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Subject
cc Europa Pt 20
Brussels



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

20 March, 1985.

Contributions from the United States to Irish causes

In the course of her meeting with Mayor Feinstein of San Francisco this morning, the Prime Minister developed the idea that she and the Taoiseach should encourage the creation of a charitable fund to benefit worthwhile causes both in the Republic and in Northern Ireland, to which the generous impulses of Americans who wished to contribute to Irish causes could be channelled. One purpose would of course be to tap sources of the funds which are at present channelled to NORAID and divert them to more constructive purposes. The Prime Minister said that she would pursue the idea when she met the Taoiseach in the margins of the European Council on 29/30 March.

Mayor Feinstein reacted enthusiastically. She may well make some public comment.

BF1
I should be grateful if this point, worked up if possible into a concrete proposal, could be covered in the briefing for the Prime Minister's meeting with the the Taoiseach.

I am copying this letter to Jim Daniell (Northern Ireland Office) and to Richard Hatfield (Cabinet Office).

(C.D. Powell)

Len Appleyard, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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DIANNE FEINSTEIN (MAYOR OF SAN FRANCISCO)

Dianne Feinstein (fine-stine) was chosen by the Board of Supervisors of San Francisco to become Mayor when the elected Mayor was murdered in 1978. She has subsequently been elected in her own right for two four-year terms. She will not be eligible for re-election when her present term ends in 1987.

She was born in San Francisco in 1933, and attended schools in the city before going to Stanford University from which she graduated in 1955 with degrees in history and political science. She has been active in city and state politics since the mid-fifties, and was a member of the City's Board of Supervisors (equivalent to city councillor) for nine years.

A Democrat, Mrs Feinstein is a dynamic Mayor. Politically very well attuned, she has worked hard to establish support among the key pressure groups of the city, especially the gay community (now reckoned to comprise 20% of the voting population), blacks and organised labour.

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Very forceful and ambitious, she is said to be considering running for Governor of California or challenging Alan Cranston for his Senate seat in 1986. She has received considerable national attention, most recently as a possible Vice-Presidential running-mate for Walter Mondale. She is on the 'right' of the Democratic Party.

The first of her three marriages ended in divorce; her second husband died; and she was married in 1980 to Richard Blum (rhymes with plum). She and her husband are Jewish. She has retained the name of her second husband. She has one daughter by her first marriage.

Her husband is a wealthy investor and investment adviser, generally regarded as very sharp - even ruthless - in his business dealings, but straight. Any suggestions of similarities to Mrs Ferraro's husband are discounted locally. He is a keen mountain climber, and a regular visitor to Nepal where he has climbed with Sir Edmund Hillary.

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THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO, AND THE BAY AREA

1. The City of San Francisco is surrounded on three sides by water - the Pacific Ocean to the West and the San Francisco Bay to the North and East. The city rests on forty hills, with elevations varying from below sea level to almost 1,000 feet above.
2. The city dates from 1776, where the first colonising party of Spaniards arrived and established a mission and military base. San Francisco was transformed from a sleepy outpost to a boom town when gold was found in 1849 in the foothills of the Sierras. The city's growth further accelerated with the completion of the first trans-continental railroad in 1869.
3. The San Francisco earthquake of 1906, and the fire which followed, destroyed 28,000 buildings and killed 600 people. By 1911 the city had been rebuilt and in the 1930's the completion of two bridges - the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge and the Golden Gate Bridge - greatly improved its access and encouraged further expansion. In 1945 San Francisco was the site of the founding of the United Nations.

Economy:

4. San Francisco is the hub, with Oakland, of what is known locally as the



Bay Area -that part of Northern California which borders the Pacific from the Napa Valley in the North to San Jose in the South. The Bay Area's economy is diverse but has little heavy manufacturing industry. Much of San Francisco's wealth derives from Silicon Valley, the world's largest concentration of high-tech companies, to be found in the counties immediately South of the city. The Bay Area is also the centre of California's wine industry. San Francisco itself has become a commercial and financial centre for the West Coast, although tourism is still the city's major industry with over 3 million visitors each year. Generally, the city's economy is thriving although some sectors - eg banking - have their problems.

5. San Francisco has the world's largest natural harbour and is, with Oakland immediately across the Bay, a centre for shipping and international trade. Whilst Asia is Northern California's leading trading region, trade and investment in both directions between California and Britain is showing healthy growth. The United Kingdom now ranks as the eighth largest exporter to the area, on a par with West Germany. The Bay Area contains the headquarters of a number of major United States corporations with United Kingdom subsidiaries - including Standard Oil of California, Hewlett-Packard and Levi Strauss. A number of British companies, including British Petroleum and Dalgety, have significant interests headquartered in San Francisco, as do the major British banks.



Culture and Politics:

6. San Franciscans are proud of their city. New and architecturally pleasing highrise buildings in the downtown financial and business area blend well with older structures. In the residential areas the predominantly Victorian houses and apartment buildings are well preserved and cared for. The cable transport system, invented by the Scottish Engineer Andrew Hallidie in 1873, has been carefully preserved and the Victorian-style cable cars have become a civic symbol. In and around the city there are many wide open spaces and magnificent countryside. San Francisco boasts a renowned opera, and leading ballet and symphony companies as well as museums and theatre. Other features include Japantown and Chinatown, the latter constituting the largest Chinese quarter outside Asia and reflecting the diverse nature of a community which also has large Italian, Spanish and Latin elements. It has always been difficult to determine the size of the community claiming British ancestry; the best estimate is about 80,000 living in the Bay Area.

7. The diversification in the people of San Francisco is further seen politically, philosophically and culturally in a city known for its liberal and democratic leanings. (It was the host city for the Democratic National Convention in 1984.) There are also prominent conservation and anti-nuclear lobbies and, not least, a very large and politically active gay community which any San Franciscan politician needs to take into account as they represent a substantial proportion of the voting population.

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