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Title: Note from CV Whelan, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Embassy of Ireland to Great Britain, to Ambassador of Ireland to Great Britain Donal O'Sullivan, reporting a conversation between Minister for Finance George Colley and John Hume MP, regarding the talks between Taoiseach Jack Lynch, Prime Minister Edward Heath and Northern Ireland Prime Minister Brian Faulkner at Chequers.

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Ambassador

Mr Colley, Minister for Finance, telephoned shortly before 12 noon today with the following message which he asked to have passed to the Taoiseach, following his return from Chequers this evening.

Mr John Hume, M.P. telephoned Mr Colley very late last night with two points which he would like to stress in connection with the current talks. The first point was mentioned by Mr Hume at the meeting in Dublin last Saturday, but he did not have the opportunity to develop it. This is the suggestion that the Taoiseach should ask what are the objections to reunification. Mr Hume gave the following three reasons for this suggestion:-

- (1) to enable an offensive proposition to be adopted by ourselves and by the Northern opposition;
- (2) to get the objections on the record; and
- (3) to have the objections listed so that remedies could be put forward to deal with them by ourselves and by the Northern opposition.

To these three reasons, Mr Colley added a fourth of his own - to enable the Taoiseach to say afterwards that the question of unity was discussed.

The second point stressed by Mr Hume was that he had a conversation in London last week with "a very eminent person" who had pointed out that the Downing Street Declaration had included a prohibition on the Stormont Government from making statements on matters outside their domestic jurisdiction. It was up to Mr Heath to enforce this prohibition and Mr Colley remarked that its implications were very significant.

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On this latter point, I informed Mr Colley that, in the course of his speech on the Northern Ireland debate on 22nd September 1971 Mr Wilson had stressed this very point and that Mr Hume had been present in the Gallery and had remarked to me that it was very important. Mr Colley confirmed that Mr Hume had also discussed it privately and that the suggestion had been made by the "very eminent person" that the prohibition in question should be enforced.

The section from Mr Wilson's speech (Columns 25 and 26 of Hansard, Vol. 823, No. 196) reads as follows:-

"I referred just now to the telegram the right hon. Gentleman sent to Mr Lynch. Perhaps its tone, however indefensible, was meant as a proper rebuke to Mr Faulkner, because Mr Faulkner, contrary to the terms of the Downing Street Declaration, sought to assert a non-existent right of the Stormont Government to make international declarations. This was laid down quite clearly two years ago, if not earlier, because the second article in the Downing Street Declaration was a clear warning, after the previous Northern Ireland Government had been tempted into making international pronouncements, that

'The United Kingdom Government will take full responsibility for asserting this principle' - that is, the principle of Northern Ireland domestic jurisdiction -

'in all international relationships'".



C.V. Whelan

September 27 1971