

RESTRICTED

UNDER/ 685/12
23DEC1991



FROM: D A L COOKE
SIL DIVISION
20 DECEMBER 1991

cc PS/Pay Gen (L&B) -B&M
PS/MofS (L&B) -B
PS/Mr Hanley (L&B) -B&M
PS/Mr Needham(L+B) -B&M
PS/PUS(L+B) -B
PS/Mr Fell -B
Mr Thomas -B
Mr Ledlie -B
Mr Bell -B
Mr Alston -B
Mr McNeill -B
Mr Wood -B
Mr Ralph, Washington FAX
Mr Archer, RID

(with enc - BY FAX)

23/12

PS/Secretary of State(B) -B

VISITS BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS TO THE UNITED STATES

Thank you for your minute of 4 December.

2. Both we and the Embassy do indeed offer assistance to NI politicians making freelance visits to the USA. We are especially keen that visitors receive from the Embassy an account of what it and other posts are doing to help Northern Ireland. This assistance takes a variety of forms, including arranging for visitors to see influential figures in Washington and elsewhere; organising social functions during their stay; and providing general advice and, on occasion, briefing material. (The Embassy also liaises with the US authorities on personal security for visitors where necessary.) I enclose a letter by the Head of Chancery in our Washington Embassy which explains what the Embassy was able to do for Dr Alderdice, Mr Robinson and Mr Dodds on their recent visits. I gather that Messrs Robinson and Dodds, and also Mr Maginnis, who called on the Ambassador during his trip to the US last month, greatly appreciated the assistance provided by the Embassy. For their part, the Embassy welcomed the opportunity to

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MR Maxwell

File

Mr Hays

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be helpful to the Unionists, both as a bridge-building exercise in the light of past Unionist suspicions, and because there has for some time been a clearly perceived need for the Unionists to do more to put their case across effectively in America. There is some evidence, both in remarks by Mr Dodds quoted earlier this week in the Belfast Telegraph, and in comments made by UUP officials to PAB, that this message is now getting through.

3. One problem, of course, has been that very often on these occasions we have not known at all in advance, or have found out only at the last minute, that particular visits were taking place. Mr McNeill has recently minuted helpfully about this. We are in the process of working out with the Embassy, the FCO and PAB what more we can do to make politicians aware of the facilities available (perhaps in the form of a briefing paper on HMG services abroad, contact points in Embassies and Consulates, and so forth), and to ensure that they have sufficient factual information available to them to enable them to give a balanced picture of Northern Ireland. Naturally if other parts of the system (including Ministers' Offices) pick up that such visits may be in the wind it would be a help if they could let us know.

(SIGNED)

D A L COOKE
SIL DIVISION
20 DECEMBER 1991
OAB EXT 6587

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218/87c

FROM: N P PERRY
SIL DIVISION
11 DECEMBER 1991
SIL DIVISION
DECEMBER 1991



Mr Cooke

VISITS BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS TO THE UNITED STATES

As requested, I attach a short draft reply to Mr Ferguson's note of 4 December.

VISITS BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS TO THE UNITED STATES

17/12
16/12

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N P PERRY
SIL DIVISION
11 DECEMBER 1991

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17 DEC 1991
MR Maxwell

mm 352/12

Mr Hedges
Mrs Murphy

Mr Duma

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DRAFT

FROM: D A L COOKE
SIL DIVISION
DECEMBER 1991

3. The problem, of course, cc PS/Mr Needham(L+B) -B
PS/PUS(L+B) -B
PS/Mr Fell -B
Mr Thompson (DED)
Mr Hopkins (DED)
Mr Alston -B
Mr McNeill -B
Mr Ralph, Washington

PS/Secretary of State(B) -B

VISITS BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS TO THE UNITED STATES

Thank you for your minute of 4 December.

2. Both we and the Embassy do indeed offer assistance to NI politicians making freelance visits to the US; we are especially keen that visitors receive from the Embassy an account of what it and other posts are doing to help Northern Ireland. This assistance takes a variety of forms, including arranging for visitors to see influential figures in Washington and elsewhere; organising social functions during their stay; and providing general advice and, on occasion, briefing material. (The Embassy also liaises with the US authorities on personal security for visitors where necessary.) I believe that Mr Maginnis, for example, who called on the Ambassador on his trip to the US last month, appreciated his contact with the Embassy. In the case of Messrs Robinson and Dodds, the Embassy is attempting to arrange calls for the visitors on the Ambassador, Speaker Foley, Congressman McCloskey (the Congressional Friends of Ireland) and Joe Beeman (Northern Ireland Working Group of the Presbyterian Church). In addition the Embassy has asked the Northern Ireland Partnership to host a dinner, and the visitors have also been invited to a supper party which Trevor Killen of the Northern

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Ireland Bureau is hosting for Dr John Alderdice, who is in Washington at the same time and for whom the Embassy has arranged a full programme.

