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1. cc to Alexander MS
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BY FAX  
INF 026/546/2

Mr Jonathan Powell  
British Embassy  
Washington

Dear Jonathan,

cc. PS/SJS (L+B)  
PS/Mr Smith (L, DOE + DED)  
PS/Sir J Wheeler (L, B+DFP) British Consulate-General  
PS/Michael Angram (L, B+DENI) Boston  
PS/Baroness Denton (L, DHSS + DANI)  
PS/PUS (L+B)  
PS/Mr Fell  
Mr Legge  
Mr Thomas  
Mr Laughlan  
Mr Sample  
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Mr Steele  
Mr Watkins  
Mr Williams  
Mr Wood (L+B)  
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13 April 1994

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UNDER/ 1115  
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- 4 MAY 1994

CENT SEC

# VISIT OF SIR PATRICK MAYHEW, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Sir Patrick Mayhew, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, accompanied by David Fell, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Jonathan Stephens, Private Secretary, Andy Wood, Director of Northern Ireland Information Services, and Peter Reid, visited Boston from 10-12 April. The programme included a useful balance of speaking engagements, media events and informal conversations with key players in Boston's political scene.

2. The Secretary of State met with top Massachusetts political figures including Governor Weld, Senate President Bulger, the Speaker of the House of Representatives Flaherty, Mayor Menino, and Cardinal Law. He addressed an academic seminar at Boston College, and Harvard's Centre for International Affairs (CFIA), which also hosted a lunch. The Committee on Foreign Relations (CFR), and the Irish American Partnership (IAP) also hosted a breakfast meeting. The Secretary of State gave interviews to the Boston Globe, the Boston Herald, the Christian Science Monitor, Monitor Radio, BBC Northern Ireland, and Sky TV. I hosted a reception followed by a dinner.

3. Much has happened since the Secretary of State's last visit to Boston in May 1993. The highlight for Irish-Americans here was the Joint Declaration (JD), which is admired as a "superbly crafted document" and, more importantly, as a turning point in the way in which Britain and the Republic of Ireland are tackling the Northern Ireland situation. The JD is seen as an





example of solidarity between the two countries and a maturing of the relationship between the British and Irish Governments. In addition the fact that since the JD both Governments have stood shoulder to shoulder in pursuit of peace is also seen as positive. There is also respect here for the Secretary of State and the Prime Minister for the personal and political risks which they took in using the channels of communication with Sinn Fein. The Secretary of State's visit could not therefore have taken place at a better time.

4. In my "Setting the Scene" piece (copy attached), I said that the Secretary of State would be given a "friendly and informed reception in Boston". He was. The tone was set at the Irish American Partnership breakfast, which was attended by 110 Irish-American business leaders, some of whom had travelled out of State to be there. The Secretary of State's relaxed, informal style and his straightforward replies to questions surprised and pleased the audience. The questions were positive and supportive. During question time the Secretary of State was given the opportunity to reinforce our tough stance on Loyalist violence - an important point in this City which has always accused us of being less than even-handed in our approach.

5. During a friendly meeting with the Senate President the Secretary of State briefed him on the situation in Northern Ireland. The Secretary of State then gave a five-minute address to the Senate which included reference to the JD, and solidarity between British and Irish Governments regarding Sinn Fein. It was initially disconcerting for the Secretary of State as he appeared to be addressing forty empty seats and a collection of officials and journalists. But, as the Senate President told me afterwards, the address was being televised and the Senators who were present had crowded around each side of the podium so that they would be seen by the TV cameras! He added that the Secretary of State's address would be televised to the Senate Chamber and the House and also on Boston TV.

6. When the Secretary of State called on Governor Weld, the Governor said that he and House Speaker Flaherty, plan to visit Belfast and Dublin together, possibly in November. The Secretary of State welcomed the visit and invited them to stay at Hillsborough House. During my subsequent conversation with the Governor's staff they told me that November is too early and that the visit is more likely to take place in the Spring of 1995. In addition that the Governor will then continue to London and Edinburgh on his own to head a financial services trade mission. We will follow this up with the Governor's office.





7. It was clear from the Secretary of State's call on Mayor Menino, that the Mayor was not focused on Northern Ireland. The discussion centred on policing, and the judicial system. The Mayor said that he plans to visit Dublin and Londonderry, at John Hume's invitation, in the autumn. The Secretary of State said that he hoped the Mayor would visit Belfast as well to which he agreed. The Mayor also plans to extend the trip to London. As you know there is an outstanding invitation for the Mayor to visit the City of London.

