determining Ireland's EEC membership application. This section of *Ireland's first EEC application, 31 July 1961*, concentrates on the contrasting importance of the UK to Ireland when compared to the relationship that applied *vice versa*. It is divided chronologically and encompasses various germane aspects of Anglo-Irish relations relative to the subject of European integration, including an initial

assessment of the detailed and regular correspondence that went on between the taoiseach and Macmillan at this time. It leads into an analysis of the Irish government's White Paper on the *European Economic Community* and subsequently analyses the government *aide-mémoire* issued on 5 July 1961. In point of fact, later sections also make a detailed review of the bilateral meetings held on 18-19 July 1961 and then look at the immediate lead-up to, as well as the announcement and aftermath of, the Irish application to join the EEC. All of these points are actually introduced throughout this brief analysis of the role of the UK government in Ireland's decision-making process, but are intended to lead to just one main conclusion. Dublin could not act on the EEC issue without a deep awareness and appreciation of what London was going to do.

In this context, it is therefore particularly interesting to note what the UK thought of the taoiseach, before moving on to give more detail about its views on the Irish government's position on European integration. In fact, Lemass was seen as being untypically Irish; he was described as being 'sensible, courageous and cool-headed'. He had been, it was said, the 'apostle' of the policy that led to the establishment and continued protection of indigenous Irish industries. Indeed, when this assessment was presented in July 1961, the view was put forward that the taoiseach's opinions on economic self-sufficiency appeared to have become considerably modified. In point of fact, Lemass was seen as being 'more progressive than the majority of his colleagues and fellow countrymen', but that as an adept politician he was 'too shrewd to try to force the pace'. Importantly, however, he was perceived to be fully 'alive to the need for changes in the economic policies which he had himself forsaken'.⁶⁵ Although at most only a pen-picture of private UK government views on the taoiseach, these opinions have a credibility which has to be kept in mind when the part played by London in the formation of Ireland's European policy is taken into consideration.

Of course, the Irish government was well informed about the public and private UK position on the EEC throughout the period in question, knowing about most of its motives and reservations. Indeed, in turn, the London government rightly felt that it had kept the Irish 'in touch on pretty much the same basis as Commonwealth countries'.⁶⁶ Such communications were carried out through formal private means – by way of the various sets of Anglo-Irish talks, as well as through the continuous exchange of correspondence between Lemass and the UK prime minister – and through more public methods – via statements issued by the UK government, as well as through newspaper reports. These formal private means included, for instance, remarks made by A.H. Tandy, the UK chef de mission to the EEC in

Brussels, in May 1961, that in his opinion his government had:

... gone too far to withdraw ... MacMillan [sic] had already made up his mind on the subject and he fully expected to receive an instruction within the next three or four months to submit a formal application for British membership.

Tandy expected this announcement to come before Westminster adjourned for the summer recess, even if it was still recognised that this would 'only be the beginning' of the process and that the resulting negotiations would be 'long and tedious'. Most importantly, however, he felt that the London government had now gone 'beyond the point of no return'.⁶⁷

On the other hand, various high profile statements by prominent UK politicians gives credence to the view that, in addition, the Irish received much of their information on the UK government's position through more public means. This source would have included, for example, the important speech made by Edward Heath, then UK Lord Privy Seal (effectively a junior foreign ministerial post), to the House of Commons in mid-May 1961, when he gave what was then described as the 'fullest public exposé to date of Britain's attitude to Europe'. With the accumulation of such evidence, the Irish ambassador in London felt that the UK would yet 'take the plunge' and try to join the EEC, though he had to report at the time that a final decision had obviously not as yet been taken.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, it becomes clear from this line of argument that the government was receiving its information on the position of the UK regarding its integration from a wide variety of sources. The relatively simple question that therefore must be asked remains: if an application to join the EEC was so expected from the UK, why is it worth investigating the decision-making process in such detail?

The simple answer to that query is that the UK government's standpoint on European integration impinged upon Dublin's thinking to such a degree that it is only by tracing the development of positions taken by both sides that the degree of Anglo-Irish interdependence and, more specifically, the extent of Ireland's dependence upon the UK can be appreciated. Right from the beginning of the process, it was obvious to the UK that, because of Europe's trading divisions into groupings of the Six and of the Seven, Ireland was going to have to 'consider carefully the question of associating herself with one or other of the two groups'.⁶⁹ The fact that the general UK announcement to join the EEC could still come as some sort of a 'surprise' to the Irish government – to the extent that, when London's position was finally and publicly formalised, it still precipitated a 'crisis-point' – is reason enough to investigate the issue. Nonetheless, it was also obvious to all concerned that

the time for decision-making was close at hand. Indeed, Lemass said as much in a speech he delivered in early June 1961. His statement is worth quoting fairly extensively because he asked:

If this Western European Community should extend its membership to include most of the States of Western Europe – not only the present Six but also Britain, Denmark, Norway, Portugal and possibly Spain – with Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and Finland linked with it – could we, in any circumstances, contemplate remaining outside it? The consequences arising from such a position of isolation must also be visualised. We would be cut off from European markets by the imposition against our products of the permanent common tariff of the whole Community, and left in an economic back-water, unable to participate in the economic expansion which the creation of the Community is designed to generate. The prospects for Irish agriculture in that situation would be very depressing, and for Irish industrial expansion practically non-existent.

As Lemass concluded: 'The alternative to accession to the European Community, if all our European neighbours join it, does not seem very attractive'. Therefore, it was not only the case that Ireland's decision to accede to the Treaty of Rome would cause 'many and serious problems', but that the flip-side to this argument provided no relief either as there would also be considerable problems in remaining 'aloof'. In fact, a resolution was considered to be the stark choice of deciding between two sets of complex problems and, thus, for Ireland, there was to be no easy or readily apparent solution.⁷⁰

In expressing its opinion on the Irish situation, the UK Foreign Office remarked that the Irish ambassador in London had a 'good understanding' of the UK government's position on European integration and of the particular difficulties that the EEC posed to it. In that context, McCann had in fact informed the UK that he personally felt that, if the UK decided to go ahead and accede to the EEC with 'whatever reservations might be necessary', the Irish government would not be able to stay outside. Indeed, although his government had not yet reached any firm conclusions about the relative merits of full membership or association, the Irish ambassador also told the UK that he felt that full membership was the better option.⁷¹ Opinion regarding the rectitude of Ireland's EEC membership was quite divided within the Foreign Office, with one viewpoint raising doubts about 'whether the Six would greet an Irish application for membership with much enthusiasm'. Meanwhile, another opinion that was expressed stated that, for Dublin, it would be of 'critical importance' that they be allowed to join the EEC if they so desired.⁷² Significantly, in direct conjunction with these views, the UK Commonwealth

Relations Office summed up its view of the Irish position on adhesion by saying that:

... while the Republican Government do not rule out the possibility of trying to obtain an association with the Community, they would, if possible, prefer to go for full membership so as to have a better chance of influencing its agricultural and economic policies in the way that they would like to see them develop.⁷³

Thus, despite appreciating the reality of the situation that there was a limited list of options available to Ireland regarding its process of European integration, the London government was obviously determined to go its own way on the issue. Undoubtedly, the same criteria did not operate the other way round. However, this only leads to the question: what exactly was the Irish government prepared to do about this situation and how was it to proceed?

With the UK's role foremost in the Irish government's mind, a critically important meeting of departmental secretaries and ambassadors was convened on 6 June 1961. At this gathering, a consensus of opinion emerged that it was becoming more and more obvious that there was a vital need for Anglo-Irish talks to be called to discuss the matter. As a result, it was recommended that the taoiseach should write to the UK prime minister so as to give 'greater emphasis' to the impression of seriousness with which the subject was being treated in Ireland.⁷⁴ Dispatched some days later, Lemass pointed out in his letter to Macmillan that he had personally made repeated statements to the effect that, should the UK decide to join the EEC, the Irish 'Government would consider applying for membership also, endeavouring to secure such terms as would satisfactorily take account of our economic circumstances'. Of course, the taoiseach's principal intention throughout was to procure private advance notice if such a decision was going to be taken by London and, thus, he sought an early opportunity for bilateral consultations.⁷⁵

Meanwhile, a meeting of government ministers and departmental secretaries that was held on 8 June 1961 did not alter the general direction of the earlier recommendations, except that it was decided that the Irish government should no longer make references to associate membership of the EEC as an Irish foreign policy option. This was another critical moment in the history of Ireland's experience of European integration because, from this point, it was made clear that full membership, rather than association, was the government's primary and sole objective in relation to the EEC. In this regard, Ireland would, however, push for special economic treatment from the Six by arguing that:

- the country had a lower living standard when compared to the various members of the EEC;
- it carried a high level of unemployment and was also demographically hindered;
- compared to the Six, it had a slower rate of economic progress;
- the government wanted its *Programme for economic expansion* to be taken into consideration.

In the meantime, other significant decisions regarding European integration were also taken. For example, the government wanted observer status to be granted at the CAP discussions if such a facility was accorded to other non-members or prospective members of the EEC. It was also decided that all of these points would be conveyed by means of an Irish government *aide-mémoire*, which was to be made available not only to the Six but also to the UK and US governments; in addition, this move would coincide with an announcement in Dáil Éireann. At the same time, the Irish government went about preparing the groundwork that would be needed for the opening of membership negotiations – by intensifying the consultation process with interest groups and by determining the various positions that required to be taken within the different government departments – within the framework of the envisaged turn of events, that is a formal UK government application for full EEC membership.⁷⁶

Notwithstanding this consideration, it was obvious from the outset that the slated tour by UK government ministers to sound out British Commonwealth views in relation to its role with the EEC was going to be part of a dynamic over which the Dublin government could exercise very little control. Nonetheless, their chief hope remained to influence and, indeed, to participate in the UK's decision-making process, an ambition which they aimed to fulfil through their own full bilateral discussions. At least, the Irish government had the power to influence the Six and the UK government in other ways. However, its White Paper entitled the *European Economic Community* and the issuing of an *aide-mémoire* entirely failed in this regard. The government *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961 is fully assessed later in this chapter, but only after an in-depth investigation of its White Paper is presented. Nonetheless, it is still possible to contend, even at the beginning of this analysis, that both of these documents must be evaluated as valuable missed opportunities by the Dublin government. In fact, its efforts at convincing its European neighbours of its perspicacity for membership failed miserably, perhaps even having the opposite effect to the one intended; instead of persuading Europe that Ireland was primed for full membership, these

documents only confirmed that it was anything but ready. The damage caused would have serious repercussions.

European Economic Community: the White Paper⁷⁷

With the continued growth of external and internal pressures on the government in the early 1960s to articulate its position on the EEC, it was decided that the 'unexpected announcement of the imminence of a White Paper' – that is by publishing a document on the issue – would meet what seemed an insatiable appetite for information. The Department of Finance secretary was particularly concerned that the Irish government should not be distracted from taking this course of action, as he was inclined to see the 'merit of presenting information in a co-ordinated, comprehensive manner' in the form of a government White Paper, rather than issuing the facts on an *ad hoc* basis. The opposition in Dáil Éireann had by this stage been swamping the government with incessant questions, at the same time accusing it of lacking direction. Whitaker felt that it would be 'good administration' therefore for the government to make its position clear through the publication of a White Paper; he thought that 'criticism is unlikely to be stilled by a willingness to answer questions which is more apparent than real'.⁷⁸ Assessing the genuine value of the White Paper is an important aspect of this text's argument, mainly because the publication of *European Economic Community* was one of the few extensive public statements of intent by the government regarding the EEC at this point in time. There had, of course, been many speeches on the subject of European integration by Irish politicians and there had also been a vast amount of newspaper coverage. However, this White Paper was to become the first formal indication of the Irish government's views on the issue that was made widely available to the general public.

In fact, the necessity of preparing and publishing a White Paper on the issue had been agreed at the various meetings held between government ministers, departmental secretaries and ambassadors in early June 1961. It was decided that the publication would come in two separate parts, only the second of which would deal with the implications of EEC membership for Ireland. According to the government, however, this second part could only conceivably be prepared when the actual membership negotiations themselves had gotten underway and a clearer picture of the resulting agreements had emerged, before it could be ascertained what they would entail for Ireland. In spite of such logic, it soon became apparent that what was inherently correct in this supposition was also going to be the major failing of the document

European Economic Community, because it was precisely this argument which was used to prevent a fuller examination of the political dimensions of EEC membership being generated. The White Paper was envisaged as a means of detailing the contemporary history of European integration, as well as assessing how Ireland had fared throughout the OEEC-sponsored FTA negotiations and the instigation of the Treaty of Rome, and what the effects of the proposals for a CAP would be. Indeed, it was felt that this document would also explain what positions the taoiseach and the government had taken and, in the process, furnish 'useful statistics and factual material' such as those related to bilateral Anglo-Irish trade, as well as Irish trade with the Six.⁷⁹ It was decided that the White Paper would be published as soon as it was practicable to do so, but that there would be no attempt as yet to go into detail about the wider implications of EEC membership for Ireland. There was 'no point ... at present' in doing so, it was felt, because of course there was the ever-present danger of prejudicing any forthcoming membership negotiations.⁸⁰ The various recommendations that arose from the meetings on a White Paper being published were forwarded to Lemass.

As the summer months of 1961 quickly progressed, there was a public air of pace and immediacy about the whole subject of Ireland's possible membership of the EEC. To a large extent, the Irish government either did not have control over many of the events that affected it or precipitated new crises by its actions. All of these background European events occurred with other less unusual developments such as the setting-up of the Anglo-Irish meetings to be held from 18-19 July 1961 in these critical, indeed crucial, initial stages. However, the explicit need in Ireland to have a definitive statement on European integration available for the general populous – although clearly recognised by the opposition parties in Dáil Éireann and by informed public opinion – was only recognised by the Lemass administration after much hesitation. The taoiseach was particularly adamant that his government's announcement regarding Ireland's desire to have consultations with London should not be misinterpreted. For the duration of the protracted build-up to Ireland's application for EEC membership, there appeared to be a domestic political need for Lemass and Fianna Fáil that their decision should not be seen as consequential on the forthcoming bilateral talks.⁸¹ The need not to fall into the trap of being perceived to be dependent upon the UK – the reality of the situation – was tempered by political necessity to appear to be taking the decision independently.

