

RESTRICTED



British Embassy
Washington

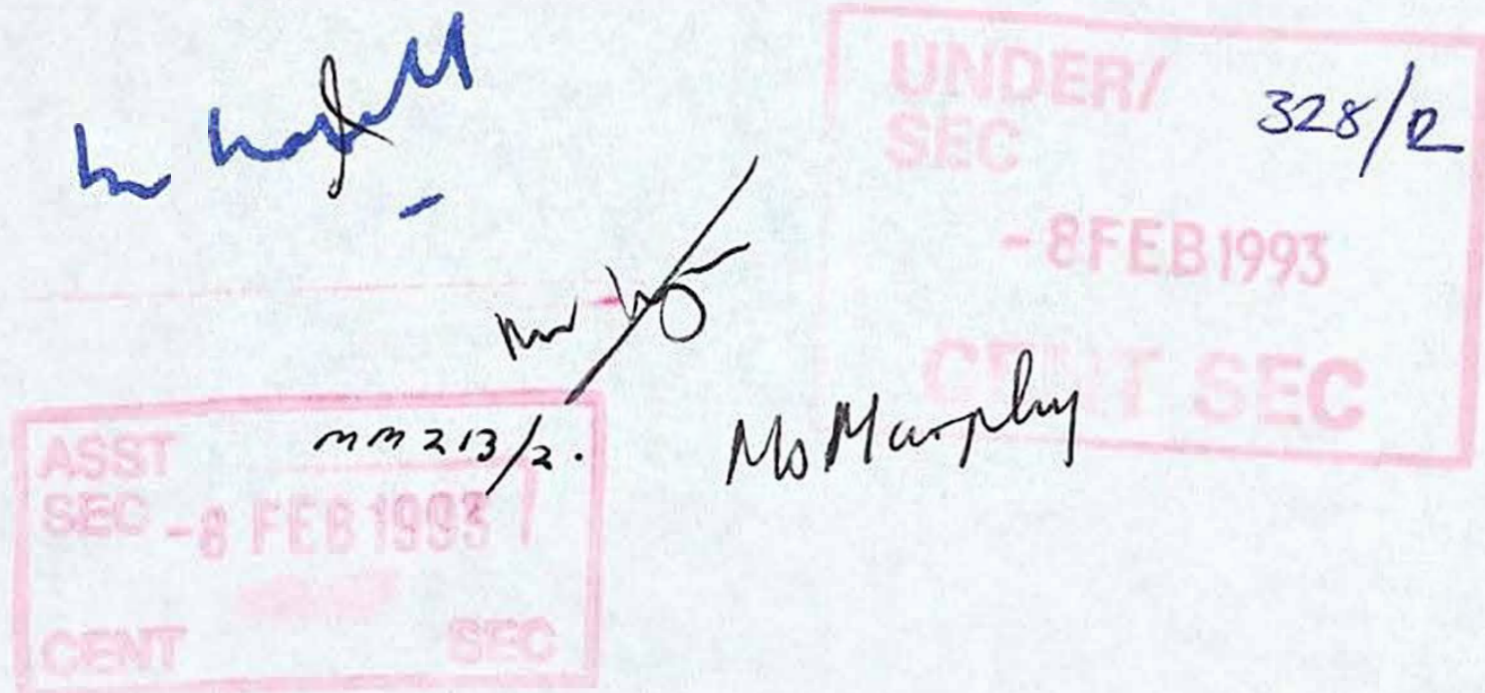
27 January 1993

Graham Archer Esq
RID
FCO

BY FAX

3100 Massachusetts Ave N.W.
Washington D.C. 20008-3600

Telephone: (202)
Telex: RCA 211427 or 216760-WUI 64224
Facsimile: (202)



