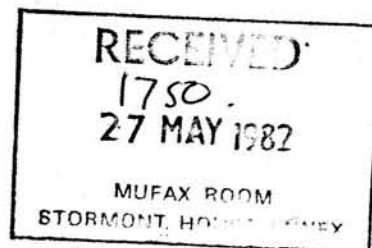


① Sir Ewart.

366/5

PS/LORD GOWRIE. (L)

21/10



cc: PS/Sofs (L&B) -
 PS/Ld Gowrie(B)
 PS/PUS (L&B)
 PS/Sir Ewart Bell
 Mr Marshall
 Mr Blelloch -
 Dr Quigley, DFP
 Mr Angel
 Mr Buxton -
 Mr Wyatt -
 Mr Blatherwick -
 Mr Harrington
 Mr Templeton -
 (with Annexes A & D only)

LORD GOWRIE'S MEETING WITH THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND

1. Lord and Lady Gowrie will be entertaining representatives of the Congressional Friends of Ireland to lunch at Hillsborough on 29 May. Sir Ewart Bell, Dr Quigley, Mr Buxton, Mr Blatherwick and Mr Templeton will attend.
2. The composition of the group and brief notes on the three Congressmen are set out in Washington telegram 1900 of 25 May, a copy of which is attached. Brief A attached attempts to set the Friends in the context of the range of Irish American interest in Northern Ireland; they constitute by far the most responsible and influential Irish American political grouping.
3. The Friends' visit to Northern Ireland, which will take up most of 29 and 30 May, is part of a five day visit to Ireland (made at the invitation of the Speaker of the Dail), during the course of which they will meet both the Taoiseach and Dr FitzGerald. At the time of writing their final programme in Northern Ireland (which is being arranged by the US Consul General, Mr Michaud) is not available, but they have expressed an intention to see John Hume (whom they know

well) Harold McCusker (whom they have met three times over the last eighteen months and who is keen to offer them hospitality in Unionist homes during their visit) as well as Bishop Eames and the Chief Constable.

4. The purpose of the meeting is partly social (it opens up a potentially useful line of personal contact between a senior NIO Minister and this important and influential group) and partly political, in that it provides an opportunity to explain the Government's Northern Ireland policies to them. This is particularly important given that Mr Haughey, whom the group will be meeting (whether before or after they meet Lord Gowrie is not clear, but after seems more likely) is likely to dismiss the devolution proposals and argue for early progress towards Irish unity, which is of course the Friends' ultimate objective too. While the Friends tend in general to follow the SDLP line and have offered no welcome to the initiative, they may well be more disposed than either Mr Haughey or the SDLP to welcome signs of political progress in Northern Ireland and the Minister may be able to build on this to engage their sympathy, if not their open support, for the initiative.

5. We hope that discussion will concentrate on political development (the brief at B is an aide memoire) and perhaps economic issues - separate briefs are provided on US investment (at C) and cross-border economic co-operation (at E). Anglo-Irish relations are also likely to be a focus of interest; a line to take and background is at D. We hope that security issues will not bulk too large, but if they do come up Lord Gowrie may care to draw on the brief at F. At G is a defensive Q and A brief on baton rounds.

David Hill
DJR HILL

INDEX TO BRIEFS

- A. Northern Ireland and Irish-American Opinion ✓
- B. Political Developments ✓
- C. US Investment in Northern Ireland
- D. Anglo-Irish Relations ✓
- E. Cross-Border Economic Co-operation
- F. General Security Brief
- G. Baton Rounds and European Parliament Decision.

NORTHERN IRELAND AND IRISH-AMERICAN OPINION

Friends of Ireland

The Friends of Ireland are a Congressional group set up in 1981 to act as a focus for responsible Irish-American opinion and as a counterweight to the pro-IRA tendencies displayed by the other two main Irish-American lobbying groups, the Irish National Caucus (INC) and the Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs. The Friends of Ireland are, in political terms, a far more "heavy weight" group than either the INC or the Ad Hoc Committee; they centre around the so-called "Four Horsemen", Senator Kennedy, Speaker O'Neill, Governor Carey and Senator Moynihan. Congressmen Foley, Shannon and Dougherty constitute the second line of leadership and are all highly influential in their own right.