The questioning of the government within Dáil Éireann continued on various topics concerned with the EEC, adding to the pressure on it to act. For example, Brendan Corish, the Labour party leader, thoroughly quizzed Lemass

on the related issue of neutrality; in three separate, though interlinked, instances, the latter replied in the negative each time. Indeed, the taoiseach stated that:

- Ireland had not consulted the Austrian, Swedish or Swiss governments regarding the obvious problems involved in entering the EEC without already being a member of NATO;
- the US government had not in any way tried to influence Ireland upon the desirability or otherwise of joining NATO, even if Ireland decided to join the EEC or not;
- on the direct question of whether EEC membership would in fact affect Ireland's position on neutrality, he declared unequivocally that the 'Rome Treaty does not bear directly on the policy of a member State in the matter of neutrality or otherwise'.

When all was said and done, Irish neutrality was not a serious consideration for Lemass in the context of European integration.⁸² Eventually, on 30 June 1961, the Irish government's White Paper was laid before the Oireachtas.⁸³ One of the major stated aspirations given for going ahead with the publication of *European Economic Community* was to explain and list the numerous postwar developments that had then led to the establishment of the various Western European trading groups. This was an aim because, as Con Cremin, the Department of External Affairs secretary, informed the US ambassador to Ireland, Edward G. Stockdale, the document was chiefly intended as 'an effort ... to bring out the political aspirations behind the establishment of the Community'. Nevertheless, the White Paper did not do so explicitly. At this meeting, Cremin also drew particular attention to the official Irish view of the major developments which had led to the establishment of closer European integration in those two decades.⁸⁴ The principal historical importance of the government's publication of its White Paper *European Economic Community* was that it finally introduced its position with respect to the EEC into the public sphere. Although there is no particular need to go into any great detail in describing this document here, some interesting and relevant points do still emerge from this manuscript as they illuminate government thinking.

As described in *European Economic Community*, the creation of the EEC in 1957 was viewed by the Dublin government as 'an event of the utmost significance affecting not only future economic and political developments in the member countries, but also their trade and economic relations with other countries of Western Europe and the world at large'. Lemass had made it obvious in Dáil Éireann on 16 May 1961 that, in direct contrast to the EEC,

EFTA did not offer Ireland any 'substantial advantages'. He explained that this was because the existing Anglo-Irish trade agreements – economic arrangements which helped to govern trade within this bilateral relationship – were recognised as already giving 'mutual advantages' which could not have been substantively added to within EFTA. Nevertheless, despite the vast size and opportunities offered by the EEC, it was still held by this document that in any:

... consideration of Ireland's position *vis-à-vis* the EEC a major factor must be the large proportion of Ireland's external trade which is with the United Kingdom ... In any assessment of the economic effects of a link between Ireland and the EEC it would be necessary to take account of the extent to which such a link might affect Ireland's trade with the United Kingdom ... Ireland's ... national interest ... would, in certain circumstances, be served by our joining a grouping of which the United Kingdom was a member, it would not be served by joining the EEC if the United Kingdom remained outside and we had to forgo our preferential advantages in that market.

The taoiseach had previously said as much in parliament on 26 April 1960 and, indeed, further reiterated the substance of this position a year later when he said:

... the best situation possibly for us would be association with the Common Market, if Britain were also a member of it, on a basis which satisfactorily took account of our economic circumstances.

Ireland was therefore faced with two principal choices regarding the form of its participation in the EEC, either full membership or associate membership. Even still, both of these options remained totally dependent on the direction taken by the UK government. In actual fact, the Irish government wavered dramatically between both of these alternatives, each of which need to be assessed in the light of what the White Paper actually said.

As was stated previously, it was evident that Ireland would be applying for full EEC membership under the relevant provision in the Treaty of Rome (Article 237). However, as no other country had as yet applied for membership under this provision, there was no prior experience from which the government could work. Notwithstanding this fact, it was under no illusions regarding the substance of what this particular stipulation entailed. Indeed, it was fully recognised in *European Economic Community* that:

... possible adaptations to the Treaty on accession of a new member would not be such as to modify in any important respect the basic provisions of the

Treaty ... Membership would entail acceptance of the principles and obligations of the Treaty.

Nevertheless, although this statement formalised the limits within which the Irish government could operate, full membership was additionally deemed to proffer many opportunities. As a full member of the EEC, for instance, Ireland was assured that it would have an equal:

... voice in the formulation of policies and ensure access on a footing of equality to a large and growing market with the prospect of sharing in the benefits which would flow from the progressive achievement of the aims of the Community ...

Of equal importance to Ireland, of course, was the fact that full membership would open up access to the various sources of financial assistance that were on offer, such as access to the European Investment Bank, to the European Social Fund and to the European Fund for Structural Improvements in Agriculture. Thus, according to *European Economic Community*, there were distinct benefits to be garnered from Ireland's full adhesion to the EEC, advantages that weighed up rather favourably when stacked against the disadvantages.

Of course, as was explained earlier as well, Ireland also had recourse to another form of relationship with the Six, that is associate membership, an alternative arrangement which was also governed by the Treaty of Rome (Article 238). However, as only one other country – Greece – had by this stage negotiated an associate membership agreement with the EEC, once again there was little previous experience from which the Irish government could work. It was recognised that the Treaty of Rome was quite capable of supporting a variety of forms of association with the EEC and, therefore, that it was within this context that the individual needs of certain countries might be catered. In spite of this explicit undertaking in the Treaty of Rome, the exact manner in which such a relationship might affect, for example, agricultural trade was not as yet clear. Thus, there was no formal indication, for instance, as to how a CAP within the EEC might apply to an associate member. Indeed, this was also the case regarding the various sources of financial assistance that were actually available for associate members. Therefore, the real set of choices facing the Irish government was relatively stark because, in addition to the limitations of full membership, *European Economic Community* made it clear that the possibilities inherent in associate membership were also circumscribed. Nonetheless, at least it was clearly seen that:

The influence which an associate would be able to exert on the formulation and modification of Community policies would of course be determined by the provisions of the relevant agreement of association. It could not be expected to be as significant as that of a member.

Consequently, the Irish government did not have a blinkered view of the possibilities intrinsic to associate membership. The arguments for and against full membership as opposed to the more limited associate status were out in the open at last. Perhaps, however, it is better to finish this examination of *European Economic Community* with a brief investigation of the one aspect which clearly demonstrates Ireland's true orientation, that is trade, before moving onto an analysis of the Irish government's *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961.

By choosing a category such as trade, it is immediately apparent that Ireland did not, in fact, have much room for manoeuvre on the question of European integration. Indeed, it could not be said that the government was operating within a scenario over which it extended much freedom of control. The truth of the situation was that Ireland was completely limited by how the UK government intended to proceed on membership. The Irish government could not act, it could only react. This conviction can clearly be seen from the statistics.⁸⁵ There is no real need to go into too much detail about such figures, except to say that the volume of Irish exports was obviously increasing rapidly, while the importance of the UK market was decreasing, however slightly; in turn, Ireland was importing more goods, while determinedly sourcing them from further afield than previously.

When this limited data is added to the evidence presented that Ireland was orienting itself towards markets different to that of its mainstay – the UK – there is no question but that it was totally reliant upon Anglo-Irish trade and that, until this situation of dependence was finally rectified, this bilateral consideration would be the sole significant determinant in any major foreign economic activity undertaken by Dublin. While it can be legitimately argued from the trade figures that this bilateral trade relationship was mutually beneficial, Ireland had hit upon a situation over which it could exercise very little control, the process of European integration. Ireland's relative position in any trade talks could only suffer as a result. This was the unenviable situation in which Dublin now found itself. EFTA may not have turned out to be the immediate potentially devastating threat to the Irish economy that had initially been envisaged, although the soundings that were coming from it were not too helpful to the Irish cause either.⁸⁶ However, it was undeniable that the EEC could pose such a threat, if only because of the agriculture question; this was excluded for the most part by EFTA, but it was very firmly on the former's

agenda. Dublin thus had to act both quickly and rationally. Notwithstanding these considerations, the *aide-mémoire* issued by the government on 5 July 1961 was certainly not the right answer.

The *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961⁸⁷

For the purposes of this special analysis, it is the various European and UK reactions to the Irish government's *aide-mémoire* which was issued on 5 July 1961 that are actually more interesting rather than the substance of the document itself. Of course, it is still necessary to reveal how the government was thinking, how its views developed and what it expected the *aide-mémoire* to achieve. Nonetheless, this can best be done in many ways by integrating the different sets of reactions to the text of the document and to its nuances into this appraisal here. It is possible to divide the responses upon receipt of the *aide-mémoire* into two main categories; each was foreboding and may be listed as follows:

- the UK government's veritable lack of enthusiasm for the actions that Ireland prescribed;
- mixed reactions from the Six and from the institutions of the European Communities, though on balance they looked upon it unfavourably.

Both sets of responses are dealt with in turn, while also being interspersed with an analysis of Irish thinking behind, and reactions to, the manuscript itself.

The EEC was well aware already through informal means that the Irish government would make its proposed application for membership contingent upon the UK's own decision. Thus, the UK government's attitude to Ireland's proposed *aide-mémoire* was most revealing within this context. Indeed, the Irish ambassador in London, Hugh McCann, was reported by the UK as having tried to explain that the *aide-mémoire* to be issued by his government:

... was intended to serve much the same purpose so far as the Irish Republic is concerned as our own informal talks with certain of the Governments of the Six and that his Government wished us to know of it in advance. They hoped that it might elicit information which would be helpful to us as well as to themselves.⁸⁸

UK Foreign Office officials privately admitted that an Irish approach to the Six at that time had 'obvious disadvantages'. Indeed, they were actually opposed to the idea. However, it was asserted within UK government circles that 'it is difficult to see that we can do anything at this late stage effectively to delay the proposed Irish action', partly as it was pointed out that Ireland's diplomatic representatives to the Six and the EEC would already have received their instructions. Thus, it was decided that, even if London was able to persuade Dublin to delay this course of action – and presumably then only momentarily – Ireland's intention to convey the *aide-mémoire* to the Six would quickly become known and, more importantly, it would then come out 'together with the fact that we had been against their execution'. It was felt that such an initiative would ultimately only rebound on London, damaging the way it was perceived and disadvantaging its own position in relation to the EEC even further.⁸⁹

Indeed, two supplementary arguments were also put forward by the UK Foreign Office against taking any action to dissuade the Irish from making its move. These contended that:

- the proposed Irish *aide-mémoire* was intended to find out whether the Six would be prepared to envisage special provisions being made to enable Ireland to become a full member of the EEC and that the Irish government had made it clear that it did not propose to join the EEC unless, and until, the UK did so as well. Additionally, it was pointed out that 'they are not proposing to try to get in first';
- the *aide-mémoire* was also seen as only the formalisation of what was already known to have been previously said between the West German foreign minister and Lemass. In fact, it was thus argued that the Irish government initiative might not be 'wholly disadvantageous' to the UK, especially in regard to lessons that could be learned from how the Irish presentation was received.⁹⁰

In turn, the UK Commonwealth Relations Office also felt 'that it would be extremely difficult for us to object to the proposed action of the Irish Republican Government'. In truth, it was recognised that the taoiseach was committed to saying something substantial on the subject of European integration in Dáil Éireann on 5 July 1961 and that what he really wanted was to be in a position to announce that his government had taken some 'exploratory action' with the Six.⁹¹ Thus, the UK did not find itself in a position to object strongly to the issuing of this document, though Dublin was certainly aware of their reservations.

It is with this background in mind that, in addition to its publication of *European Economic Community*, the *aide-mémoire* distributed by the Irish government on 5 July 1961 should also be considered as a major step in the history of Ireland's European integration. Announcing the decision that 'in the event of the United Kingdom applying for membership of the EEC, we will also apply', the taoiseach declared that Ireland did not have any:

... obligations under international agreements or arising out of traditional national policies, such as appear to arise in the case of Switzerland, Austria and Sweden, which need cause us to hesitate in accepting the authority of the institutions of the European Economic Community. If we can be satisfied that it will promote this country's economic welfare and progress we can welcome the prospect of European integration, even those of us who are not prepared yet to look further than the obligations which are specified in the Rome Treaty.

The UK would, of course, remain integral to Ireland in economic terms. Indeed, Lemass held that the 'facts of geography cannot be changed by either the institutions or the rules of the European Community and it is certain that the proximity of the two countries will retain a situation in which the great bulk of our exports to and imports from Europe will be consigned to and from Great Britain'.⁹² In this way, Dublin once again made its intentions regarding the EEC and the role that the UK would play public knowledge; simultaneously, it tendered its *aide-mémoire* to the members of the EEC.

The *aide-mémoire* itself marked the first formal occasion in which Ireland unveiled its foreign policy intentions in relation to European integration unequivocally to the members of the Six and to the institutions of the EEC. However, the Irish government made a grievous error by giving too much information away, that is by not keeping the *aide-mémoire* simple and to the point. All that was required from this document was an uncomplicated statement of intent. In spite of this, the government submitted a detailed memorandum. D.J.Maher has remarked that the Irish government's declaration was instead comprised of three major policy components which it wished to impart. Indeed, the *aide-mémoire* maintained that:

- Ireland favoured attaining full membership of the EEC;
- it wanted to convey the impression of a 'dynamic and rapidly growing economy';
- it invited consideration of Ireland as a developing economy in the same light as that previously accorded to Italy during the negotiations for the Treaty of Rome.⁹³

As the nation was admitted to be economically dependent upon its neighbour, understandably enough the *aide-mémoire* opened up with a statement which basically declared that Ireland's possible candidature of the EEC would depend upon the UK's decision on whether or not to join.⁹⁴ Thus, despite the fact that the government stated that it had followed the EEC's birth and evolution with interest and that it was in accord with its aims and plans, the *aide-mémoire* then made the mistake of going on to impart much more information than was required.

Indeed, the Irish government's *aide-mémoire* stated that, although it was prepared to accept the Treaty of Rome in principal, it had not developed its economy enough to undergo the full adaptive rigours, within the envisaged timescale, necessitated by membership.⁹⁵ A more explicit declaration of support for the political concept outlined in the preamble to the Treaty of Rome was obviously necessary from Ireland. As a result, the Irish government's statement was found wanting, the consequences of which soon became readily apparent. The *aide-mémoire* also made strong references to the *Programme for economic expansion* being an integral part of its envisaged future economic policy and, indeed, expressed the desire that it wanted the EEC to facilitate Ireland in accomplishing this ambition. This document insisted that not only did the goals of its economic initiative conform to those of the EEC, but that their realisation was in the interests of the common good.⁹⁶ In addition, the *aide-mémoire* also demonstrated Ireland's special interest in using the EEC's economic facilities, such as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, an assertion which obviously did not prove to be particularly endearing in Brussels or elsewhere. It was no wonder that, from the outset, the EEC suspected Ireland's real motives in applying as a full member. After all, the *aide-mémoire* did not exactly display wholehearted enthusiasm for membership, certainly not for participation without some sort of a price or even without preconditions.

