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Title: Draft summary of a discussion at the White House, Washington DC, USA, between Dr Patrick John Hillery, Minister for Foreign Affairs, with Richard Milhous Nixon, President of the USA, regarding topics of mutual interest including the situation in Northern Ireland.

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DRAFT SUMMARY OF
DISCUSSION BETWEEN DR PATRICK J HILLERY MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS WITH PRESIDENT RICHARD M NIXON
AT THE WHITE HOUSE 6TH OCTOBER 1972

The Minister was welcomed warmly by the President. The Minister was accompanied by Dr. Seán Ó hÉideáin, Counsellor of Embassy, Washington D.C., and the President by Mr. John D. Moore, U.S. Ambassador to Ireland; Ambassador Marion Smoak, Acting Chief of Protocol, Department of State and Col. Richard Kennedy of Dr. Kissinger's staff, National Security Council, the White House.

2. Press and visit to Ireland: During the preliminary photographing President Nixon addressing the dozen pressmen and photographers said that on his next visit to Ireland he would bring a plane-load of pressmen and photographers with him, at least one way by Aer Lingus-Irish Airlines, to Ireland. The Minister shot in, "To Shannon". The President indicated agreement and said Ireland was a beautiful country well worth a visit. The press then withdrew.
3. Landing Rights: The President said that landing rights were one of the stickiest matters, but a confrontation had been avoided and the matter was postponed. He introduced the subject of more use of Chicago and said some of his people said this was impossible. He would like to examine again after the (presidential and congressional) elections what arrangement could be made. He knew the small country argument but so many nations had flag carriers. The matter was getting his personal attention, with a view to a fair deal for both sides.
4. The Minister said the U.S. did well in getting rights early, in 1944. Mr. Walsh-Poage and other U.S. officials connected with the matter then and since knew the facts. At the time there were people in Europe who did not want to let America in at all. The present landing rights situation was a very serious one for Ireland. It was much more than a matter between airlines. The Government's whole development policy for the West of Ireland was put in jeopardy by the demands made by American airlines.
5. The Minister said the Irish Government had put an airport, Shannon, an industrial estate and housing - all where there had been a bog. This was done at great capital cost, chiefly to provide jobs. He said that Shannon was of crucial importance and any suggestion of by-passing Shannon and risking making it a ghost town would provoke a strong reaction from the people affected. Ambassador Moore said that the Irish were afraid Shannon would become another Gander. But the Americans (he said) would stop in Shannon en route to Dublin. The Minister said that in five years' time a different attitude (to stopping at Shannon) could possibly be taken by the Americans. There would be an economic argument against two stops in a small country.

6. The President again referred to Chicago and that the Americans would have to give the same rights to other countries' airlines. Ambassador Moore mentioned that Irish Airlines were in Chicago already (via Montreal) but that a Chicago co-terminal with New York and Boston would economise the use of aircraft.
7. The Minister repeated that anything the President could do would not overcome the political problem. Anything involving landing rights in Dublin would cause an immediate strong reaction among the people who felt threatened in their jobs and livelihood.
8. The President saw a certain resemblance to Brasilia (the federal capital of Brazil). He had seen it as a wilderness in 1967, now it was a key-place and developed. He noted that the Irish attitude on landing rights was largely a matter of Government policy in relation to jobs. He would have that in mind.
9. The President congratulated the Minister on his EEC appointment. The Minister said that ~~from~~ the country's viewpoint the first two years would perhaps be difficult - the period of adjustment. Ireland had a basically good economy. The President said Ireland's greatest asset was hard work, guts and drive. The Minister said competition would be good for Ireland in the long run.
10. Northern Ireland: Apropos of Northern Ireland the President said Ireland was a country that had suffered so much in its history. If he thought the U.S. getting in could help he would go in. He was concerned but did not want to stir up hopes that could not be realized. He did not want to hurt the Taoiseach or his people.
11. The Minister said the Irish Government condemned violence on both sides. There were extremists on both sides. The Taoiseach, in working for a peaceful solution, had taken the only course. The Government had solid support in the country as had been shown by the recent Cork by-election. The problem was that the British never had understood the Irish question, though the two peoples got on well together. He asked the Americans only to ask the British Government to "talk to Ireland", bring Dublin into the discussion. A friendly word from the U.S. to the British would help.
12. The President said public intervention did not work. "What you do, you do quietly". In the U.S. they would resent intervention in U.S. affairs. If they intervened they could be asked what about their own black problem and about ~~Burundi~~.
13. The Minister said the situation in the North of Ireland was grave and could become a morass. Friendly American influence could be helpful. In that context the Irish Government hoped that President Nixon would gently suggest to the British to bring Dublin into the discussions for a political solution.

14. The President said they would keep in touch and do what they could. They were very interested and concerned.
15. After some general discussion on history and reading the Minister took his leave. The meeting had lasted about forty minutes. The atmosphere throughout was cordial and friendly.

S.

Embassy of Ireland
12th October 1972