3. The problem, of course, is that very often we do not know, or find out only at the last minute, that these visits are taking place. Nor, indeed, are offers of assistance always welcome. The Embassy nevertheless always responds very helpfully to our requests and attempts to put a worthwhile programme together even at very short notice. There are particular advantages, to the Embassy at the moment being seen to be helpful to the Unionists, partly as a bridge-building exercise in the light of past differences, and partly because there is a clearly perceived need for the Unionists to do more to put their case across effectively in America. We are in the process of discussing with the Embassy, the FCO and PAB what more we can do to encourage contacts between the Embassy and visiting politicians. In this regard it would be helpful if, when passing on his open invitation to NI MPs to accompany him or Mr Needham on overseas visits, the Secretary of State could remind them of the assistance that we can, given sufficient notice, provide.

D A L COOKE
SIL DIVISION
DECEMBER 1991

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SC/SILMAIL/18851

Mr. [unclear]
Pl. take into account
in the advice you
are preparing.

DMC
10/12

Mr D A Cooke
SIL, NIO B

FROM: G R ARCHER
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND DEPARTMENT

DATE: 9 DECEMBER 1991

cc Mr R J Alston NIO B
Mr D McNeill NIO B
Mr R P Ralph WASHINGTON
Mr B Kirk, BIS NEW YORK

KEN MAGINNIS MP

1. Richard Ralph's letter of 19 November to you about Ken Maginnis, is of considerable interest. I am glad that the Ambassador was able to see him and that he appreciated his contact with the Embassy. I note that he was encouraged to bring back the word that the Embassy are ready to help.

2. This prompts me to enquire whether there is anything more that we can do from Belfast and London to steer suitable politicians to the Embassy. I appreciate that Ken is in a rather different category from some of his colleagues and that high profile contacts with other of his colleagues might have a down side elsewhere. However, I shall be interested in your comments and those of Danny McNeill on whether there is any role for us in doing more to encourage visitors to the United States to get an account from the Embassy of the American scene and what the Embassy and other posts are doing to help Northern Ireland. As seen from here, the more we can do to encourage such contacts, the better.

SIGNED

G R ARCHER

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FROM:

DAVID FERGUSON
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (B)
4 DECEMBER 1991

*Pl. discuss with Washington (who
are, I think, providing assistance*

cc: PS/Mr Needham (L&DED)
PS/PUS (L&B)
PS/Mr Fell
Mr Loughran (DED)
Mr Hopkins (IDB)
Mr Alston
Mr McNeill

f advice.
JMC
5/12

-	T
-	B
-	B
-	T
-	T
-	B
-	B

MR COOKE - B

VISITS BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLITICIANS TO THE UNITED STATES

Dr Paisley mentioned to the Secretary of State, in the margins of a meeting on Monday afternoon, that two of his colleagues (Mr Robinson and Mr Dodds) were just about to leave for a two week trip to the United States. Unfortunately, the notice was much too short (Mr Robinson and Mr Dodds leave today) to offer any practical assistance, though I understand from the Lord Mayor's Office that in any event they have already been in contact with the Embassy who have been most helpful in facilitating and arranging part of the programme.

2. For the future the Secretary of State left an open invitation to Dr Paisley and his colleagues to join him or Mr Needham on overseas trips to the US, especially where the emphasis was on inward investment in the Province. He referred to his own trip earlier this year, when he had been accompanied for part of the time by Mr McGrady, and Mr Needham's more recently, when he had been accompanied by Mr Maginnis. Both had been extremely helpful.

SDS/SOFS/12668

3. The Secretary of State said he would be leaving a similar invitation with Mr Molyneuax when he next saw him. Meanwhile he would be grateful for advice on what guidance and assistance the office can and/or does give on freelance visits, such as that just being undertaken by Messrs Robinson and Dodds.

Signed

DAVID FERGUSON
PS/Secretary of State (B)
4 December 1991

SDS/SOFS/12668