Before moving onto to give the views of the Six, it is perhaps beneficial to deal briefly with the sort of information that the Department of External Affairs was issuing to the Irish representatives abroad to use in conjunction with this *aide-mémoire*. Six principal arguments were being issued in fact, each of which related to Dublin's stated desire for special economic treatment from the EEC. Each of these requirements needs to be dealt with in turn. Firstly, the Irish government particularly wanted Ireland to be recognised as a country in the process of economic development and, at the same time, to be seen as one requiring special measures to raise *per capita* incomes so that they could come closer to the average of the Six. To put this

statement into context, it was estimated in the data supplied that the *per capita* income in Ireland in 1959 was 60% that of the Western European average with, for example, the Swedes earning nearly three times as much as their Irish counterparts, the UK's workers over twice as much, and the Danes just less than that again. Indeed, by this scale of reckoning, Ireland was only ahead of Italy, Greece and Portugal in economic terms; it was shown that its GNP had only increased by 10% during the 1950s, in marked contrast to the OEEC's average of a 45% increment. The only saving factor, according to this analysis, was that the *Programme for economic expansion* was gradually reversing this economic anomaly.

Secondly, it was also declared in this Department of External Affairs review that the government wanted to increase the contribution of industry to the economy, both in terms of the relative percentage of the Irish workforce employed in this sector and, additionally, in order to speed up an increase in national industrial production. In 1959, it was asserted that 28.6% of Irish GDP came from industry, in contrast to, for example, a figure of 54.9% for Austria, 47.9% for the UK and 42.3% for Denmark. Indeed, even Portugal had 38.2% of its GDP coming from industry, with only Greece and Turkey trailing after Ireland when this method of gauging the health of the economy was used and then, in the case of Greece, only just. Once again, the memorandum held firmly to the view that progress was being reflected through the impetus of the *Programme for economic expansion*. However, the Department of External Affairs brief did state that 'Ireland cannot yet be regarded as an industrialised or advanced economy'. Indeed, according to the information that was imparted to the Irish representatives in the capitals of the Six, Ireland, although still encumbered with the tag of 'less developed status', was merely a country in the 'process of development'.

A third desire that was to be communicated to the Six, as outlined in this Department of External Affairs memorandum, was the need for recognition at European level of Ireland's various demographic, social and economic difficulties, especially those directly related to the critical problems of emigration, underemployment and unemployment. Irish unemployment was considered to be 'very high by European standards' with a figure of 6.7% given, which compared rather badly to corresponding figures of 4.3% for Denmark, 1.8% for the UK and 1.2% for West Germany. Indeed, when these statistics were then added to the considerable problems of emigration, a declining population and underemployment, the Irish government was keen to stress the country's real need for special treatment from the EEC. In fact, this argument led to a fourth requirement being proclaimed, which appertained to how dependent Ireland had actually become on its foreign trade. In 1960, Irish

imports amounted to 35% and its exports to 23% of GNP. Indeed, these sets of data ably demonstrated that Ireland's finances were utterly dependent upon the fortunes and intentions of the UK, indeed that in real terms increased trade with the EEC bore at best secondary, if nonetheless highly symbolic, consequences for the realities which distinguished the economic situation that the Irish faced.

The penultimate Irish government request slated to be communicated by its diplomatic representatives was that it specifically wanted the *Programme for economic expansion* to be given full consideration, not least because it was supported by various organisations which favoured international cooperation, but furthermore because it was in harmony, rather than in conflict, with the economic aims of the EEC. However, the main point to be made in this regard by the various diplomats was that Ireland was 'not at present in a position to undertake all the obligations of full membership', in particular the accelerated programme of tariff and quota dismantlement. Thus, it was recommended that it would need a 'reasonable period' to adjust its economy to the new realities and that the *Programme for economic expansion* must be protected within this wider framework. It was considered that a 'prosperous Ireland, with a balanced economy and a high standard of living, would be of benefit to Europe generally', and that this message should be imparted to the Six. Indeed, this request led onto a last point listed to be relayed to the EEC institutions and members.

The final stipulation in this document called for a general provision to be afforded to facilitate the country's requirements within the context of EEC membership. After all, the government had a very difficult decision to make between two highly problematic and not particularly welcome positions – whether or not to enter the EEC – which were, in any case, dependent upon London's attitude. However, if Ireland's 'developing' status was accepted as a reality by the EEC, it was felt that such difficulties as those which existed could be more easily overcome. Nonetheless, this series of demands issued by the Department of External Affairs only aroused connotations and feelings at home and abroad of 'an béal bocht', the traditional Gaelic saying parodied in a novel by Flann O'Brien of the same name; these indicated that Dublin's *aide-mémoire* and its subsequent diplomatic instructions simply meant that Ireland was once more 'putting on the poor mouth'.⁹⁷

Indeed, entreaties such as these, intended to be appealing and endearing, at eliciting sympathy, were not very positively received by the EEC, especially in the long run. As was stated at the beginning of this segment, the reaction of the Six to the *aide-mémoire* and to the logic of the argument presented by the various Irish diplomats was for the most part fairly

mixed, although there were some positive responses initially. Frank Biggar, the ambassador in Brussels, informed his superiors that in the course of various conversations with EEC and Belgian officials he had received general support for Ireland's action. Walter Hallstein was noted as being 'fairly non-committal, but sympathetic', and was said to have felt that Ireland was doing the right thing in seeking membership of the EEC. Interestingly, Hallstein also mentioned that, when he was in Dublin in 1959, the taoiseach had consulted him about the possibility of Ireland joining EFTA, but that he had advised against it at the time. Indeed, according to Biggar, Hallstein regarded subsequent developments in the intervening period as having justified his advice then.⁹⁸ Meanwhile, in direct relation to the wider economic implications of membership, Paul-Henri Spaak told Biggar that if the UK joined the EEC, then Ireland would have to do so as well.⁹⁹ Additionally, a senior Belgian civil servant was quoted as being generally in favour of Ireland's stated desire to join the EEC, although he did point out that the Belgian government would have to 'fight' the Irish position on agriculture. Nonetheless, Biggar still felt this attitude to be 'not unencouraging'.¹⁰⁰

The immediate response of the Dutch government appeared even more favourable. The Irish ambassador in the Hague, B. Gallagher, stated that he had given the *aide-mémoire* to the Dutch prime minister. He assessed his government's move as follows to the Dutch:

... [the] *aide-mémoire* might virtually be regarded as a conditional intimation of our intention to seek membership ... conditional on Britain applying to become a member of the Community, because it would be impossible for us to join without Britain ... However it now looked as if Britain was going to apply. The Prime Minister said he realised that it would not be possible for us to apply for membership unless Great Britain did.

With regard to Ireland's retarded economic development, it was further noted that the Dutch government would consider this approach in a 'sympathetic spirit'.¹⁰¹ The same can be said for the initial, unofficial West German government reaction to the *aide-mémoire*, which was stated as being 'very warmly welcomed'; indeed, it was added by Ireland's representative in Bonn, Brian Ó Ceallaigh, that 'Germany would be happy if Ireland could join'.¹⁰² Equally, this position applied to the Italian government's intermediate reply, according to the Irish ambassador in Rome, Thomas V. Commins, which viewed the initiative positively as well; the ability to take the full commitments of the Treaty of Rome on board was another matter.¹⁰³

In fact, it was universally noted in diplomatic reports that, when the *aide-mémoire* was presented, none of the Six raised any problems, not even in

relation to defence or neutrality, for instance, issues which later became of prime importance.¹⁰⁴ Notwithstanding such signs, these instantaneous reactions do not underline the general perception of wariness displayed towards Ireland or towards the Irish government's motives in applying. The *aide-mémoire* was interpreted in Brussels as meaning that the EEC would, despite the fact that Ireland was prepared to accept all the inherent rules in the Treaty of Rome, have to acknowledge both its weak economic situation and Irish efforts to improve it. If the EEC accepted this line of argument, even if only on a temporary basis, it would also have to admit that Ireland would thus require 'special time limits and even special clauses' for it to adapt fully.¹⁰⁵ It was no wonder that the institutions of the EEC and the Six subsequently became more skeptical about the government's reasoning once further appraisal was made of Dublin's position.

Before moving on to analyse the UK government's view of the Irish initiative and the issue of Anglo-Irish relations within the context of this development, it is worth looking at the attitude of the US government towards the question of Ireland and European integration too. For the US, the Treaty of Rome had very definite political goals and was 'considered ... to constitute a most significant step in the direction of European unification ... [which] is the reason why Washington has always supported it'. It was also clear that the US supported the UK's bid to join the EEC and, in turn, that it was in favour of the ensuing candidature of Ireland being proposed. The US ambassador to Ireland even went on to suggest to the government that the Kennedy administration was prepared to come out publicly in support of Lemass's integration policy, though this initiative was politely turned down.¹⁰⁶ Crucially, what this particular perspective ignores, however, is that the US did not influence European integration policy to such a degree that the Irish government could put any faith in it as a mechanism through which to attain full EEC membership. Such a desire would have to take London's position into consideration and, even more importantly, the attitudes and opinions of the Six and the institutions of the EEC. The French government's antipathy towards the US was even more pronounced than their attitudes towards the UK.

Despite all of this initial support, the majority of the departmental secretaries seemed to be in accord about not wanting to risk giving the governments of the Six the impression that the government in Dublin was lukewarm towards the concept of the EEC, in the process 'compromising the prospects of our securing satisfactory conditions for entry to the Common Market within the framework of the Treaty'. In fact, it was Cremin, Whitaker and J.C.Nagle, the Department of Agriculture secretary, who were of this view, while J.C.B.MacCarthy, the Department of Industry & Commerce

secretary, was understandably enough more ambivalent about the whole situation considering the department he ran.¹⁰⁷ It is with this complicated picture in mind that the next section makes a detailed review of the weeks leading up to the Irish government's decision to apply for full EEC membership on 31 July 1961. In truth, the part played by the UK government proved to be singularly influential in the development of Ireland's policies on European integration in this period. Obviously, the Dublin government was finding it particularly difficult to escape from the economic and political realities of its foremost bilateral relationship, a feature inherent in Irish-European relations which cannot fail to have gone unnoticed in Brussels and the other capitals of the Six.

The 'appropriate moment': Anglo-Irish relations and integration

It has been thoroughly illustrated throughout this investigation that the single-most important consideration for Ireland in relation to the EEC was the UK's standpoint on membership. The UK government had assured Dublin that, although it had formed a *prima facie* view of the question, it would not make a final decision regarding membership until it had ascertained the views of the members of the British Commonwealth and, at the 'appropriate moment', had also exchanged opinions with the Irish government. The Irish ambassador in London was told that an unspecified date in July 1961 would probably present a timely opportunity. McCann was subsequently reported to have replied that:

... his Government would welcome this, because they are under pressure from their public opinion and would be sensitive to any charge that events in Europe are moving on without their participating in their development and that they may be presented with a package all sewn up to take or leave.

However, the Irish ambassador also informed the UK government that before joining the EEC Ireland would need indepth bilateral discussions to be held to consider two main problems. He said that these would require:

- deliberations on the possibility of securing a longer transitional period for Ireland to dismantle its tariffs against Europe and the UK;
- an investigation into Ireland's participation in the CAP negotiations.

The 'appropriate moment' to hold these Anglo-Irish consultations was eventually considered by London to be between 18-19 July 1961. Despite the

evident reluctance of the latter to hold such talks, these were still seen by the Irish as proffering the ideal opportunity for full bilateral trade discussions in the framework of European integration.¹⁰⁸

The UK prime minister had replied to Lemass's initial overture of 10 June 1961 for bilateral discussions in a positive and open manner. Indeed, he remarked to the taoiseach that the EEC was a 'subject on which we must keep in close touch with each other'. This contact was scrupulously maintained. The UK government had already been maintaining close links with Ireland through the Irish ambassador, but Macmillan was also said to be encouraged by the suggestion of Lemass to have a series of Anglo-Irish consultations on the issue, preferably from the UK's perspective, during the impending British Commonwealth tour by its ministers. Apparently, Ireland would therefore have significant access to London's thinking.¹⁰⁹ The advice from McCann to his superiors in Dublin was that such a set of meetings were not only 'important', but opportune. Indeed, he reported that:

British thinking is now moving around to the point of view that it will be impossible to get a clear impression as to the likely terms on which Britain can join the Common Market until actual negotiations are entered into.

Thus, high-level Anglo-Irish consultations presented the ideal chance to deal decisively with the broader issue of whether Ireland should stay in or out of these European developments. At the same time, however, diplomatic reports that were being relayed to the Department of External Affairs continued to emphasise that the UK government was definitely heading in the direction of filing an application for full EEC membership.¹¹⁰ Indeed, this was also the case with Irish newspaper reports, which subsequently showed that other European countries were in the same position as Ireland. The Danish prime minister was paraphrased as having said, for instance, that he 'could not find a more satisfactory solution to Denmark's marketing problem than British membership of the Common Market, but there was no possibility of Denmark joining alone if Britain did not'.¹¹¹ Thus, although it can be argued that Lemass was rather fawning in so readily agreeing to Macmillan's suggestion regarding the timing of these bilateral Anglo-Irish meetings, it was not as if Ireland's position in regard to integration was very strong; a reliance upon trade relations with the UK saw to that.¹¹²

The main motivation behind the Irish government seeking consultations with their UK counterparts was, according to a draft agenda prepared for the meetings, to enable them to discover their 'present mind' with respect to fields of specific interest, areas which were also directly related to

European integration. These necessitated up-to-date information on the positions of the EEC and the UK on a wide variety of considerations – the future status within this context of the British Commonwealth, the CAP difficulty, and future role of EFTA.¹¹³ Paramount in Irish government minds was, of course, the wish to protect their own respective economic position. Obviously, self-interest was the leading consideration for London as well, particularly in the light of the fact that Anglo-Irish relations appeared to be 'one of those illogical arrangements which worked so well', even if Ireland was presumably not a crucial factor in the UK's decision-making process.¹¹⁴ Consequently, before it came to the time to make determined decisions, one of Dublin's principal aims in these bilateral consultations was to make sure that in any 'negotiations with the Common Market Britain would have as much regard to our position as to that of her EFTA partners'.¹¹⁵

Understandably, Ireland still wanted to negotiate entry into the EEC on its own account, independently of the UK government's own negotiations with the Six. Nevertheless, it was interesting that, according to Whitaker, if it was felt that the UK was indeed prepared in such negotiations 'to take account of our interests, to the same extent as those of EFTA members', that a decision had already been made within the Irish government that it should be indicated to the UK delegation in the talks that such a stratagem would very obviously be 'welcome'.¹¹⁶ Ireland wanted and needed to have the appearance – at least – of independence of action although, in truth, its position would be severely compromised in the eyes of those who knew the reality of its situation.

