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ROINN AN TAOISIGH

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TAOISEACH'S MEETING WITH SENATOR T. KENNEDY

The Taoiseach, accompanied by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the undersigned met Senator Ted Kennedy in the Library in Blair House. The Senator was accompanied by Mr. ~~Carey~~ Parker.

- (1) Senator Kennedy opened by discussing the recent Brezhnev initiative and the relative positions of the Republican and Democratic parties in relation to it. He mentioned that President Reagan had done a brilliant job in conveying the view that he had a mandate, given to him at the last Election, for the economic policies now associated with his name. The Taoiseach said that he remembered the Senator's view that unemployment should not be used as a weapon of economic management. Senator Kennedy said that he still strongly held that view. They were in for difficult times, in the United States. On youth training, for example, the numbers engaged had fallen from 3m. to 2m. and were now approaching 1m. There was going to be trouble if this sort of process continued. The President was in the difficulty that he could not now change his policy - to which he was so deeply and publicly committed. The crunch would come when the national debt came up for re-ratification towards the end of next May. The whole issue could then become of the highest political importance. The President had so far managed to disconnect the lines between ~~the~~ person and his policies.
- (2) The Taoiseach referred to the meeting he just had with the Friends of Ireland and asked the Senator as to whether he had any advice as to how relations could be improved or the group used to mutual advantage. Senator Kennedy said that Saxalt, who is a member of the group, was close to the President as well as to Kennedy. He also had a good relationship with Clarke, who was extremely helpful. Foley and Tip O'Neill were also good friends of the country. The thing was to develop these contacts and to exercise influence quietly and discretely through a number of contacts. More and more people were getting wrapped up in the operations of the Friends of Ireland group. He thought that the Biaggi group had been or was being eclipsed. In this sense, the Friends of Ireland were enormously important. This should be encouraged by, for example, having Ministers or other people of influence come over from Ireland to speak to them, from time to time. The Taoiseach enquired as to whether a visit from the Friends of Ireland would help. The Senator said that this would be extremely useful. He thought that a good time would be in the fall when the electoral campaign was over. In reply to a question from the Taoiseach he said that the whole House and one-third

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of the Senate would be up for election. Mr. Parker said that if we wanted something before the fall, May could probably be regarded as the cut-off date. After that everybody would be engaged in the campaign. In reply to a question from the Taoiseach, the Senator said that it would be very useful if Ministers from the Irish Government were to come, from time to time, to speak to the group. The Senator said that he would support ~~this~~ type of operations and could talk to people in, for example, the Boston Globe, the New York Times etc. The whole thing must be seen as a continuing educational process. Television programmes, particularly in the morning, were of great use for this.

- (3) The Senator asked as to whether the Taoiseach wanted to make any suggestions as to policy on the North. On this, the Senator was completely open to suggestion. The Taoiseach said that the impression he had gained from the present visit^{was} that there were many people in America who wanted to help but they also wanted to know how this could be done. Senator Kennedy said that Judge Clark was very helpful in this sense. The trouble with the State Department was that everybody stops off in London. There had been no serious Ambassadors in Ireland, for a long time. On the other hand, the Ambassadors in London were a great deal better informed and stronger in personality. The result was that the State Department got the English view, all the time. In reply to a query from the Taoiseach, the Senator said that the new Ambassador, Mr. Dailey, was a decent man. He had been recommended to the Senator by Judge Byrne of California, who was a good friend. He thought that Dailey was very close to Clark, which was useful. The Senator then enquired as to see whether the Taoiseach would be meeting the British Prime Minister. The Taoiseach said there was a possibility of a short meeting during the European Council but that a more substantive meeting would have to wait until later. *He asked* If there was anything we could do to help the Senator. The Senator said that he would like to come over, sometime, to visit Ireland. The Taoiseach said that he would be most welcome. All he had to do was to lift the phone and let us know when he wanted to come. The Senator said that this was a very generous offer and thanked the Taoiseach. The meeting then concluded.

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19 March, 1982.

(Copy to Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs).