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PERMANENT MISSION OF
IRELAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS
866 UNITED NATIONS PLAZA · SUITE 520-21
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

18th August, 1971.

Confidential

Dear Assistant Secretary,

Further to our conversation this morning concerning the question raised with me by the Minister on 12th instant of United Nations observers on our territory, you will find herewith a report on my talk with the Secretary-General on Monday 16th: paragraph 8 relates to that point.

Yours sincerely,

Con Gorman

Mr. Sean G. Ronan
Assistant Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin.



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Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin

CALL ON SECRETARY-GENERAL

Having returned to New York on 14th August I sought an appointment with the Secretary-General on Monday 16th. he received me at 3.00 p.m.

2. The Counsellor of the Mission had of course, in accordance with the instruction contained in your telegram 177 of 12th August, called on the Secretary-General on the following day to convey to him the text of the Government statement. Both at that interview and when he received me the Secretary-General was accompanied by Under-Secretary-General Guyer.

3. After the usual preliminaries the Secretary-General asked me about the situation in the North. I recalled the events of the previous week, referred to the Government statement and said that another statement had been made by the Minister for Justice on the following day refuting the charge in Mr. Faulkner's statement of the same morning that our territory is serving as a base for I.R.A. activities in the North and that those engaged in such

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activities come largely from the South. I added that such information as I personally had heard in Kerry, including from prominent personalities in Tralee which in the past tended to be a strong source of support for the I.R.A., left no doubt in my mind of the lack of foundation for Mr. Faulkner's charge. The Secretary-General remarked that the Faulkner statement was extremely strong. I agreed and mentioned particularly the quite odd reference, coming from a Prime Minister, to "the people I represent", which clearly implied that he sees himself as representing the Unionist population.

4. The Secretary-General then asked me whether there was any talk of an early meeting of Prime Ministers. I recalled that it had ~~been~~ been agreed that the Taoiseach and Mr. Heath would meet on 21st October. I was not, I said, aware of any indication that the meeting might be brought forward and indeed a report in the London Times of 13th August maintained that Mr. Heath would not at that stage alter the schedule. Whether there is any prospect of a triangular meeting I could not say but it would seem that Mr. Faulkner is under pressure from the extreme Unionist wing to take a strong line and avoid any appearance of compromise. Here the Secretary-General remarked that the Reverend Paisley is a most dangerous person.

5. He wondered how things would evolve if Mr. Faulkner should fall. I replied that I could not say but that in that eventuality the British Government might possibly decide to assume direct administration of the North, a contingency for

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which the Labour Government had made provision before leaving office (paragraph 3 of report of 10th May). The Secretary-General wondered how we would feel about such a development. I remarked that it would at least mean that the London Government would now be quite evidently directly responsible and could no longer, as so often in the past, adduce the existence of the Stormont administration as a pretext for shedding liability. Moreover one could reasonably assume that Westminster would see to it that equality of treatment would be observed in the North in the same way as in say Surrey or Lancashire, as they would find it impossible to justify different treatment in different local units of a territory all of which they would now be administering directly.

6. The Secretary-General then enquired about the point he had raised with me in July of his designating a personality to look into the problem of human rights (my report of 16th idem). I told him that, in the conditions of my stay in Ireland, I did not have an opportunity of having the matter thoroughly studied but that, while I was sure that we would welcome a prominent personality as a United Nations Observer, the impression I got in Dublin was that the Conservative Government would be at least as opposed to the idea as the Labour Government had been two years ago: in that connection it was interesting to note that Mr. Michael Stewart, who had been so uncooperative in August 1969, had stated in the House of Commons a fortnight ago that he could see no solution except in a united Ireland. This, of course, I

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added represented the only sound solution in our opinion. The Secretary-General told me that he had in fact mentioned his idea to Sir Colin Crowe, the British Permanent Representative: he did not say when he had done so but I assume that it was after my interview with him in July. In any case he had, had no reaction from which he was inclined to infer that London remains negative to the idea.

7. I mentioned to U Thant that during my talks at home the suggestion had been made that he might perhaps consider establishing a UN information office in Dublin. He would be aware that at present Ireland is covered by the United Nations Information Office in London. It is recognised that a Dublin office might encounter financial objections but it is thought that the expenditure involved could be insignificant and that only a quite skeleton staff would be required. The Secretary-General seemed carefully to note the point but made no comment.

8. The Secretary-General confirmed the opinion I expressed to the Minister on 12th August that he would feel obliged to have the authority of the Security Council for the despatch of observers even to our territory. The same would apply to a fact-finding mission but he would feel free to undertake a good offices mission (by way of an individual observer) without Council authority but with the approval of the party or parties concerned.

9. As regards the question of our bringing the issue to the United Nations I informed the Secretary-General of what the Taoiseach had said in answering a question on the point at his Press Conference of 12th August. U Thant agreed that the British

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would still be at least as opposed to recourse to the United Nations as they were in 1969 and he doubted whether they would accept on this occasion the same departure from procedure in the Council as they did (albeit reluctantly) then when the Minister was allowed to address the Council before a decision on adoption of the Agenda.

C. C. Quinn

Permanent Representative.

CCC/kh