At the same time, the Irish government recognised that there were some extremely serious problems confronting the UK regarding the issue of full economic union with the Six. These difficulties were ascertained as:

- the resulting status of the British Commonwealth in the EEC;
- the subsequent position of EFTA within that same context;
- the question of where UK agriculture would stand;
- the requirement that the UK would also observe a common commercial policy towards third countries;
- the sovereignty issue, as related to the subordination of Westminster to European institutions.¹¹⁷

Although, each of these complications are fairly self-explanatory, they need to be dealt with in some detail. It is interesting to note regarding the British Commonwealth, for instance, that as far as London was concerned, the views of Reginald Maudling, the UK Board of Trade president, went straight to the heart of the matter especially when he asked rhetorically:

Would you be enthusiastic to give away something which you had which you valued, in return for something unspecified which you are not yet sure you will receive?¹¹⁸

Of course, it was also noted by the Irish government that its own individual interests might end up running contrary to those of the UK as, for example, with the position of agricultural products within the whole integration process. Thus, the question of Anglo-Irish talks being held was considered to be all the more relevant and timely as a result.¹¹⁹

The belief that these bilateral consultations were of fundamental significance to the Irish government can be gleaned from the taoiseach's presence alone. Indeed, because of this decision, Heath was chosen to head up the UK's delegation; it was thus readily apparent from the outset that these Anglo-Irish talks were going to be of considerable importance. However, this did not stop the negotiations from having their teething problems. It should be noted that through an accident of history, it was the UK Commonwealth Relations Office which usually dealt with Ireland rather than the UK Foreign Office; surely, London's attitudes to Ireland were complicated enough regarding European integration without them being kept within the remit of the Commonwealth Relations Office rather than the Foreign Office. As a result of this state of affairs, there was an odd dispatch from the latter during deliberations about who exactly should be chosen to head up the UK deputation which reads:

Why doesn't the Commonwealth Sec deal with him? We don't want to get mixed up with S.Ireland do we?

In point of fact, there was a instant reply to these queries to the effect that the Commonwealth Relations Office secretary was not going to be in the country at the time and clearly therefore would not then be able to attend the meetings. Additionally, the Foreign Office was told that these bilateral discussions would 'deal only with the Common Market business not anything else!'¹²⁰ Evidently, neither UK government department was in a particular rush to take on the responsibility of dealing with the Irish delegation.

As a consequence, Heath was specifically chosen to meet the taoiseach, partly because it was felt that no other UK government minister would be able to deal effectively with him, but also, it should be noted, because it had already been decided by the UK government that any decision regarding the EEC would 'not be affected by the discussions with the Irish'.¹²¹ Of course, throughout this time, London did not want to give the impression that, because of the Commonwealth tour by its ministers, it would by that stage

have already reached a final decision before talking to the Irish. Macmillan had other things to consider:

- a House of Commons question had been tabled on the issue;
- there was EFTA to think of as well and whether the other members of the Seven 'might well feel that they had a right to know as soon as the Irish what we were going to do'.

In any case, the point for the UK government of the bilateral Anglo-Irish discussions was 'to take them [the Irish deputation] over the ground rather than to let them know what we intend to do'.¹²² Evidently, London did not recognise Ireland as an important consideration in the determination of its policy towards the EEC, but clearly realised that Dublin could never be allowed to know that this was its private position.

As was generally known, both at home and abroad, it was basically agriculture which was at the heart of the EEC's appeal to Ireland, as industrial considerations posed a much greater problem. Upon his departure for the Anglo-Irish talks to be held in London between 18-19 July 1961, the taoiseach declared that the political implications of the Treaty of Rome did not necessitate partnership in a military alliance. Noticeably, right from the beginning of the membership negotiations process, it was economics, rather than any other consideration, which mattered most for Ireland in the context of European integration. During his airport press conference, in remarks that were expressly meant for domestic consumption, Lemass said that he personally felt that the linkage at European level between economics and politics would eventually result in the unification of Ireland. However, despite paying homage to this ritualistic rhetoric, at least he appreciated that any notions such as these were all in the long-term, because even negotiations for entry into the EEC would take a year to complete at the earliest. Thus, the taoiseach concentrated on the vitally important task at hand, even if it was crucial that the domestic audience's appetite for reassurance remain satisfied.¹²³

The Anglo-Irish talks themselves saw considerable progress being made and were in fact based on the assumption that both countries would manage to enter the EEC. Therefore, the bilateral discussions were focused on two central integration issues, which were:

- the arrangements that needed to be made for Anglo-Irish trade in the transitional period before both countries could join the EEC;
- ascertaining what the UK government eventually hoped to secure from the Six regarding agriculture.

During the meetings held on 18 July 1961, the Irish delegation insisted that it would negotiate with the EEC independently from the UK, but made it clear that it would want to attain entry simultaneously.¹²⁴ Replying to a comment during a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) interview conducted between the two sets of meetings, that of all the UK's trading partners Ireland seemed to be the least concerned about the prospects of UK membership in the EEC, Lemass baldly stated that:

The bulk of our exports go to the British market, and a very high proportion of imports are consigned from Britain. It's therefore obvious that the facts of that trade situations make it necessary for us to base our decision upon the decision of Great Britain. If Britain goes into the Common Market we could not contemplate a situation in which the common external tariff of the European Community would be interposed between ourselves and Great Britain. Therefore we have to apply for membership also, and have in fact announced our decision to do so.¹²⁵

Ireland's actual situation regarding membership was not, however, as simple as that; it would not just be determined by what happened to the UK.

It was unquestionably recognised from the outset that there would be both advantages and disadvantages to entry, sometimes with these pros and cons intertwined. For instance, industry would need time to adapt to this change in circumstances but, at the same time, the two countries sharing the island of Ireland would experience similar economic phenomena concurrently and thus would come closer together as a result, economically and otherwise. Dublin was prepared to accept all of the obligations implicit in the Treaty of Rome, economic and political, with the taoiseach even going so far as to say that, for Ireland, the supranational elements of membership were not considered to be a barrier to its entry.¹²⁶ In spite of this position, Ireland would essentially be able to do very little about events which were outside of its control. Similarly, however, it would be found that it also failed to deal properly with many of the events that it could have influenced.

The Anglo-Irish meetings of 18-19 July 1961 only confirmed the Irish government's innate feeling that, although the EEC was very appealing on the agricultural question, it posed quite obvious problems regarding industry. The *Irish Press* reported that the talks with the UK government had 'not displeased or disappointed' Lemass. At least, he now had a better appreciation of where the UK actually stood. Indeed, the taoiseach publicly declared that he expected Ireland to receive modifications or at the very least a postponement in implementing the Treaty of Rome. Furthermore, he expected that there would

not be problems regarding Anglo-Irish trade arrangements during the membership negotiations process.¹²⁷ At the same time, Lemass continued to emphasise the pragmatism of Ireland's relationship with the UK in the context of the EEC. He stated that:

... [Ireland] could not permit a situation to develop in which the right of free entry now enjoyed in respect of our exports in our principal market, would be replaced by tariffs against them. There would be no sense in giving ourselves a hard kick in the pants just to show that we could do it, or to prove that nobody would be interested in stopping us from trying.¹²⁸

Every consideration for Ireland in relation to European integration was ultimately dependent upon the UK government's final decision on EEC membership and the subsequent timing of any future application that it would tender. Everything else was secondary.

Critically, however, the two sides attending these consultations were either oblivious or failed to appreciate fully the significance of a statement that was made by the leaders of the Six during the course of these talks. The substance of the Bonn Declaration delivered on 18 July 1961 – which Patrick Keatinge neatly analyses as having 'clearly envisaged a form of eventual political union of Europe' in *A singular stance* – impacted severely upon Ireland's position relative to EEC membership.¹²⁹ This was primarily because the preamble to the Bonn Declaration expressly stated that there was a desire within the Six:

... to strengthen the political, economic, social and cultural ties which exist between their peoples, especially in the framework of the European Communities, and to advance towards the union of Europe.¹³⁰

Ireland would find it difficult in such circumstances to convince the members of the EEC that it in fact accepted unequivocally and unreservedly the political aspirations outlined in the Treaties of Rome and, indeed, in the Bonn Declaration despite warnings on the matter in the Seanad, amongst other fora.¹³¹ Regardless of this consideration, the government had another more immediate concern to face before all the implications of this development had been fully assimilated. Thus, Irish government members were finally starting to ask the most pertinent question of all: where exactly did Ireland actually fit in the UK's EEC membership equation and what implications would that position have *vis-à-vis* Ireland's prospective application?

Pulling the rug out or paranoia?

An ever-present Irish government worry in the days that followed the Anglo-Irish meetings of 18-19 July 1961 was centred on the uncertainty over whether something substantial would happen concerning London's negotiations with the EEC over which it had neither control nor prior notice. Indeed, throughout this time, Dublin continuously emphasised to the UK that it needed to be kept informed about any analogous move in its European integration policy or even changes in its commercial arrangements which would have any direct effect upon the Anglo-Irish trading position. Moreover, it is possible to contend that, in basic terms, what Dublin was really worried about were London's true feelings emerging regarding the prospect of an Irish application being tabled.¹³² The UK government knew that it could not object to such an initiative *per se*, but there was very definitely a move afoot in the Foreign Office to discourage Ireland from doing so, because of what were vaguely termed as potentially 'serious political difficulties'.¹³³ The truth of the matter was that London really wanted the inherent advantages in full EEC membership all for itself, while simultaneously retaining the privileges in existing Anglo-Irish trading arrangements; it certainly did not want it somehow to make the likelihood of that happening more distant or unnecessarily complex.¹³⁴

The UK ambassador to Ireland, Ian MacLennan, called on the Department of External Affairs secretary, Con Cremin, to show him an important UK Foreign Office minute that had previously been shown to the Irish ambassador in London on 19 July 1961. In this note, a senior West German foreign ministry official – heretofore considered to be sympathetic to the position of the Dublin government – was paraphrased as having said that he 'thought it very unlikely that the Six would be prepared to accept the Irish Republic as a full member'.¹³⁵ At the same time, the UK ambassador was under strict orders to go on the 'attack' in an active effort to dissuade the Irish from applying to join. Privately, the Foreign Office did not feel particularly happy to leave Ireland to 'run head on into trouble on this' if this was in fact the line that was going to be taken by the Six. Indeed, it was felt that: 'The effect on the Irish themselves might be unfortunate; even worse might be the strengthening of the fears held by some members of the Commonwealth ... that the E.E.C. is a kind of economic arm of NATO'.¹³⁶ The Foreign Office minute shown to Cremin expressed the opinion that West Germany was actually airing the view that:

... while NATO members of EFTA might become members of the Community, he doubted whether we could do so by reason of the political factors and that this view was strengthened by the fact that we had intimated that we could not comply fully with some of the provisions of the Rome

Treaty within the time appointed.

Therefore, this was the first really substantial indication that there were political, as well as economic, grounds for Ireland to worry regarding full membership. In reply, the senior Irish official pointed out to MacLennan that, when the German foreign minister, von Brentano, was in Dublin, he had made categoric statements to the effect that NATO membership was not in any way some sort of precondition for membership of the EEC, however, a view which had been echoed subsequently by Spaak, the Belgian foreign minister.¹³⁷

Another UK Foreign Office minute gave further information, reputedly from the same senior West German foreign ministry official, which said though that while his superior's remarks were formally correct, that it was 'doubtful whether they reflect the realities of the situation entirely accurately'. Of course, what this whole anecdote boiled down to was an informal UK attempt to block full Irish membership by making the suggestion that Ireland's application should be worded so as to leave all options regarding a formal relationship with the EEC open, thus including full or associate membership. This second Foreign Office minute actually remarked that the UK had already warned the Irish that full membership of the EEC should not be taken for granted and that the 'appropriate relationship for them was association'. This was not a feeling which dulled over time. Indeed, not too long afterwards, it was noted in one publication that: 'Associate membership would be the best solution ... for Eire'. The West German official, meanwhile, had actually advised that:

... the Irish might be wise not to commit themselves too far to any particular form of relationship. If they were thinking in terms of a communication to the Six they might leave the question open and apply for membership or association, or use some vague phrase like 'a close relationship'.¹³⁸

London was being underhand in its communications with the Irish who, not surprisingly in turn, were entirely suspicious of the former's real motives.

At their meeting, Cremin informed the UK ambassador in Dublin that Ireland had already announced that it would be seeking full membership of the EEC if the UK did so as well. Indeed, he added that the declaration by the Six desiring 'the accession to the European Communities of other European States which are ready to assume in all fields the same responsibilities and the same obligations' was totally acceptable to the Irish government and therefore was not necessarily interpreted as a stumbling-block at all.¹³⁹ MacLennan thus reported that the Department of External Affairs secretary 'did not seem particularly disturbed by its implication of difficulties arising over forms of

association' with the EEC. In fact, the UK ambassador attributed this to being the reality of a situation in which the Irish had already committed themselves to applying for full membership of the EEC in the event of the UK doing so: 'It may be that the Government here have been unwisely sticking their necks out, but I do not see that there is much that they can do about it now and they seem content to await developments'.¹⁴⁰ In truth, what Dublin was actually more worried about were the real motives of the UK, not the views of the Six or the EEC.

The presentation of these two UK Foreign Office minutes was obviously viewed in Dublin as a 'somewhat unusual step' and was being interpreted in one of two ways. On the one hand, it appeared as if the UK was being very frank with Ireland, even to the extent of passing on the doubts – on grounds other than economic ones – of at least one member of the Six over its proposed candidature; on the other, London evidently might have a more self-interested motive in mind and was thus engaging in efforts to discourage Ireland from seeking membership. If it was thought that the latter tactic indeed reflected the real UK position, the Irish government could clearly no longer accept London's views without qualification, either on EEC membership or on other aspects of the Treaties of Rome. Certainly, Cremin was able to put two principal political reasons forward as to why the UK government might not want Ireland to join as a full member of the EEC. These arguments he listed as follows:

- Ireland would not only continue to enjoy advantageous access to its UK markets, but it would now also have access to the EEC, two privileges which would probably be denied in fact to the members of the British Commonwealth;
- the Stormont government in Northern Ireland was against Ireland's membership, essentially because the EEC was all about breaking down economic barriers and, thus, membership would further diminish the significance of the border dividing the island into two jurisdictions.

