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① Wash DC  
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EMBASSY OF IRELAND

2234 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008

22 March 1991

Mr Dermot Gallagher  
Assistant Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
Dublin

Mr. Fallon To see and  
File USA / Reports from  
Missions / also St. P's Day 2.  
(1991)  
Tb.  
PB  
(9/4/91)

1. cc A/Secy to the  
President  
Pb's Celler

Dear Dermot

I am attaching herewith summary account of meetings which the Minister had during the course of his visit on Capitol Hill.

Yours sincerely

*Brendan Scannell*

Brendan Scannell

Enclosure  
as stated.

BS/nc

DRAFT

MEETING WITH SPEAKER FOLEY AND THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND,  
13 MARCH 1991.

Present with the Speaker were Congressman Ray McGrath (R-NY), Congressman Richard Neal (D-M), Congressman Bill Lowery (R-CA), and members of the Speaker's staff. Accompanying the Minister were Ambassador MacKernan, Secretary Dorr, Assistant Secretary Gallagher, Mr Scannell, and Mr Kelleher.

In a private tete-a-tete at the outset, the Minister briefed Speaker Foley on the situation in Northern Ireland, including the talks.

The Minister expressed thanks to the Speaker for his support for the IFI. Mistakes had been made at the start but now the Fund was doing a good job. The Speaker said that he would possibly go to Ireland before the end of the year. He said "the Taoiseach keeps inviting me". He noted that President Bush and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu would attend his lunch on 18 March.

On the Birmingham Six, the Minister commented on their imminent release and said that the Home Office had got to grips with the problem. The Speaker agreed and was interested in the mechanisms by which the court would formally quash the convictions.

Congressman McGrath raised with the Minister his concerns about the backlog in citizenship applications at the New York Consulate and expressed the hope that it would be possible to resolve this problem by a technical adjustment to the legislation. The Minister responded that he had raised this matter with our Department of Justice, that written advice had been obtained from the Attorney General, and that meetings were taking place with the Department of Justice on the resolution of this problem. Congressman McGrath

said he would appreciate it if the issue could be resolved as soon as possible. Joking, he said that a resolution would "get people off his back" in his district. The Minister expressed understanding of Congressman McGrath's concerns and said that he would do his best.

In answer to a question from the Speaker, the Minister said that he viewed John Major's style as pleasant and courteous. He was an able and friendly individual and wanted to understand and be helpful about Northern Ireland. He had some domestic electoral problems arising from the poll tax. These had been illustrated through the recent loss of the by-election in Lancashire. He would be further tested in the local authority elections in May. June or the autumn were likely timings for a general election. Major was more European in outlook than Mrs Thatcher and he was looking forward to meeting with the Taoiseach.

The Speaker relayed some anecdotes about Mrs Thatcher who had recently received an award in the United States and noted that she was "virtually worshipped" on the Republican side of the House. Congressman McGrath, a Republican, intervened to say that this was not quite true and that he was opposed to her giving the keynote address at the next Republican Convention. The Speaker commented in jest that the Democrats were in favour of her giving the address.

There was a brief discussion about the talks in Northern Ireland. The Minister drew attention to the significance of the statement by Brooke that Britain no longer had strategic or economic interests in Northern Ireland.

At Congressman McGrath's request, the Minister briefed him on the 1992 process in Europe and the challenges facing the European

Community. Congressman Lowery and McGrath were interested in the effects of the Gulf war on the European/US relationship. The Minister briefed them on our perceptions, recalling the achievements of the Irish Presidency in formalising EC/US consultations and Irish support for the international coalition in the Gulf and the implementation of the Security Council Resolutions. The Minister also outlined our perceptions of the GATT issue.

In response to a question, the Minister pointed to our liaison with the United States as regards policy towards the Soviet Union and outlined our policy towards Gorbachev, the Baltic issue and the Soviet Union as a whole. In answer to a question from Congressman Lowery as to whether Gorbachev had adequate strength to survive, the Minister indicated our concern that Gorbachev was perhaps not strong enough and that it would be prudent for the Baltic States to soft-pedal on their demands at present.

MEETING WITH SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY - 14 MARCH 1991.

Present were Ambassador MacKernan, Secretary Dorr, Assistant Secretary Gallagher and Brendan Scannell.

Senator Kennedy was accompanied by Carey Parker, his Chief of Staff, and Ms Trina Vargo.

The Minister and Senator Kennedy initially spoke about the release of the Birmingham Six which had been announced earlier in the day. The Minister thanked the Senator for the interest he had shown in the plight of the Six and the role international and US opinion played in bringing about their release. The Minister added that the Royal Commission which had been announced by Home Secretary Baker was an important consideration.

On the question of the Northern Ireland talks, the Minister said that the Government had 'bent over backwards' to bring about an accommodation with Secretary of State Brooke. We were putting a lot of trust in Secretary of State Brooke particularly in the matter of timing. The timeframe on talks would be clearer after the next Anglo-Irish conference scheduled for early April. The Taoiseach had put out a short statement welcoming the agreement on talks and the ball was now basically in the unionists' court. Already, there were 'whispers of discontent' from the unionists.

Senator Kennedy asked about the Fair Employment situation in Northern Ireland and the loophole which had occurred in the new legislation. The Minister, in reply, said that the British had moved quickly on this aspect and amending legislation was being introduced as a matter of urgency. The Minister said that it would take 1 to 2 years before the effectiveness of the new legislation could be fully judged.

