



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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FROM DUBLIN

22 December, 1991.

Mr. Sean O hUiginn,  
Assistant Secretary,  
Anglo-Irish Division,  
Department of Foreign Affairs.

*Mr. O'Connell  
Mr. O'Connell  
25/12*

Dear Assistant Secretary,

NIO presence at British Embassy in Washington

After a briefing on the political talks at the NIO, London, on Friday, I attended briefly at a Christmas Drinks Party. The main comment of interest that was made to me is that it is intended to appoint the NIO political contact man in Northern Ireland, Mr. Danny McNeill, to the British Embassy in Washington within the next month or so. \*

Mr. McNeill is an Assistant Secretary (our Counsellor rank) and will take charge of the small Northern Ireland Bureau within the Embassy which was set up last year to develop direct contact with the Irish community with, no doubt, the operation of our Embassy very much in mind.

McNeill is a Catholic (a St. Malachy's boy) whom the British expect will be well placed to cultivate the Irish American community. The appointment represents an important step in an obviously developing policy which has seen Mr. Brooke and his Ministers in North America many times over the last couple of years, the establishment of the NIO Bureau in Washington and, just last week, the appointment of another Catholic, John McGuckian, as Chairman of the IDB.

Yours sincerely,

*Declan O'Donovan*

Declan O' Donovan  
Joint Secretary

\* McNeill will not take up permanent residence until the summer but will travel back and forth in the interim.