Cremin advised the government that Ireland needed to clarify the NATO position in relation to the EEC, regardless of the fact that he did not personally think that the UK government was deliberately using these unofficial West German foreign ministry views to discourage the Irish from applying for membership. Clarification of the views of the Six and indeed of the UK's true position had become of the utmost importance, however, before he felt that Ireland could proceed in its quest without further vacillating.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, it

has to be conceded that a decision of the magnitude and resoluteness of Ireland's official application for full membership of the EEC on 31 July 1961 was not the most subtle of strategies that might have been pursued in order to achieve this clarification. Nonetheless, this was the actual strategy that ultimately was chosen by the Dublin government.

In the meantime, there were conflicting reports emanating from Brussels in the lead-up to the application which, while noting Ireland's 'positive attitude' towards the EEC – partially interpreted as a vindication of the route taken by the Six towards integration – were literally suggesting that any substantive membership overtures which were emanating from Ireland were actually 'premature'.¹⁴² Thus, receipt of the application did not alleviate the confusion that was being felt in Brussels. Indeed, it only served to exacerbate it. For better or worse, Ireland had taken a position. It is by addressing the reactions of the Six and the EEC to the government's decisive move of 31 July 1961 that this investigation next proceeds.

Reactions to the Irish application for full membership

As with the Irish government *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961, arrangements were made for the application for full EEC membership to be made available to all the members of the Six, as well as to the governments of the UK and the US, while being formally directed towards the EEC. Of the various immediate reactions given to this application, the general feeling was either one of ambiguity – regarding the implications and real meaning of this decision by the Irish government to apply – or surprise – as the view existed that Ireland's move in requesting membership negotiations had been untimely because its entry was so dependent in real terms anyway upon consequent UK government negotiations.

In relation to Ireland's application, any positive feelings on it emanating from those actors most intimately involved were limited to the fact that the Irish government had at least given away as little information as possible about its economic situation and its views upon European integration through the wording of its communication. Indeed, the letter's brevity and terseness was held to be one of its more positive aspects. It might be worth remarking that a more detailed enunciation on its position would probably have prejudiced, rather than aided, Ireland's application to the EEC for membership negotiations to open. In addition, however, the UK chef de mission in Brussels, A.H.Tandy, in analysing this formal application for his superiors, noted that Ireland was applying for full EEC membership and not

for association. In fact, a subsequent meeting with his Irish counterpart elucidated the heretofore unexpected response that Ireland's application had become quite literally a 'brief request for negotiations expressing adherence to the general objectives of the treaty and making no mention of special problems'.¹⁴³ It has to be said that Dublin appeared to have learned a valuable lesson from the cool reception accorded to its earlier *aide-mémoire*.

Upon reading the official Irish application for membership negotiations to begin, one senior EEC civil servant in Brussels responded by declaring: 'I see that the Government of Ireland understand perfectly the Treaty of Rome'. The fact that the said letter contained no expressions about conditions for membership, as the *aide-mémoire* had previously done, did not mean that the Irish government would not have liked to have made its economic worries and political position on European integration clear at this point in time. However, as the Irish ambassador in The Hague, B. Gallagher, pointed out regarding this reaction, he did not think that it was 'opportune ... to dampen in any way' what he felt to be 'the excellent effect created by the form of application made by the Taoiseach'. In truth, Gallagher did not find himself in a comfortable position – when presenting the Irish application during the series of meetings that he held with a myriad of responsible EEC officials and representatives of the various governments that were present in Brussels – to draw attention simultaneously to the problems that Ireland would possibly have to face in regard to its European integration. His final word was that these difficulties would have to be left to the membership negotiations themselves or, at least, to more formal meetings with EEC officials.¹⁴⁴

It is interesting to note that Spaak was more circumspect in his response to Dublin's initiative, seeing Ireland's application as being totally contingent upon the success of a similar UK government move. Indeed, he contented himself to speak of the difficulties involved in arranging the actual form of membership negotiations, a ploy which was obviously meant to stall Irish aspirations of instantly entering the EEC. With regard to the UK's role, Gallagher informed the Belgian foreign minister that, although Ireland's desire to adhere to the EEC was independent of any consideration outside of the Six, the country's ability to accede was also obviously affected by the realities of its economic relations. In addition, Ireland was stated to have no fundamental political reservations on European integration. Overall, however, the Irish ambassador thought that Spaak was 'restrained' in his general reaction.¹⁴⁵ In point of fact, he was not in the least bit enthusiastic about the prospect of this application for full membership being deliberated. This position was reflected throughout the EEC Commission as informal talks regarding adhesion negotiations progressed; Ireland's application at this time was proving to be

rather less than constructive in its opinion.¹⁴⁶

There were, of course, varying reactions from the member states, even if reports from the Netherlands appear to have been more helpful than was the norm. Indeed, those accounts appear to have been fairly positive initially, with the Irish chargé d'affaires in The Hague, Florence O'Riordan, reporting that the Dutch government was actually pleased with Ireland's initiative. In point of fact, the Dutch foreign minister, Joseph Luns, complemented the Irish government on its 'excellent letter' by saying that their 'manner of doing it is excellent ... you have been very quick, indeed, very quick'. Somewhat surprisingly, he also reportedly felt that the decision of the EEC Council on the advisability of opening negotiations would only be a 'formality' in Ireland's case.¹⁴⁷ The reality was very different indeed; any initial Dutch enthusiasm for the Irish decision to apply for full membership soon waned.

The Irish chargé d'affaires was subsequently summoned for a *tête-à-tête* at the Dutch foreign ministry to discuss some aspects of the Irish application which the Dutch government said 'intrigued' them. In delivering his report on this encounter, the Irish diplomat concerned actually had to plead for more instructions from the Department of External Affairs because his lack of knowledge on Irish government motives for applying had been so exposed at this meeting.¹⁴⁸ It has to be said that this particular report was itself damning, revealing the lack of preparation and coordination in government circles. It seems absurd that a diplomat could be embarrassed in this way. O'Riordan summarised one Dutch foreign ministry official who frankly stated the Dutch government's position on Ireland by recounting that:

... at the discussions in Brussels ... and elsewhere, following our application for membership of the E.E.C. 'some countries' had asked whether it was worth having Ireland ... in view of the fact that she was an underdeveloped country with apparently many difficulties, who would be looking for assistance, would be asking for so many concessions, all of which would make it impossible to accept her without breaches of the Treaty which could not be considered.

Quite obviously, what the Dutch government was in fact looking for was more information from Ireland about the precise meaning of the earlier *aide-mémoire*, precisely what were the concessions that the Irish envisaged as being necessary at the accession negotiations. As a result, the Irish were advised to apply pressure on both the Six and the UK for support of its candidature, without which Ireland's weak position would be exposed. Indeed, they were forcefully cautioned to downplay any talk of economic underdevelopment and were told that the time for further elaboration regarding entry issues would

best be left to the membership negotiations themselves. O'Riordan felt that, although the Dutch government official with whom he had conversed was 'embarrassed by the fact that these difficulties were being raised now in our case (and not in that of the British) ... he was certainly giving the impression that the Dutch were more anxious to help than other Governments who should be pressurised'.¹⁴⁹ Clearly, the Dutch attitude to Ireland's application was as yet 'less explicitly formulated' than its opinions on the UK's position. It was concluded by the Dutch that the prospect of Irish membership should be met officially with a positive response, that this bid should be 'applauded'. This opinion was expressed despite the fact that there were various good reasons why the Netherlands should have insisted that it would be more appropriate for Ireland to seek an association agreement rather than full membership, reasons such as 'neutrality or relative economic backwardness'.¹⁵⁰

Nevertheless, the central advice from the Dutch, which appeared to be that Ireland should bide its time, was expressly ignored in Dublin. Throughout this period, in fact, the Irish government was not just waiting to receive the various reactions from the Six or the EEC, but it was actively engaged in taking new and at times unsuitable initiatives of its own, notably in relation to the agriculture question and particularly with regard to the possibility of a CAP being formed by the EEC. However, before considering such a specific aspect in this analysis of the different reactions to Ireland's first EEC application, it is more relevant at this stage to investigate the official EEC responses to the Irish initiative. It appeared as if Ireland wanted to run before it was up and walking.

The UK government, which had applied for membership of the EEC ten days after the Irish government had done so, was generally expected to receive an intermediate reply from the EEC Council before Dublin did. It is interesting to note, therefore, the petty nature of the latter's thinking. Even within the Department of External Affairs it was advised that:

... there would be no point in our trying to get a reply before the British, even though *we applied first*; the E.E.C. reaction would probably be that our application was contingent on the British one, and therefore that it should take second place.¹⁵¹

The fact that such an gesture was even contemplated exposes the complete lack of acumen or insight being displayed on the Irish side. There was something that the Irish government appeared to be forgetting. Richard Vaughan has written in his *Twentieth-century Europe* that:

Although the Irish had been careful to apply separately from and in advance

of Britain, membership of the EEC was economically unthinkable for them without British Membership ... the EEC could not undertake to negotiate with several different countries at once. Inevitably, then, the decision was to negotiate first and foremost with Britain.¹⁵²

Ireland was not expecting to receive a definitive reply concerning the opening of membership negotiations until September 1961, although Gallagher was still able to inform his superiors that the EEC Council president, Ludwig Erhard, was going to answer the Irish government's request forthwith, even if it was only an intermediate reaction.¹⁵³

Before responding officially, however, the Irish government was informally sounded out by the EEC as to whether the *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961 was to be regarded as part of its official application. Of course, panic ensued in Dublin. A UK Foreign Office report from this time remarked that Ireland's application was actually causing extreme embarrassment in Brussels and smugly added the view that this was 'no more than we expected'.¹⁵⁴ The Irish diplomatic representative was ordered to inform the EEC that the government *aide-mémoire* was not to be considered part of Ireland's official application for full membership and tried to explain that it had only been intended as an indication of its views regarding the agenda and content of subsequent negotiations. The damage had been done though. So worried was the Irish government about the implications of this earlier submission that Gallagher was told to make 'every effort' to avoid reference being made to the *aide-mémoire* in Erhard's formal reply to Ireland's request for membership negotiations. Lemass clearly did not want the *aide-mémoire* to become either public knowledge or even more widely known than it already was in official EEC circles, presumably because it now only compromised Ireland's negotiating position.¹⁵⁵ However, it was becoming increasingly apparent that it was already too late to retract the statement. Ireland's *aide-mémoire* had developed into a *bête-noire*.

On 14 August 1961, Erhard's official reply to the taoiseach's request for membership negotiations to open began by expressing general satisfaction with Ireland's stated desire to be associated with the future development of the EEC and, furthermore, he remarked that the EEC Council was pleased that the Irish government shared the ideals which had originally motivated the Six in its formation. To this end, he added that Ireland's application would be processed through the EEC Council. Erhard was also moved to ask for more information, however, specifically in relation to a previous communication from the Irish government, the curious *aide-mémoire*. Indeed, it should be pointed out that, as a result, even this interim reply from the EEC differed significantly from those which had been accorded to Denmark and to the UK,

both in its content and form.¹⁵⁶ It was a taste of things to come.

Thus, to his obvious embarrassment, the taoiseach had to respond on 18 August 1961 with a statement to the effect that the Irish government only wanted its formal application of 31 July 1961 – as well as this subsequent further elaboration – to be considered by the EEC Council. The *aide-mémoire* of 5 July 1961 was deemed to be no longer valid. This new Irish government position came about, Lemass declared to Erhard, 'after full consideration'. It was now felt that any problems and obligations arising out of EEC membership would best be resolved by Ireland going through with the negotiations procedure that was outlined in the Treaty of Rome (Article 237). Dublin continued to insist, all the same, that they wanted these discussions to run concurrently with, although independently of, the UK's own negotiations for entry. In the process, of course, Ireland only created another unnecessary precondition to talks before they had even begun, further alienating goodwill towards their application.¹⁵⁷ Unknown to the Irish government, it was strongly felt within the Foreign Office that the task facing the UK was whether it 'should now consider seriously how much importance we attach to Irish membership of the Community: and if we do think it important, what – if anything – we can do to help Ireland to get in as a full member'. As a consequence, both of previous positions taken and events outside of its control, Ireland was in serious danger on two counts of being left out in the cold regarding European integration, in relation to how the EEC Council acted towards its prospective candidature and how the London government proceeded in either promoting or hindering that status.¹⁵⁸

At the same time as this procedural mechanism was operating, the Irish government was giving different explanations to different audiences regarding the probity of its move, mainly in an effort to justify its membership application. For instance, the taoiseach was keen to tell the nationalist audience in Northern Ireland that the political implications of the border dividing the two countries would in fact 'diminish very considerably' once Ireland and the UK were operating in harmony within some form of European FTA. Indeed, he stated that he personally believed that the problems of economic development were rather similar north and south of the border, that European integration would benefit the island as a whole.¹⁵⁹ Such an outlook could only lead to a serious question being put forward: what was Ireland hoping to receive exactly from EEC membership? After all, as Bill McSweeney has written in his study 'Out of the ghetto: Irish foreign policy since the fifties', despite what the Irish federalists may have felt regarding European integration, no country was actually trying to join the Six 'for the good of mankind or [for] any other predominantly altruistic reason'.¹⁶⁰ Therefore, it could reasonably be

asked: why should the Irish government have had different motivations? Ireland was clearly attempting to adhere because of economic considerations. However, the fact that Dublin was at the same time ignoring the political consequences of membership was not being lost on the EEC; it still appears to have been blissfully unaware of the trouble into which it was at that point proceeding headlong.

Of course, the main beneficiary of EEC membership in Ireland's case, especially in the short-term, was seen to be agriculture, mainly because of the potential it offered if the negotiations for a CAP proved to be successful. In this regard, the Anglo-Irish talks that were held in the middle of July 1961 had somehow raised Irish government hopes about being able to influence the whole procedure. The UK Lord Privy Seal had already declared that he did not foresee any difficulty about securing observer status at the CAP talks; indeed, he stated that London expected this facility to be offered.¹⁶¹ As a direct consequence, J.C.Nagle, the Department of Agriculture secretary, actually suggested that Ireland should enquire informally of the EEC whether or not this facility would be granted. Indeed, Nagle also noted that, because his department was in fact having some difficulty in following the rapid and rather complex evolution of the EEC's agriculture proposals, Ireland needed to have more regular contacts with European agriculture officials.¹⁶² This move was subsequently approved and an appropriate official was accredited to the EEC.¹⁶³ The government also decided that, if the UK and Denmark obtained observer status at the CAP negotiations, they too should insist on receiving similar treatment. Indeed, an approach on this matter to Sicco Mansholt, the EEC agriculture commissioner, was approved by the cabinet as well, as was a explicit appeal to the Six for equal treatment.¹⁶⁴

In spite of perceptible progress being made, the immediate sense that was emanating from Brussels on these various ideas was not a positive one; the suggestion of observers at the CAP, for example, was envisaged as a non-starter from the outset.¹⁶⁵ Indeed, it has to be said that the Irish government's basic lack of sensitivity regarding the circumstances and context of European integration – that, while Ireland was earnestly looking towards something as specific as observer status at the CAP, the EEC was questioning the whole rectitude of its application for full membership at all – leads this analysis to question the standard of policy procedures that Ireland was following in its attempted economic integration. Dublin was about to find out much more about the realities of the European economic situation.