8. The Secretary of State and Cardinal Law spent about half-an-hour in a private conversation - at Cardinal Law's request. This was followed by a general discussion which focused on the need for the British Government to reassure the Nationalist community that "parity of esteem" for Nationalists would continue after Sinn Fein renounces violence. Cardinal Law said that this was a matter of concern for the Nationalist community. The Secretary of State whilst accepting this point said that it was a question of balance and that he had to be careful that he did not lose the confidence of the Unionists. The Cardinal also proposed that there should be a programme for young political and community leaders in Northern Ireland to come to Boston and spend some time at the Kennedy School in preparation for increased responsibilities which would eventually fall on their shoulders at the time of a political settlement. I said that I would follow this up with the Cardinal's office.

9. The Secretary of State also had useful exchanges of views with academics in Boston. At Boston College he addressed about 30-40 Irish Studies students and faculty. The questioning was direct and informed. But the more important event was the Harvard seminar which was attended by over 50 Fellows and academics with an interest in Northern Ireland or in conflict resolution. Once again the Secretary of State was master of the occasion. He spoke for about twenty minutes during which he reviewed the talks process, the JD, and clarification, and re-emphasised the need for a permanent cessation of violence before Sinn Fein is allowed to enter into political talks. The questions were well-informed and gave the Secretary of State an opportunity to make it clear that there are no grounds for comparing Mr Adams with Mandela or Mugabe. The questioning lasted over an hour and could have gone on longer. The Executive Director of the CFIA described the Secretary of State's audience as the most high-powered audience which she had known during her time at CFIA.

10. The breakfast hosted by the Committee on Foreign Relations was attended by 40-50 multipliers. Again a well-informed audience, genuinely interested in the situation in Northern





Ireland, the prospects for peace and a lasting political settlement. As one of the members told me later, support for Mr Adams in Boston is ebbing away as a result of his refusal to condemn violence. He added that Mr Adams' visit to the US has shown Sinn Fein in its true colours.

11. The media events went well. The op-ed piece written by the Secretary of State which appeared in the Boston Globe on the first day of the Secretary of State's visit to Boston was a first-rate curtain raiser. The Secretary of State's interviews with Kevin Cullen of the Boston Globe, Bob Connolly, of the Boston Herald, and his interview with Monitor Radio, (broadcast on National Public Radio today), and the Christian Science Monitor resulted in comprehensive coverage which gave a positive spin to the British Government's position over Northern Ireland.

12. My reception, to which about 90 people came, was a good opportunity for the Secretary of State to meet a cross section of members of the Irish-American community. This was followed by a dinner for 40 key players at the Somerset Club. For most it was their first visit to the Club - a WASP bastion. The atmosphere was warm and friendly.

13. Lady Mayhew also tackled a full programme which started on the first morning with callisthenics at 8 a.m. with City Year youngsters, followed by time spent at a City Year project at a homeless shelter, where she helped to fix sheet rock wall cladding. Lady Mayhew's programme also focused on community service projects, particularly those involving at-risk youth and conflict resolution. In addition, three youth programme managers who had visited Northern Ireland on a British Council programme in February had a chance to share with Lady Mayhew a comparative overview of programmes in Boston and in Northern Ireland. Lady Mayhew also met with the American coordinators of a Boston conference on women's issues scheduled for November 1994 which will include participants from Northern Ireland, the Republic, and Massachusetts.

14. The Secretary of State capitalised on the existing goodwill in Boston with his direct and sincere approach making the visit an outstanding success. The Secretary of State took every opportunity to say that although there may be some sympathy in Boston for Sinn Fein's request for clarification, at no time have Sinn Fein set out what needs to be clarified. More importantly he made it clear that Sinn Fein must announce a permanent cessation of violence before they can join the political talks process, and that the gun and the bomb has no place in a democracy. The Secretary of State's emphasis





on the way the British and the Irish Governments are standing shoulder to shoulder, also went down well. An encouraging aspect of the visit is that Irish-Americans here are now thinking about what happens after Sinn Fein's renunciation of violence, in particular whether institutions would be put in place to ensure that the Nationalist community would have "parity of esteem". In this context his willingness to support, if necessary, a Bill of Right for Northern Ireland was well received.

