

16 June 1975

Speech of Welcome by the President-in-office of the Council of Ministers, Mr. Richie Ryan T.D., Minister for Finance of Ireland on the occasion of the official visit of the President of Ireland on Monday, June 16, 1975.

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Mr. President,

Fágann an meath atá tagtha ar chúrsaí eacnamaíochta ar fud an domhain - an meath is measa agus is faide a mhair le leathchead bliain - cúraimí troma ar Airí Airgeadais agus Baenamaíochta. Is cúis mhór áthais dúinn, a Uachtarán, tú a bheith i láthair ag cruinniú seo na n-Airí. Ní miste leat má ghlacaimid leis gurab ionann tú a theacht i láthair anseo agus aitheantas a bheith á thabhairt agat, mar cheann stáit, don tábhacht a bhaineann leis an obair atá ar siúl ag na hairí ag iarraidh fadhbanna ár linne a réiteach.

(The present global economic decline, the most serious and prolonged for almost half a century, imposes grave burdens upon Ministers for Finance and the Economy. It is therefore a cause of considerable pleasure to us, Mr. President, that you should grace this meeting of the Council of Ministers. We respectfully interpret your presence as a recognition by a Head of State of the importance of the work being discharged by Ministers in grappling with the problems of our time.)

It is a happy coincidence that your visit should take place during the Irish Presidency of the Council so that it falls to me to welcome you on behalf of my colleagues the members of the Council of Ministers. It is a great honour and a great pleasure for us all; and I bid you the warmest of welcomes - a Céad Mile Fáilte.

This is the first time that the Head of State of a Member country has paid an official visit to the Community Institutions in their own right; and your visit is therefore doubly memorable. And it provides in itself tangible evidence of the growing impact of the Community on the lives of all the citizens of all our countries. Moreover, that it should be the Head of State of the Most Western Atlantic bordering Member country who is visiting us is a reminder of the extended dimension the Community has acquired. I am sure that the Founding Fathers of our Community would have been happy to think that this visit, with all its implications, would have taken place in this year in which we are celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Schuman Declaration.

This is a Community in which personal examples have always played an important part. And your Excellency, Mr. President if I may say so, has made clear your devotion to the European ideal both as a Judge of the European Court of Justice and now in the highest office in your - and my - country. Because of this it seems to me that your presence here is the outward and visible sign of the attachment of Ireland to the European Community and her determination to participate fully in our common enterprise for the construction of Europe, and the betterment of the world.

Mr. President, I wish to assure you that the Council of Ministers shares your aims, your beliefs and your ideals. It too is determined to play its part in the building of Europe, for this is a determination which is a guiding force for all the governments which form this Institution. Our common purpose is strong; and we believe that it is a sound basis on which to build for all our peoples a future of prosperity, stability and peace.

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