Ireland: left out in the cold

In truth, the country was to come in for quite a shock. There were two fundamental sets of difficulties confronting the Irish government in the wake of the series of delays that began to affect its application for membership of the EEC. The Council of Europe, a relatively dispassionate viewer of the process, summed up the intricacies of the situation facing Ireland, stating that they could be divided into two distinct categories:

- the complexity of the country's economic difficulties;
- the equally demanding question posed by political problems.

In fact, it was in relation to economic factors that the main difficulties arose, although the government would ignore the political issues involved in European integration at its peril. Of course, as has been repeatedly stated, Ireland was economically dependent upon the UK and the quasi-British Commonwealth preference arrangements which were still then in force, a relationship which had been reinforced by the various Anglo-Irish trade agreements dating from 1938, 1948, and 1960. However, the Council of Europe report felt that Ireland's tariffs were at such a high level that it was quite probable that it would not only experience grave difficulties in adopting the common EEC external tariff that was required by full EEC membership, but that it would also encounter serious problems in deconstructing the customs barriers that it had raised against the import of goods from its possible future partners. The adoption of the common external tariff and the deconstruction of internal trade barriers were part of a foreign economic policy envisaged by the Six as being commonly enforceable within an accepted and restricted timeframe.¹⁶⁶

According to this Council of Europe publication from 1961, the political problems that were facing Ireland in relation to its full adhesion to the EEC, albeit not as important as the economic considerations, were nevertheless rather significant in terms of European integration. These political difficulties included the fact that Ireland observed a policy of neutrality, which the government said it wanted to maintain as long as partition remained in place, an obvious contravention in itself of the political desires inherent in European integration. In addition, there was also the problem that Ireland shared many institutional forms and traditions with the UK, many of which differed considerably when compared to those which were operating on the European continent, the sum of these views not being particularly helpful to the Irish cause.¹⁶⁷ Indeed, the Six and the institutions of the EEC both remained totally unconvinced about Ireland's economic and political propensity for full

membership and did not hesitate in enunciating their considerable reservations.

Of course, many of the doubts regarding Ireland's suitability for full EEC membership dated back to the demands that it had made for economic concessions to be allowed for the peripherals during the OEEC-sponsored FTA negotiations. However, as has been pointed out, there were also serious political reservations too. The fact that Ireland was not a member of a security alliance was the most obvious explanation being put forward to justify this reserve and was partly the reason why the government found that its EEC application soon stalled. Indeed, the *aide-mémoire* issued on 5 July 1961, which had concentrated upon elucidating various envisaged economic difficulties that accession would doubtlessly bring, did not sit well with the Bonn Declaration of the Six that followed a fortnight later, an announcement which itself was concerned with investigating how European foreign policy cooperation could be further developed. Ireland was thus pointedly excluded from the positive interim replies that were issued to the other prospective applicants by the EEC Council.

Indeed, EEC membership negotiations actually opened with the UK government on 8 November 1961 and with the Danish government on 30 November 1961, even though the UK and Denmark had both applied to join the EEC after the Irish government had done so. It should also be noted that the Norwegian government, which only applied to join the EEC on 30 April 1962, was also able to open its EEC negotiations on 12 November 1962, leading to D.J.Maher's biblical reference to the procedure followed in Brussels as being 'decidedly a case of the first being last'.¹⁶⁸ Undoubtedly, the question that the Six were in fact asking themselves was whether Ireland would actually be ready or not to follow through with the ideals envisaged, though not manifestly stated, by the Treaty of Rome. The Irish government, however, concluded that the problem with the membership negotiations not opening was more to do with the general perception of Ireland rather than with the reality of the situation. Thus, it began to tackle those perceived problems one by one.

As a result, two senior Irish civil servants, T.K.Whitaker, the Department of Finance secretary, and Con Cremin, the Department of External Affairs secretary, were sent to the capitals of the Six in September 1961. This endeavour was primarily attempted in an effort to explain Ireland's own peculiar economic and political position within the wider context of European integration. Once there, these officials were typically confronted with the argument that Ireland would not in fact be a suitable candidate for full EEC membership, substantially because of economic, rather than political, misgivings on behalf of the Six. Indeed, there was a strong body of opinion within the Six and the EEC which viewed associate, rather than full,

membership as the most 'appropriate link' for the Irish.¹⁶⁹ The UK Lord Privy Seal did of course state on 10 October 1961 that Ireland was also a consideration for the UK in its own application for membership. In his statement, Heath said:

There is one other European country I should like to mention, namely the Irish Republic. We have special trading arrangements with the Irish, deriving from the days when they were part of the United Kingdom. I do not think it necessary to describe these in detail. I will limit myself to saying that we in the United Kingdom were pleased to see that the Republic had applied for membership of the Community. If their application succeeds – as we hope it will – our trading arrangements with them will be subsumed in the wider arrangements of the enlarged Community, and no special problems need arise.

Heath had won the UK cabinet over to his point of view regarding Europe and had managed to carry Irish interests along with him as well.¹⁷⁰

The EEC Council met to discuss the issue at the end of that month but, unlike the UK and Danish cases, decided to postpone an examination of the Irish government's application until a later date. In actual fact, the EEC Council eventually only examined Ireland's request on 24 October 1961 and, once again, decided that still further information was needed from Dublin before they could proceed. Erhard informed the taoiseach that the EEC Council had unanimously decided to suggest that the Irish should present their case for membership to the Six in Brussels at the beginning of January 1962. Ireland would therefore be accorded the opportunity to discuss its own particular problems and, at the same time, begin to address the question of how its European integration process should proceed. Within this proposal, there was the intrinsic promise that, once the wider implications of this proposed meeting between the Six and the Irish government had been fully examined, membership negotiations proper would begin in earnest for Ireland's entry into the EEC.¹⁷¹ Dublin was not yet placated.

The Irish government, which had also received electoral reconfirmation of its mandate in October 1961, immediately set about clarifying its integration position even further still. Indeed, running through his speeches on the subject of Ireland's aspirant status, the taoiseach constantly reiterated that the EEC was a 'development in which we want to participate', both economically and politically. On the economic side of the equation, he summarised the Irish position by stating that once 'granted reasonable temporary arrangements in the industrial field, we can face up to the obligations of the Treaty'. Obviously, agriculture within the EEC presented a

much greater opportunity for the country than did industrial considerations and, indeed, did not pose anything like the kind of problems that industry did. Meanwhile, on the question of the political implications inherent in European integration, the fact which was constantly reiterated was that Ireland was neutral in practice, although not constitutionally. It was clearly seen by Lemass as a highly significant, if not vitally important, complication. As a direct result, therefore, the demystification and devaluation of neutrality as an absolute and accepted government policy option quickly gathered pace.¹⁷² In fact, by this process, it can be said that the taoiseach was quite prepared to sacrifice the 'political' for the 'economic', even confirming upon re-election to office that:

... there is the consideration that it will, in my view, be necessary at some stage, arising out of our relations with the European Economic Community, to set up a new Ministry to deal with European Community affairs and with foreign trade generally.¹⁷³

It was becoming more readily apparent in government circles that the positive economic aspects that European integration held for the country were quite easily prevailing over all other – thereby including political – considerations. Clearly, however, they did not exercise control over the situation prevailing in Europe.

Intermediate conclusions

Writing to Friedrich Engels on 2 November 1867, Karl Marx equanimously declared that:

Formerly I considered the separation of Ireland from England impossible ... I now consider it inevitable, although after the separation may come federation.

Essentially, what Marx foretold actually came true.¹⁷⁴ In the first place, Ireland did indeed become an independent and integrated nation, considerations such as the partitioning of the island aside; and, secondly, Lemass, while espousing and initiating the country's European integration, in the meantime also forged a situation whereby Ireland was treated as part of the UK for trading purposes. In order to become more 'deeply Irish', it would have to utilise its links with the UK more positively and concurrently become more European. Consequently, the reasoning behind and real value of the constant flow of anti-partition propaganda that was emanating – even if it was to a lesser degree –

from Dublin throughout this period has to be questioned. It is true that economics were coming out ahead of political considerations in the determination of foreign policy. Thus, a central issue has to be more fully explored: what was the taoiseach's real agenda in saying that European integration would bring about an end to partition? Indeed, another question might be raised: what about the role of Irish neutrality in the particular context of partition, never mind its wider implications in an EEC which only had members of NATO and no other neutrals? The answers to these reveal that economics was gradually overtaking politics.

The reality of the situation was that, to all extents and purposes, Ireland became part of an economic federation, initially through the Anglo-Irish FTA agreement – a subject that is investigated in the penultimate chapter entitled *The 1965 Anglo-Irish FTA agreement* – and subsequently through to its final accession to the EEC in 1973. However, this does not answer the immediate question about what the Irish government was prepared to sacrifice in a decisive effort to further its chances of fully taking part in the European integration process. Perhaps some intermediate conclusions on this issue are appropriate here, before moving on to a much more extensive elucidation of these issues, dealt with in the next chapter centred on *De Gaulle's refusal of the UK, 14 January 1963*. It comes as no great surprise that the role played by the UK remained absolutely integral throughout.

Of course, the implications of Ireland's application for EEC membership and, indeed, the various reactions to it were diverse. Economically, it was felt that Ireland might only end up impeding the process of European integration because its needs were so vast. This did not apply so much in relation to agriculture because, after all, this economic sector was also in need of special care and attention for each of the Six; the Irish government's main worry was that a CAP would be developed without its input. Industrially, other than fears of dumping and increased compatibility difficulties, Ireland clearly did not have that much to offer and would suffer initially from the removal of industrial tariffs. Dublin's position on other issues such as, for instance, the EEC's external tariff policy and transport policy, what it thought of European institutions, as well as UK membership, would also need to be defined. However, Ireland had political problems with which to contend, even if the government quickly went about allaying the fears of the Six with regard to foreign policy cooperation. For example, although partition might have been a little more exacting to explain, Dublin made sure that neutrality consequently became, by definition, 'negotiable'. Indeed, it was quickly guaranteed that this subject would not be allowed to encroach on a concerted campaign for participation in the process of integration. In fact, it was ignored domestically

or just glossed over when it suited the government. Neutrality was viewed by Lemass as a policy of expedience and was never seen as something 'traditional'.

Indeed, in the spring of 1960, the government had even seriously examined a proposal for the establishment of a factory to produce 200,000 hand grenades – detonators and die-cast metal casings – for sale to Venezuela. The Department of Justice informed the government that it could do so with a 'clear conscience' – Washington and London having intimated that they were not opposed to this economic initiative – but realised that it could 'not divorce itself from the responsibility for the end-use of the weapons sold'.¹⁷⁵ The Department of External Affairs was worried about them falling into the wrong hands though; Cuba and Algeria were mentioned specifically.¹⁷⁶ It is not clear if the arms were sent, they probably were not, but that is not the point. In time, the focus of foreign affairs would change from a political to an economic outlook, but Lemass was not ready just yet. Dublin's approach to the issue of neutrality was always a cautious one, chiefly because of the Irish people's inherent fealty to the concept; they had not reached a stage where they were ready to sanction the manufacture of grenades for the Venezuelan government. Instead, in the course of a decade, successive governments embarked on a policy that was specifically designed to erode, quite gradually, the country's allegiance to the idea of neutrality and, therefore, benevolently and consistently consented to its gradual desanctification and ultimate cheapening.¹⁷⁷

Under Lemass, the government had not implicitly accepted the political ramifications inherent in the Treaties of Rome because, of course, they were not explicitly stated. By its very nature, however, Ireland's membership application represented tacit approval of its indisputable aspirations. Throughout this period, as Trevor Salmon has critically concluded in *Unneutral Ireland: an ambivalent and unique security policy*, it appears that:

When it was expedient to stress commitment to the European cause, or even to European defence, then this was done [but, at other times, such commitment became conditional and was expressly muted] ... Although there certainly was ambiguity in the Irish position, one is left with the impression that they would have been prepared to do virtually all that was necessary on the political side, because of the perceived economic case for membership.¹⁷⁸

Economics and, by some sort of instinctive extension in the 1960s, European integration thus began to come before political considerations – such as

partition or neutrality – for Ireland, as the Irish government enthusiastically and willingly sought to enter the EEC. Sometimes, what it appears to have been oblivious to was that there were other considerations over which it has no control. As with the state of its economy, Irish political views and affiliations were very important. Anglo-French relations were to prove even more fundamental however to the successful conclusion of Ireland's aspirant status.