15. I am grateful to the Secretary of State for tackling a rigorous programme with great energy and enthusiasm. He has helped to make our job here that much easier. As a result of his visit we have consolidated our hold on the high ground. But I give the last word to the Speaker of the House of Representative, Charles Flaherty, who when he met the Secretary of State in the corridors of the State House, told him, "The bleachers are rooting for you, Sir Patrick" ("we're all behind you on this one!" in baseball jargon).

*Yours ever*  
*John*

John Owen

c.c. Mr Graham Archer, RID, FCO, London (By Fax)  
Mr Mark Pellew LVO, NAD, FCO, London "  
Mr Jonathan Margetts, SIL, NIO, London "  
Mr Peter Innes, BIS, New York "  
✓ Mr Jonathan Stephens, PS, SOSNI (By Bag)



## SETTING THE SCENE

The Secretary of State will be given a friendly and informed reception in Boston with his interlocutors focussing on the Downing Street Declaration, and the prospects for peace and political development in the North. Of all US cities it is Boston in which the most abiding and helpful interest in Northern Ireland figures most prominently.

The Secretary of State's visit comes at a time when the euphoria which greeted the Downing Street Declaration in Boston Irish circles has gradually given way to dismay and perplexity at the failure of Sinn Fein to respond positively. The statesmanship of the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach in bringing about the historic Declaration and the Prime Minister and Secretary of State's role in handling the follow-up have met with warm recognition and praise from a community not used to giving credit to the British for integrity. The Joint Declaration is seen by many here as opening a new Chapter in the relationships between the British and Irish Governments in which an equal footing and shared commitment figure prominently. What is perceived as the pivotal role of Boston's favourite Irishman, John Hume, in creating the framework for the Declaration, through his talks and agreement with Gerry Adams, also contributed to the Declaration's warm reception. But there is increasing concern that with continuing Sinn Fein prevarication, John Hume is allowing himself to be manoeuvred into the position of apologist for them.

The granting of a visa to Gerry Adams initially played well in Boston, as being long overdue and offering the opportunity for Adams to signal a dramatic breakthrough. When it became clear that Adams was not going to deliver, the disappointment was reflected in a visible change of mood and some critical editorials. Perceptions have changed to the extent that it is no longer the British that are seen as unreasonable, but Sinn Fein. Although there have been calls for HMG to provide the "clarifications" demanded repeatedly by Sinn Fein, these have been balanced by regular acknowledgement that the Declaration is perfectly clear, that Sinn Fein has repeatedly failed to explain what it wants clarified and that both Governments have been rightly resolute in not allowing Sinn Fein the opportunity to enter into negotiations prior to a cessation of violence. But the IRA's temporary Easter ceasefire has brought about a slight change of mood in the press which has focused on the Prime Minister's "negative" response.

Ray Flynn's resignation as Mayor of Boston and his removal to self-imposed exile as Ambassador to the Vatican should have lifted the pressure for the appointment of a US Peace Envoy to Northern Ireland. Although sentiment in general in Boston now regards it as an idea that has passed its sell-by date, Flynn and his acolytes have continued to press the case, to the obvious annoyance of the State Department, which has made it clear that the Administration is no longer



ANNEX 1 (contd)

interested in pursuing the idea. (Flynn has been a difficult problem for the State Department to handle. His wish to play a global trouble-shooting role, his meddling in Irish affairs, and his very public agonising over whether to run for Governor of Massachusetts have led to some well-publicised disagreements, culminating in the State Department's refusal to give Flynn leave to return to Boston for St Patrick's Day.) But this has not eliminated US interest in a constructive role in the conflict. In his St Patrick's Day address Cardinal Law proposed the establishment of a US Commission of Enquiry for Northern Ireland.

The MacBride Campaign continues to attack the effectiveness and sincere motives of the FEA, and challenges HMG's argument that MacBride discourages much needed investment. We have to work hard to counter-act this. Only the Governor's veto prevented the adoption of MacBride contract compliance legislation by the State at the end of last year. Similar bills have already been introduced into both Houses this year.

Although Boston now has an Italo-American Mayor, the City remains Irish America's capital, where the Irish hold prominent positions in City Hall and the State legislature and government. They dominate the public service; they command the heights in real estate development and are increasingly powerful in other financial sectors; many have become highly successful businessmen who, like the Kennedys, have assumed the mantle of the old Yankee establishment; but they continue to take pride in displaying their humble roots. Our credibility and dialogue on Northern Ireland thus affect HMG's interests well beyond those directly linked to the Island of Ireland. Its implications ripple through the financial, academic, political and media circles, in which Boston holds national (and international) clout.

Consulate-General Boston  
6 April 1994