The basic position of the Friends is support ^{for} an Ireland united on the basis of reconciliation between the Protestant and Catholic traditions. (A copy of their St Patrick's Day statement 1982, which sets out their position, is attached). They are active in condemning violence and in dissuading Americans from offering support to the Provisional IRA; in recent years the "Four Horsemen" have made a number of calls to the British Government to improve its human rights record in NI. On the political front they have pressed for closer co-operation between the British and Irish Governments in dealing with the problem of Northern Ireland.

The senior Friends have a very good relationship with John Hume and on most matters we would expect them to follow fairly closely

E.R.

the SDLP line; this may help to explain why, despite a general predisposition in the United States to welcome signs of political movement in Northern Ireland, the Friends have failed to produce any statement of support for the political initiative.

On the other hand, partly arising from several meetings they have had with Harold McCusker, the Friends are demonstrating an increased awareness of the complexity of the political situation in Northern Ireland and the inadequacy of simplistic solutions. Their latest St Patrick's Day statement, for example, expressed support for Irish unity but only on the basis that it could be achieved by "the consent, freely given, of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland". This was particularly significant, coming as it did only a week after Mr Haughey's inaugural speech as Taoiseach to the Dail and on the day of his speech at the White House, in both of which he notably failed to refer to the principle of consent.

Irish National Caucus and the Ad Hoc Committee

The INC is the most important Irish-American lobbying group outside Congress. It is associated with Moraid and its attitude to PIRA is ambivalent; some of its leaders (including Father Sean McManus) have in the past expressed strong support for the PIRA, although more recent statements have been less clear on this issue. The INC has close links with Congressman Biaggi's Ad Hoc Congressional Committee on Irish Affairs, which boasts a large but relatively uncommitted membership in Congress. It raises "human rights" issues in Congress and has been associated with campaigns to stop the sale of US weapons to the RUC, with attempts to set up a "Peace Forum" to which all "parties to the conflict in NI" (ie including paramilitaries) would be invited and with allegations of discrimination in employment against

E.R.

Catholics in Northern Ireland. Biaggi has also tabled a Bill in Congress to provide \$50m of assistance to Northern Ireland providing Britain announces her intention of withdrawing from Northern Ireland.

Noraid

Noraid is the main fund-raising agent for the Provisionals in the USA. It claims to have raised over \$2m over the past 10 years, although the annual amounts have diminished over recent years. The money, ostensibly for the support of prisoners' families in Northern Ireland, is channelled to two shadowy organisations in Belfast, Green Cross and the Irish Northern Aid Committee.

On 30 April 1981 a US court found that Noraid had violated the provisions of the Foreign Agents' Registration Act 1938 by failing to identify the Provisional IRA as its foreign principal. The practical effect of this judgement, which was upheld on appeal, is that Noraid is now required to register publicly as an agent of the Provisional IRA. Further public confirmation of this role has emerged as a result of the conviction of several Noraid officers on charges connected with the illegal sending of arms to Northern Ireland.

Noraid has been publicly condemned by name by the spokesmen of successive Irish governments, and, implicitly, by both the US administration and the Friends of Ireland, although neither has yet seen fit to issue a public condemnation which names Noraid specifically.

ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONSPoints to Make

- a) The White Paper acknowledged the two political identities in Northern Ireland and clearly records the Government's view that the aspiration to Irish unity is a fully legitimate aspiration and one which should not debar those who hold it and who pursue it by peaceful political means from participating in the administration of the affairs of Northern Ireland.
- b) Given the wishes of a clear majority of the people of Northern Ireland on the question of Irish unity, present discussions about the Government of Northern Ireland must take place in a UK context. That said, the Government remains convinced that closer relations between the Republic of Ireland and the UK are in the interests of all the people of the UK, particularly those living in Northern Ireland who benefit most directly from the existing close co-operation on security and stand to benefit most from the development of economic co-operation (e.g. Kinsale Gas).
- c) It was with this in mind that HMG agreed to the institutionalisation of Anglo-Irish relations in the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Council and stood up to some powerful criticism from the Unionist side towards the end of last year. I believe that this development should also reassure the minority community in Northern Ireland and encourage them to make the necessary compromises to secure political development there.