Notes

- 1 Harold Macmillan (UK prime minister) to Lemass, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA; Macmillan to Lemass, 29 July 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA; H.Macmillan, *At the end of the day, 1961-1963* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 11. Despite this courtesy, Lemass and Ireland were well down the UK's list of priorities; indeed, the former barely gets a mention in Macmillan's memoirs, except for a brief note on this episode:
 Since the Prime Minister of Eire had made it clear that if Britain went into the Common Market his country would probably wish to do so, I invited him to come for personal consultations in July [1961]. This would be convenient because our talks would take place during the period that United Kingdom Ministers were making their Commonwealth visits. I found Seán Lemass particularly helpful, and enjoyed my meetings with him.
- 2 Note that the various articles of the *Treaty establishing the European Economic Community* (usually referred to as the Treaty of Rome despite the existence of two such treaties) are usually referred to in a shortened, bracketed form throughout this text; therefore, Article 237 of the *Treaty establishing the European Economic Community* is cited as follows in the text: (Article 237). Article 237 of the *Treaty establishing the European Economic Community* in the *Treaties establishing the European Communities* (Luxembourg, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, 1973), p. 336.
- 3 Working group of the Council of Europe secretariat report, 'Relations Economiques Européennes: la position de certains pays Européens autres que les Six en cas d'adhésion du Royaume-Uni à la Communauté Economique Européenne' (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 1961), p. 54. In the original French, this document read: 'si, l'on considère l'ensemble de l'économie irlandaise, les intérêts industriels sont faibles en comparaison des intérêts agricoles et il semble que l'Irlande doive nécessairement assumer un risque dans le domaine industriel si elle veut obtenir des arrangements satisfaisants pour son agriculture'.
- 4 Lemass to Ludwig Erhard (EEC Council president), 31 July 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 5 J.R.A.Bottomley (CRO official) to Christopher J.Audland (FO official), 14 July 1961, M6114/22, FO371/158220, PRO; Cremin to Whitaker, 31 July 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 6 D/T memorandum, 31 July 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA; *Europe* (unofficial daily EEC publication) viewpoint, 3 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 7 B.Gallagher (ambassador, The Hague) to Molloy (D/EA assistant secretary), 3 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 8 *Europe*, 3 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 9 Keogh, *Ireland and Europe*, pp. 232-3.
- 10 Hederman, *The road to Europe*, p. 65; Maher, *The tortuous path*, p. 112.
- 11 R.Fanning, 'Irish neutrality: an historical review', p. 31, *Irish studies in international affairs* vol. 1 no. 3 1982, pp. 27-38. Neutrality was a relatively secondary consideration in the process of Ireland's European integration and did not unduly interfere in its relationship with the EEC or its attempted entry. An

- enlargement upon this particular argument can be found in a previous research paper: FitzGerald, 'Irish neutrality and European integration', *passim*.
- 12 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 14 June 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 190 col. 179. Originally quoted in Hederman, *The road to Europe*, pp. 68-9.
- 13 Keatinge, *The formulation of Irish foreign policy*, p. 45.
- 14 For the further development of this argument, another research paper goes into some detail: FitzGerald, 'Ireland's experience of European integration', *passim*.
- 15 Hederman, *The road to Europe*, pp. 69-71.
- 16 This supposition has, in fact, been drawn from a table originally used in an FO brief prepared for the UK government talks with a deputation of Irish government ministers held between 18-19 July 1961, *circa* early July 1961, M6114/15, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 17 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 5 July 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 191 col. 266.
- 18 Girvin, 'Economic development and the politics of EC entry', pp. 11 & 34-5.
- 19 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 26 July 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 191 cols. 1856-8.
- 20 Murphy, *Ireland in the twentieth century*, p. 148.
- 21 B.Lenihan, 'How Lemass threw his hat into the ring', *Irish Independent*, 10 December 1994. This article is a review of M.O'Sullivan, *Seán Lemass: a biography* (Dublin: Blackwater Press, 1994).
- 22 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 8 March 1961, as quoted in W.Durbin (CRO official) to J.A.Robinson (FO official), 17 March 1961, M6114/1, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 23 Lemass interview published in *Handelsblatt* and *Schweizerische Handelszeitung*, 18 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 24 Quinlan quoting the remarks of Walter Halstein and Maurice Fauré in Seanad Éireann, 26 July 1961, *Seanad debates* vol. 54 cols. 1360-1. Maurice Fauré had also added his opinion that:

... the people who signed the Treaty of Rome regarded it as a first step in the political integration of Europe towards a United States of Europe – I think myself, that this is exactly what it was; and I think, furthermore, that a political will and a political unity is essential. It is essential if we are going to maintain the position of Europe *vis-à-vis* the other continents, such as Africa, and it is vitally essential if we are going to do something about the problem of the reunification of Germany. A united Germany must be brought into the Western community, and in order to do that you have got to have a political will and not just a purely commercial and economic one ... Indeed, this political will which I talk about surpasses all the limited commercial aims, all the economic aims. You can well, perhaps, reproach me for being a dreamer; but to my mind it is this political will for unity, for political integration which will not alone bring about the unity of Europe but will also preserve what is left of liberty in the Western world.

The conference in question had been held in Dublin exactly two years previous to

- the senator's speech.
- 25 Frank Biggar (ambassador, Brussels) to Cremin, 18 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 26 Donal O'Sullivan (economic counsellor, London) to Hugh McCann (ambassador, London), 30 May 1961, on a conversation between O'Sullivan and Franke (Dutch agriculture ministry director general), D/T-S16877J/61, NA; McCann to Cremin, 31 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 27 Lemass to Lynch, 2 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA. The taoiseach specified certain considerations with which he wanted to deal; these were listed as:
- the desirability of informing the Six of Ireland's intention to apply to join the EEC if any EFTA country also applied to do so;
 - the best means of subsequently communicating this decision;
 - the desirability of asking the EEC Commission to let Ireland attend discussions for a Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) if other non-EEC countries were also present.
- For chronological reasons, this meeting is detailed in the section **Determining factors – Part III: the UK.**
- 28 B.Gallagher to Cremin on a conversation with van Ittersum (Dutch foreign ministry official), 8 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 29 This could, for instance, be a reference to an interview given by the taoiseach in which he was reported to have said that: 'Anything which tends to emphasise the real community of interests between the people of both areas [that is Ireland and Northern Ireland] and the advantages of their reunification will ... contribute to the ending of Partition'. Lemass interview published in *Handelsblatt* and *Schweizerische Handelszeitung*, 18 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 30 Biggar to Cremin reporting on a conversation with Paul-Henri Spaak (Belgian deputy prime minister and foreign minister), 24 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 31 Preamble to the *Treaty establishing the European Economic Community*, p. 173.
- 32 Biggar to Cremin, 24 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 33 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 25 May 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 189 cols. 958-9, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 34 E.H.L.Albert (FO official) memorandum, 2 June 1961, on the reported remarks of Mr.Benirschke (Deutsche Presse Agentur London correspondent) relating to the Irish visit of Heinrich von Brentano (West German foreign minister), M6114/5, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 35 A.Meyer (FO official) note, 6 June 1961, M6114/5, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 36 Robinson note, 12 June 1961, M6114/5, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 37 Meyer note, 6 June 1961, M6114/5, FO371/158219, PRO. This official had continued his original remarks by saying that, as far as he was aware, the Irish government had:
- ... not spoken in this sense either to us or in OEEC or in the Council of Europe. If the Irish want our help they should ask us. There seems to be no good reason for us to hang yet another millstone round our neck for the forthcoming negotiations. In fact the Irish should be able to associate with E.E.C. in much the same way as Portugal I imagine.
- 38 An FO note on the last point – that West Germany intended to keep potential

- members of the Six informed about the CAP and that they were prepared to discuss it with them – stated: 'X is interesting, & a further indication of German hopes that the prospect of new members will enable them to give less more slowly to the French on agriculture'; the 'X' is marked in ink in Rose's original. E.M.Rose (UK ambassador, Bonn) to F.G.K.Gallagher (FO official), 23 June 1961, M6114/8, FO371/158219, PRO; Robinson note, 29 June 1961, M6114/8, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 39 Cremin to Whitaker, 2 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA. The *Irish Times* journalist involved, who wrote the article for the edition dated 30 May 1961, was named as Leo Muray.
- 40 *Irish Press*, 1 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 41 *Irish Times*, 6 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 42 McCann to Cremin, 7 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 43 Irish chargé d'affaires *ad interim* (Canberra) on a conversation with Philippe Monod (French ambassador, Canberra), 16 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 44 T.J.Horan (minister, Berne) to Cremin, 13 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA. The original French read: 'nous n'y pensons pas'.
- 45 D.R.McDonald (ambassador, Paris) to Cremin reporting on a conversation with Laloy (French foreign office official), 18 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 46 Thomas V.Commins (ambassador, Rome) to Cremin on a conversation with Attilio Cattani (Italian foreign ministry secretary general), 30 June 1961, D/T-S16877L/61, NA.
- 47 Unless clearly indicated otherwise, this section has been completed with the use of the following documents: Garret FitzGerald (Irish Council of the European Movement chairman) report on a visit to the EEC Commission, 11/12 April 1961, D/T-S16023C/61, NA; FitzGerald to Whitaker, 29 April 1961, D/T-S16023C/61, NA; Whitaker to Nicholas Nolan (D/T secretary), 2 May 1961, D/T-S16023C/61, NA.
- 48 Lemass speech delivered at the opening of a Comhlucht Siúicre Éireann Teoranta (the Irish sugar company) accelerated freeze drying plant located in Mallow, County Cork, 24 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 49 Robinson note, 19 July 1961, M6114/19, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 50 Article 238 of the *Treaty establishing the European Economic Community*, 336.
- 51 For three main reasons, Greece was viewed as a special case though by the EEC Commission, namely:
- as a consequence of its membership of NATO;
 - because of the threat communism posed in South-Eastern Europe;
 - as a result of its historic trading relationship with Eastern Europe.
- 52 FitzGerald to Lemass, 18 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 53 Irish government publication, *European Economic Community* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1961), D/T-S16877L/61, NA. This document is assessed later in this chapter in the section headed ***European Economic Community: the government White Paper***.
- 54 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 2 March 1960, *Dáil debates* vol. 179 cols. 983-4. Originally quoted in Hederman, *The road to Europe*, p. 67.
- 55 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 16 May 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 189 col.

298. Originally quoted in Hederman, *The road to Europe*, p. 68.
- 56 Lee, *Ireland, 1912-1985*, p. 608. Original quotation taken from the National Economic and Social Council, *Information for policy* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1985).
- 57 Quinlan speech delivered in Seanad Éireann, 26 July 1961, *Seanad debates* vol. 54 cols. 1356-80; James Ryan (Irish finance minister) reply delivered in Seanad Éireann, 26 July 1961, *Seanad debates* vol. 54 col. 1368; Quinlan speaking in Seanad Éireann, 27 July 1961, *Seanad debates* vol. 54 cols. 1446-7; Ryan replies delivered in Seanad Éireann, 27 July 1961, *Seanad debates* vol. 54 cols. 1446-7.
- 58 National Farmers' Association (NFA) statement, 20 July 1960, D/T-S16877Y/62, NA; D/A report on Ireland and the EEC, August 1960, D/T-16877Y/62, NA. Originally quoted in Girvin, 'Economic development and the politics of EC entry', pp. 19-23.
- 59 Lemass to Juan Greene (NFA president), 13 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 60 Whitaker to Cremin, 7 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 61 Girvin, 'Economic development and the politics of EC entry', p. 20.
- 62 Unattributed article, 'Free Trade Bloc robs city men of jobs', *Sunday Review*, 16 April 1961, 'Patrician Year - 1961' 98/1/62 (formerly D/UhÉ-P5690), NA. This particular story recounted the fact that, because of the effects of EFTA, perhaps up to two hundred jobs had been lost the previous day in a wool-combing factory in Dublin. The plant's management had added that: 'Until we are able to secure other markets or until Ireland joins the EFTA, we have no alternative but to drastically reduce our production'.
- 63 D/T memorandum on a meeting held on 11 July 1961 between Lemass and a deputation from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), 14 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 64 Lemass speech delivered to the Irish Management Institute, 12 May 1961, quoted in *Bulletin from the European Community* vol. 4 no. 4, June 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA; Hederman, *The road to Europe*, p. 72.
- 65 Bottomley to Audland, 14 July 1961, M6114/22, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 66 McCann to Cremin regarding a conversation with Eric Roll (UK agriculture ministry deputy secretary), 26 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA; H.Lintott (CRO official) to Roderick E.Barclay (FO official), 2 June 1961, M6114/4, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 67 Biggar to Cremin regarding a meeting with A.H.Tandy (UK chef de mission at the EEC), 23 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 68 McCann to Cremin, 18 May 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 69 W.R.Bickford (CRO official) to F.G.K.Gallagher, 6 April 1961, M6114/2, FO371/158219, PRO. This comment was prompted by an *Irish Independent* editorial, from 30 March 1961, on Finnish association with EFTA; indeed, Bickford felt that: 'The Finnish precedent is interesting from Ireland's viewpoint'.
- 70 Lemass speech delivered at the Irish National Convention of Junior Chambers of Commerce held at Shannon Airport, County Clare, 4 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 71 Barclay minute, 9 May 1961, M6114/3, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 72 F.G.K.Gallagher note, 9 May 1961, M6114/3, FO371/158219, PRO; Robinson

- note, 12 May 1961, M6114/3, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 73 F.Mills (CRO secretary of state) to Philip F.de Zulueta (UK prime minister's office official), 15 June 1961, M6114/6, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 74 Whitaker memorandum on a meeting held on 6 June 1961 of departmental secretaries and Irish ambassadors, 7 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 75 Lemass to Macmillan, 10 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 76 Whitaker memorandum on a meeting held on 6 June 1961 of departmental secretaries and Irish ambassadors, 7 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA; O'Carroll note on a meeting held on 8 June 1961 of Irish government ministers and departmental secretaries, 9 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 77 Unless otherwise stated, this section has been completed using the Irish government White Paper entitled the *European Economic Community*.
- 78 Whitaker to Cremin, 19 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 79 Whitaker memorandum on a meeting held on 6 June 1961 of departmental secretaries and Irish ambassadors, 7 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA. Aiken later revealed that, apart from pushing Ireland's candidacy, these meetings also provided the opportunity to promote both Irish trade and foreign exchange earning activities, as well as economic cooperation generally. The Minister for External Affairs said:

In 1961, in order to emphasise that much was required of our diplomatic service in this regard, I summoned every ambassador and every diplomatic representative home to Ireland. We gave them a full week of discussions, talks and lectures on the various opportunities that existed and told them that they should be followed up to increase our foreign earnings. They were addressed, not only by the Taoiseach, myself, the Minister for Industry and Commerce and the secretaries of the various economic departments but they had discussions with organisations like the Irish Exporters, Córas Tráchtála, Bord Fáilte and the Industrial Development Authority. All the people concerned, who wanted to sell and promote trade, felt it was a very useful thing to have those kind of discussions.
- Aiken speaking in Seanad Éireann, 18 November 1964, *Seanad debates* vol. 58 col. 53.
- 80 O'Carroll note on a meeting held on 8 June 1961 of Irish government ministers and departmental secretaries, 9 June 1961, D/T-S16877J/61, NA.
- 81 Lemass minute, 22 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 82 Exchanges between Brendan Corish (Labour party leader) and Lemass in Dáil Éireann, 29 June 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 190 col. 1340, D/T-S16877L/61, NA.
- 83 Oireachtas is a generic term for Dáil Éireann, Seanad Éireann, and Uachtarán na hÉireann (Irish president). White Papers and bills must be approved at all three stages and be in accordance with the Irish constitution before they reach the next stage of their debate or before they can come into law.
- 84 Cremin note of a conversation with Edward G.Stockdale (US ambassador, Dublin) and Burdett (US State Department official heading British and Northern European affairs), 6 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA. This aspect of the publication is, in itself, worth taking a closer look as this document demonstrates