On the International Fund for Ireland, the Minister explained the progress achieved by the Fund and remarked that the Chairman of the Fund, Mr John McGuckian, would be here shortly to explain in greater detail the recent advances being made by the IFI.

The Minister also thanked Senator Kennedy for his tremendous help and assistance in bringing about the Immigration Act of 1990.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE LEE HAMILTON - CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST - 14 MARCH 1991.

The Minister was accompanied by Ambassador MacKernan, Secretary Dorr, Assistant Secretary Gallagher, and Brendan Scannell.

Initially, the Minister and Representative Hamilton had an exchange of views on recent developments in Northern Ireland. Representative Hamilton said that he was reasonably up-to-date on the talks. The Minister added that there was now a sound, sensible basis under which talks can get off the ground. If real political progress was achieved, it would marginalise the terrorists in Northern Ireland.

Representative Hamilton inquired as to how we viewed the new British Prime Minister. The Minister said that there was a good relationship between both Governments and that the Taoiseach and Prime Minister Major had been in contact and that we hope that in the near future a formal meeting would take place between both men.

The Minister briefed Mr Hamilton on the International Fund for Ireland and said that we appreciate the heavy demands on US foreign assistance. The US support for the IFI was very important both politically and economically. After a slow start, the IFI was achieving its set aims and was making a real impact in disadvantaged areas. The Minister added that we would like members to come to Ireland and look at first hand at what the Fund was achieving. Representative Hamilton replied that he would enjoy that.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE DANTE FASCELL - CHAIRMAN, HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE - 14 MARCH 1991.

Present were Ambassador MacKernan, Secretary Dorr, Assistant Secretary Gallagher and Brendan Scannell.

This was a brief meeting. The Minister covered the ground of the recent breakthrough in talks and briefed Representative Fascell on the developments on the International Fund. Mr Fascell said that

the House leadership was supportive of the IFI and that he would continue to take a keen interest in it.

The Minister said that Mr Fascell, on his next visit to Ireland, should perhaps visit some of the Fund projects. Representative Fascell jokingly replied that he indeed wished to visit some of the important social projects and the first on his list was Ballybunion.

MEETING WITH SENATOR PATRICK LEAHY - CHAIRMAN, SENATE  
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREIGN OPERATIONS - 14 MARCH 1991.

The Senator was accompanied by Mr Eric Newsom, staff member in the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, and the Senator's son, Kevin.

The Minister and Senator Leahy initially had a discussion on the Gulf situation, particularly regarding the enormous costs of the War.

Senator Leahy inquired if Prime Minister Major would make a difference to British-Irish relations. Senator Leahy said that his own impression, and also from a recent conversation he had with President Bush, was that Major was the type of man that one could work with. The Minister said he had met Prime Minister Major when he was Foreign Secretary and he had made a favourable impression.

The Minister said that the Taoiseach and PM Major hoped to get together earlier this year but the Gulf situation intervened. it was our expectation that a meeting would now take place in the not too distant future between both men.



Senator Leahy had not heard of the release of the Birmingham Six. The Minister went over the background of recent events in the case. Leahy remarked that there was nothing unusual that the Birmingham Six had been wrongly convicted.

The Minister briefed Senator Leahy on the developments on the Fund since their meeting last September and reminded the Senator that he had mentioned that he would like to visit Ireland in May/June. The Senator said that because of the Gulf, his schedule had been put back a number of months but that he would try and visit before too long. On the IFI, Leahy added, "I want the thing to work".

The Minister said that the Fund was now leading the British to invest in areas that otherwise would be neglected and the most disadvantaged areas in Northern Ireland were receiving priority from the Fund.

MEETING WITH REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH KENNEDY - 13 MARCH 1991.

After some preliminary discussion on the imminent release of the Birmingham Six, the likelihood of developments in the talks about talks and the case of Sean Mackin, Congressman Kennedy discussed the possibility of a ceasefire in Northern Ireland. Representative Kennedy said he was in receipt of written correspondence from Gerry Adams in which Adams raised the question of a ceasefire, he however did not propose to answer Adams' letter. In response to this information and about rumours of a peace faction within the PIRA, the Minister said that the most tangible evidence of a desire for peace on the part of the PIRA would be to cease acts of violence. In the course of the discussion, Congressman Kennedy pointed out that he had made strong condemnations of PIRA violence in a recent speech in New York.

Congresssman Kennedy also expressed a desire to be of help on Irish issues of interest to the Government. The Minister said that he could be very helpful within the Friends of Ireland. His support would be helpful on behalf of the IFI, on the issue of judicial reform within Britain in the light of the Birmingham Six and on the issue of accompaniment. On the lethal use of force issue, the Minister said that he had demanded an immediate inquiry into the Carragher killings and in response to some skepticism expressed by Representative Kennedy about the efficacy of this, the Minister said that there was more confidence in the current head of the RUC than had been the case previously.

#### Comment

Representative Kennedy seemed well-disposed to listen to our views and to respond positively to our concerns. This may reflect some desire on his part to align more closely with the Friends of Ireland.

#### MEETING WITH REP JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY, CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON RULES - 13 MARCH 1991.

Present were Ambassador MacKernan, Secretary Dorr, Assistant Secretary Gallagher, and Mr Scannell.

The Minister went over the ground on the developments of talks in Northern Ireland and briefed Representative Moakley on the imminent release of the Birmingham Six. In particular, the Minister thanked Representative Moakley for his help in ensuring the passage of the Immigration Act of 1990. The meeting was most cordial and friendly.

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