CONFIDENTIAL

E.R.

- d) Mr Haughey's unconstructive attitude to the devolution proposals has been disappointing. The Irish Government's recent statements and actions over the Falklands have also affected Anglo-Irish relations and there have been differences over community issues. All this has made it difficult for us to develop the Anglo-Irish relationship as quickly or as fully as we would have liked. For our part, we hope that a closer relationship can be pursued quickly once the present differences are behind us.

Background

The formalisation of the Anglo-Irish Relationship was begun when Mr Haughey was last Taoiseach, when he met Mrs Thatcher in December 1980. The UK's basic aims were to accommodate the SDLP demand for a wider, or Irish, dimension to any Northern Ireland settlement without making it unacceptable to the Protestants; to demonstrate to the Unionists that they did not have a veto over Anglo-Irish relations; to maintain the active co-operation of the Irish Government in security matters; and to persuade them to acquiesce in any political developments in Northern Ireland. This led through the Joint Studies to the setting up in November 1981 of the AIIC. At the time, this met all the UK's requirements. It facilitated closer and more friendly co-operation with the Irish, it encouraged the SDLP and disturbed Unionist complacency but it could be vigorously defended on the grounds that it was solely about Anglo-Irish Relations (a fit and proper subject for discussion between HMG and the Government of the Republic of Ireland) and had no implications for the future constitutional status of Northern Ireland.

The approach of the then Taoiseach, Dr FitzGerald, was entirely consistent with this. He naturally wanted the AIIC beefed up a little to provide a stronger proxy Irish Dimension for the SDLP, but the core of his Northern Ireland policy was the need to persuade the Northern

E.R.

Unionists that Irish unity was a desirable goal. The "constitutional crusade" and his political speeches on Northern Ireland were all directed to this end and the AIIC had a secondary place.

Mr Haughey has a radically different approach. He dismisses the views of the Unionists and since his election has only once - and then ambiguously and under pressure in the Dail - accepted that Irish unity can only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland. He has always taken the traditional Pianna Fail line that Irish unity should be the over-riding political aim of the Irish Government and appears to believe that the best way to achieve this is by persuading HMG to support the aim of eventual Irish unity and to set up a Conference between the two Governments and representatives from Northern Ireland (at which all sorts of comprehensive but as yet unspecified guarantees and reassurances would be provided for the Northern Unionists). This approach dictated his support for the Joint Studies and led to his criticism of Dr FitzGerald for choosing a different focus for his Northern Ireland policy. Now he is back in power, Mr Haughey has reasserted his original version, "rubbishing", the White Paper proposals and reasserting his conviction that the development of the AIIC offers the best way to achieve Irish unity (implicitly over the heads of the Unionists). As part of this approach he has called for the early establishment of an Inter-Parliamentary Body (which he refers to as a Parliamentary "Tier"). His recent statements on the Falklands crisis have also contributed greatly to the present considerable turn for the worse in Anglo-Irish relations. There have also been differences on Community issues.

The Friends of Ireland welcomed the development of closer Anglo-Irish relations in their St Patrick's Day Statement earlier this year,

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E.R.

presumably because they felt it would tend to encourage Irish unity. They should be left in no doubt that HMG appreciates the possible beneficial effects of a closer Anglo-Irish relationship on Northern Ireland's security, economy and politics; that through the acknowledgement of the two Northern Ireland identities and the White Paper proposals HMG has gone a very long way towards ensuring that the political interests of those in Northern Ireland who aspire to Irish unity are fully safeguarded; and that it is Mr Haughey who has caused the current tension in Anglo-Irish relations. The Friends also expressed support for Dr FitzGerald's "constitutional crusade" and may, in general, feel closer to him than to Mr Haughey. The Minister may like to capitalise on this by saying off the record that he is encouraged by Dr FitzGerald's more balanced appraisal and by his cautious welcome for the devolution proposals.

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