- that the Irish government's opinions on the history of European integration had developed to the point where accession to the EEC had become an official foreign policy goal.
- 85 The data has partly been compiled using a table originally published in the White Paper *European Economic Community* and from figures that come from the following publications: Central Statistics Office, *Ireland: trade and shipping statistics, passim*.
- 86 In the middle of May 1961, de Besche (Swedish foreign affairs secretary general) told the other members of EFTA that an enlarged EEC, along the lines that the UK probably favoured – the UK entering, along with some other EFTA countries, although probably only those in NATO, Denmark and Norway, with the other EFTA countries negotiating association – would mean that a country such as Ireland would then find it difficult even to associate itself with the EEC; no consideration was given to a country like Ireland entering the EEC as a full member. R.Steininger, '1961: Europe "at sixes and sevens" – the European Free Trade Association, the neutrals, and Great Britain's decision to join the E.E.C.', pp. 535-68, in *The journal of European economic history* vol. 26 no. 3 1997, p. 553.
- 87 Unless clearly indicated otherwise, this section has been completed with the use of the following documents: D/T memorandum for the government, 27 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA; Irish government *aide-mémoire* to the Luxembourg government, 5 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 88 A.E.Furness (CRO private secretary) to K.M.Wilford (UK Lord Privy Seal private secretary) on a meeting held on 30 June 1961 between the Irish ambassador and the UK Lord Chancellor, 30 June 1961, M6114/11, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 89 Robinson note #1, 3 July 1961, M6114/11, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 90 Robinson note #1, 3 July 1961, M6114/11, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 91 Robinson note #2, 3 July 1961, M6114/11, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 92 Lemass speech delivered in Dáil Éireann, 5 July 1961, *Dáil Debates* vol. 191 cols. 206-71.
- 93 Maher, *The tortuous path*, p. 126.
- 94 In the original French, the *aide-mémoire* read: 'l'état de la situation commerciale et économique de l'Irlande est tel qu'elle ne peut envisager de devenir membre de la Communauté que dans le cas où la Grande Bretagne aurait décidé de poser sa candidature comme membre'.
- 95 In French, the *aide-mémoire* had held that: 'L'Irlande serait prête à accepter en principe, les dispositions du Traité de Rome comme on l'exige des membres, mais, au stade actuel de son évolution, elle ne serait pas à même de se conformer entièrement à certaines clauses de ce traité dans le laps de temps prévu'.
- 96 In the original French, the *aide-mémoire* stated that the aims of the *Programme for economic expansion* 'sont conformes à ceux de la Communauté Economique Européenne et leur réalisation sera dans l'intérêt commun'.
- 97 F.O'Brien, *An béal bocht* (Dublin: Dolmen, 1941), *passim*.
- 98 Cremin note of a telephone conversation with Biggar regarding the latter's meetings with Hallstein, Spaak and Hommel (Luxembourg ambassador to the EEC), 6 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.

- 99 Biggar to Cremin, 7 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 100 Biggar to Cremin on a conversation with Forthomme (Belgian foreign office director-general for special affairs), 10 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 101 B.Gallagher to Cremin, 5 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 102 Brian Ó Ceallaigh (chargé d'affaires *ad interim*, Bonn), 12 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 103 Commins to Cremin, 6 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 104 Cremin to Whitaker, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 105 *Europe*, 11 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 106 Cremin note on a conversation with Stockdale and Burdett, 6 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA; FitzGerald, *Irish-American diplomatic relations, passim*.
- 107 Cremin to MacCarthy, 7 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA; Bottomley to Audland, 14 July 1961, M6114/22, FO371/158220, PRO. It is very always interesting to note what the officials of one government thought of their counterparts in another. According to informed UK government opinion, Cremin was viewed as being 'markedly friendly and agreeable', but without having shown 'evidence of independence of thought or a readiness to assume undue responsibility'; Whitaker, meanwhile, was seen as follows: 'Brilliantly able, but with a quiet and unassuming but pleasant manner'. Nagle was perceived as having 'a sharp intellect and a considerable flair for patient and astute negotiation'; in addition, it was felt that MacCarthy had 'done very well' and that relations with him were 'excellent'. These views were for the most part positive and, because of their inherent secrecy, fairly reliable as a consequence.
- 108 H.A.F.Rumbold (FO official) memorandum, 1 June 1961, M6114/4, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 109 Macmillan to Lemass, 16 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA; Macmillan to Lemass, 3 July 1961, D/T-S16877L/61, NA; Lemass to Macmillan, 5 July 1961, D/T-S16877L/61, NA.
- 110 McCann to Cremin, 21 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA; Cremin memorandum, 21 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 111 *Irish Press*, 24 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 112 Lemass to Macmillan, 24 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 113 Draft agenda for the Anglo-Irish meetings, 28 June 1961, D/T-S16877K/61, NA.
- 114 UK Lord Chancellor's view as quoted in McCann to Cremin, 30 June 1961, D/T-S16877L/61, NA.
- 115 Cremin to Whitaker, 1 July 1961, D/T-S16877L/61, NA.
- 116 Whitaker to Nolan, 4 July 1961, D/T-S16877L/61, NA; draft agenda for the Anglo-Irish meetings, mid-July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 117 Draft agenda for the Anglo-Irish meetings, mid-July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 118 Reginald Maudling (B/T president) quoted in McCann to Cremin, 12 July 1961, D/T-S16877M/61, NA.
- 119 Draft agenda for the Anglo-Irish meetings, mid-July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 120 FO note, *circa* end of June 1961, M6114/9, FO371/158219, PRO; CRO note, *circa* end of June 1961, M6114/9, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 121 De Zulueta to A.W.France (Treasury official), 30 June 1961, M6114/9, FO371/158219, PRO.

- 122 France to de Zulueta, 30 June 1961, M6114/9, FO371/158219, PRO. Cledwyn Hughes (UK Labour party Member of Parliament for Anglesey) question to Braine (CRO secretary of state) on contacts between the UK government and Ireland on the EEC question, 5 July 1961, M6114/14, FO371/158219, PRO.
- 123 Lemass speech reported in the *Irish Press*, 18 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 124 Lemass speech reported in the *Irish Press*, 19 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 125 Lemass interview with the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), 18 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 126 Lemass interview with the BBC, 18 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 127 Lemass speech reported in the *Irish Press*, 20 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 128 Lemass speech delivered to Macra na Feirme (an Irish farming organisation) in Wexford, 22 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 129 Keatinge, *A singular stance*, p. 25.
- 130 Preamble to the Bonn Declaration of the Six, 18 July 1961, which is quoted in Maher, *The tortuous path*, p. 133; Mally, *Britain and European unity*, pp. 48-9.
- 131 Quinlan speaking in Seanad Éireann, 26 July 1961, *Seanad debates* vol. 54 cols. 1356-80.
- 132 Nagle note, 20 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 133 UK Foreign Office minute, 18 July 1961, M6114/24, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 134 In many respects, of course, it suited London that Ireland was trying to enter the EEC as a full member; the latter would not only help to forestall further French hegemony, but it would also probably help to lessen the future federal shape of Europe by diluting it, whether that was in terms of exhausting economic aims by its agricultural demands or political integration through its neutrality.
- 135 Barclay minute, 18 July 1961, M6114/24, FO371/158220, PRO. The West German official in question was Harkort (FRG foreign ministry deputy secretary for economic affairs).
- 136 Bottomley to F.G.K.Gallagher, 20 July 1961, M6114/25, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 137 Cremin memorandum, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA; Cremin to Whitaker, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 138 M.Shanks & J.Lambert, *Britain and the new Europe: the future of the Common Market* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1962), pp. 187 & 233. At least the authors noted that 'there is quite a chance that Eire may get full membership', even if it was one of 'those [states] whose economies are not strong enough to meet the full competition of the Common Market ... [and if] associate status will presumably only be temporary; in the course of time, it is to be hoped that the economies of the associates will be strong enough to stand the pressures of full membership'. Barclay minute, 21 July 1961, M6114/26, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 139 Cremin memorandum, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA; Cremin to Whitaker, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 140 MacLennan to Lintott, 25 July 1961, M6114/26, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 141 Cremin memorandum, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA; Cremin to Whitaker, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 142 Hallstein as quoted in a Molloy memorandum, 29 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA; Mansholt as quoted in N.P.Ludlow, 'Influence and vulnerability: the role of the EEC Commission in the enlargement negotiations', 1-23, paper presented at

- the conference entitled *The first attempt to enlarge the European Community, 1961-63*, held from 17-19 February 1994 at the IUE, 1; *Irish Times*, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877N/61, NA; *Gazette de Lausanne* as quoted in A.O'Rourke (chargé d'affaires *ad interim*, Berne) to Cremin, 26 July 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 143 Tandy telegram to the FO, 3 August 1961, M6114/31, FO371/158220, PRO; Tandy to the FO, 4 August 1961, M6114/31, FO371/158220, PRO; J.R.Rich (FO official) note, early August 1961, M6114/31, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 144 B.Gallagher to Molloy, 3 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA. The EEC official in question was Pierre Lucion (Jean Rey's chef de cabinet).
- 145 B.Gallagher to Molloy, 5 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 146 Ludlow, 'Influence and vulnerability', pp. 21-2.
- 147 Florence O'Riordan (chargé d'affaires *ad interim*, The Hague) to Molloy, 3 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 148 O'Riordan to Molloy, 11 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 149 O'Riordan report, 11 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA. The Dutch official in question was Kymmell (Dutch foreign ministry official heading up the European integration division).
- 150 W.Asbeek Brusse, 'Alone within the Six: the Dutch cabinet and the British application for EEC membership, 1960-1963', p. 22, paper presented at the conference entitled *The first attempt to enlarge the European Community, 1961-63*, held from 17-19 February 1994 at the IUE.
- 151 O'Carroll note, 12 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA (emphasis added).
- 152 Vaughan, *Twentieth-century Europe*, p. 152.
- 153 O'Carroll note, 12 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 154 Audland minute, 14 August 1961, M6114/33, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 155 O'Carroll note, 14 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 156 Erhard to Lemass, 14 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA. In the original German, this statement read: 'Zur Unterrichtung des Rates wäre ich Eurer Exzellenz für eine Mitteilung dankbar, inwieweit der Rat bei seinen Ueberlegungen auch das Aide-mémoire in Betracht ziehen soll, das den Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Wirtschafts-gemeinschaft am 4. Juli 1961 von der Regierung Irlands überreicht worden ist'.
- 157 Lemass to Erhard, 18 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 158 D.P.Reilly (FO official) minute, 17 August 1961, M6114/33, FO371/158220, PRO.
- 159 Lemass interview conducted with the BBC in Belfast on 4 August 1961 as reported in the *Irish Press*, 5 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 160 B.McSweeney, 'Out of the ghetto: Irish foreign policy since the fifties', pp. 401-2, *Studies* vol. 75 no. 300 1986, *passim*.
- 161 Heath reference made in O'Sullivan and Slevin (Irish embassy official, London) 'Note of discussions between Irish and British Ministers in London on Tuesday, 18th July, 1961', D/T-S16877N/61, NA.
- 162 Nagle to O'Carroll, 5 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 163 Nagle to Molloy, 14 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA. O'Sullivan became Ireland's economic counsellor to the EEC.
- 164 O'Carroll to Nagle, 10 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.

- 165 Biggar to Molloy, 12 August 1961, D/T-S16877O/61, NA.
- 166 Council of Europe report, 'Relations Economiques Européennes', pp. 52-3. In the original French, this document read: 'il est peu probable que la République d'Irlande éprouverait de grandes difficultés à adopter le niveau du tarif extérieur commun de la C.E.E. à l'égard des pays tiers ... il lui serait difficile d'accepter la démobilitation des barrières douanières appliquées aux importations en provenance de ses partenaires sur la base du calendrier prévu par le Traité de Rome'.
- 167 Council of Europe report, 'Relations Economiques Européennes', pp. 52-3. In the original French, this document declared: 'La République d'Irlande suit une politique de neutralité que le Gouvernement a proclamé sa volonté de maintenir aussi longtemps que subsisterait le partage de l'Ile ... En outre, l'Irlande partage avec le Royaume-Uni les traditions du droit coutumier et un grand nombre d'institutions qui diffèrent considérablement de celles du continent européen'.
- 168 Maher, *The tortuous path*, p. 138.
- 169 Maher, *The tortuous path*, p. 141.
- 170 Mally, *Britain and European unity*, pp. 60-83. The latter quoted Heath's speech to the representatives of the Six, delivered in Paris on 10 October 1961.
- 171 Council of Europe report, 'Relations Economiques Européennes', p. 55. In the original French, this document read: 'le Conseil des Ministres, à l'unanimité, m'a chargé de vous suggérer de tenir au début de janvier 1962, à Bruxelles, une réunion pour permettre aux Etats membres de la Communauté d'avoir avec le Gouvernement irlandais un échange de vues sur les problèmes particuliers que pose la demande du Gouvernement irlandais et les conséquences qu'il convient d'en tirer ainsi que sur certaines questions de procédure'.
- 172 Lemass speech to the Cork Chamber of Commerce, 11 November 1961. Originally quoted in Maher, *The tortuous path*, p. 143.
- 173 Lemass speaking in Dáil Éireann, 11 October 1961, *Dáil debates* vol. 192 col. 43.
- 174 C.C.O'Brien, 'The embers of Easter' (originally published in the *Irish Times*, 7 April 1966), in D.H.Akenson, *Conor: a biography of Conor Cruise O'Brien*, vol. 2 (Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); Karl Marx to Friedrich Engels, 2 November 1867, *Karl Marx Friedrich Engels*, vol. 31 (Berlin, Germany: Dietz Verlag, 1974), p. 376. In the original German, this statement from Karl Marx read: 'Ich habe früher Trennung Irlands von England für unmöglich gehalten. Ich halte sie jetzt für unvermeidlich, obgleich nach der Trennung Federation kommen mag'.
- 175 David Bell (Dublin solicitor) to P.Berry (Department of Justice (D/J) secretary), 30 January 1960, 'Proposed establishment of a factory for the production of hand grenades for sale to the Venezuelan Government' D/FA-315/59/343/26, NA; MacDonagh (D/J official) memorandum, 13 February 1960, D/FA-315/59/343/26, NA; D/J memorandum, 9 March 1960, D/FA-315/59/343/26, NA.
- 176 Cremin to Berry, 21 March 1960, D/FA-315/59/343/26, NA.
- 177 Moravcsik, *The choice for Europe*, pp. 5 & 162-3.
- 178 T.C.Salmon, *Unneutral Ireland: an ambivalent and unique security policy* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), p. 215; T.Salmon, 'Ireland: a neutral in the Community?', pp. 205-27, *Journal of Common Market studies* vol. 20 no. 3 1982, p.

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