Dear Graham

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Your letter of 21 January and David Brooker's minute of 22 January asked for our thoughts on how to handle the Northern Ireland issue with the new Administration. The following has been cleared with the Ambassador.
2. As you know, we have been lobbying the Clinton team on Northern Ireland for some time (see our teleno 81 for the Ambassador's most recent discussion with Tony Lake, National Security Adviser) and they have given us indications that Clinton will now be more cautious. The Irish/American pressure groups are lobbying hard, but their influence should not be over-estimated. Lake and Christopher will now be important players as well as Flynn and Morrison. Nor should we over-estimate how much of a priority Northern Ireland is for President Clinton. In the foreign policy field he already has his plate full with Iraq, Bosnia, Haiti and Somalia. Nonetheless we will need to keep up the pressure on the Administration to move away from Clinton's election promises.
3. We should continue to oppose the concept of a "peace envoy" to conduct shuttle diplomacy between the internal parties (including Sinn Fein) and the British and Irish Governments. As Morrison made clear to us (my letter of 6 January), if we and the Irish Government oppose a "peace envoy", even the Irish-American radicals accept one cannot be appointed. The fact that the Irish-American groups are floundering around looking for alternatives suggests that they understand this only too well. The Flynn idea of giving the US Ambassador in Dublin a Northern Ireland role is also unacceptable. The US Ambassador in Dublin would have no accreditation in Northern Ireland, and the US Ambassador in London would be unlikely to countenance the undermining of his authority.



RESTRICTED

4. To meet these objectives we recommend the following strategy:

- We should get the new Irish Government on board. Previous statements by Reynolds indicated some ambivalence: he opposed a peace envoy while the talks were going on, but some initiative might be necessary if the talks failed. It may be that the Irish feel that greater American interest gives them greater leverage over us. But, if we can agree a united front, we will have more authority in talking to the Americans.
- We should try to play the issue long. Even Morrison accepts that nothing the Americans do should cut across our attempts to get the talks going. As long as we are engaged in a talks process - which Clinton supports - we should be well placed on the subject.
- The Ambassador will keep in close touch with Tony Lake and Peter Tarnoff (the new Under Secretary of State in the State Department, likely to be the official dealing with this issue). He will emphasise the need for Americans to consult us before doing anything.
- The Prime Minister should raise the subject briefly with President Clinton when he comes here and offer to keep him fully informed of progress made in the talks. Sir Patrick Mayhew will also have an opportunity to discuss the subject with the Administration and Congressional leaders in April. We recommend we avoid any commitment to a formal inter-governmental dialogue (proposed in your paper).
- We should concert closely with Speaker Foley. Foley has been extremely helpful on Northern Ireland, and forthright in his public condemnation of IRA violence. He has already spoken to President Clinton to put him right on Northern Ireland. He opposes the idea of a "peace envoy". We are in touch with his office about the idea of a trip by Foley to Ireland - North and South - which could act as a fact-finding mission. He could then report back to President Clinton. Foley's involvement should minimise the risk of interference by Flynn, Morrison and others. Foley's people think this could lead to some positive initiative such as an increase in the US contribution to the International Fund for Ireland.

5. The trick will be to find some positive way in which Clinton can deliver on his election promises and demonstrate interest in Northern Ireland without making matters worse. We should bear in mind that while we can and should resist a "peace envoy" or anyone who might appear to have a negotiating mission, we should deal in the usual cooperative way with anyone sent on a fact-finding or "how can we help?" mission. Clinton will want to find a way of saving face.

6. We will speak to the NSC again about the St Patrick's Day message nearer the event. We have already told the State Department we want to be consulted. The Irish Government will also

RESTRICTED



RESTRICTED

seek to insert their views. Foley will play a key role here too.

8. Dermot Gallaher has returned to Dublin for consultations and the Ambassador has asked him to let us know how the Irish Embassy proposes to handle this on their return.

Completed

R P Ralph

R P Ralph

cc: PS/Mr Chilcott -
PS/Mr Fell -
Mr Thomas, NIO(L) -
Mr Ledlie, NIO(B) -
Mr Watkins, NIO(B)
Mr Williams, NIO(B) -
Mr Steel, NIO(B)
Mr McCade, NIO(B)
Mr Dodds, NIO(B)
Mr Brooker, SIL Division, NIO(L) -
Mr Pellew, NAD, FCO
HMA, DUBLIN
Mr Owen, BOSTON
Mr Kirk, BIS NEW YORK

RESTRICTED