

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



Reference Code:	2009/135/716
Creation Date(s):	November 1979
Extent and medium:	32 pages
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Access Conditions:	Open
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OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE TAOISEACH, MR. J. LYNCH, T.D.
TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 7TH-15TH NOVEMBER,
1979.

*1. MTU
 2. Textiles
 3. Steel
 4. Rhodena
 5. Carbon
 6. Spinning*

BRIEF ON ISSUES

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23 *[Signature]*

The Atkins Initiative

1. During the Summer Mr. Atkins let it be known that he proposed an initiative aimed at, in the words of the Queen's Speech to the new Westminster Parliament, restoring to the people of Northern Ireland more control over their own affairs. Mr. Atkins initially made clear that a number of options had to be ruled out - in particular a simple return to the old Stormont system, integration - the withdrawal of British troops or the establishment of Irish unity as the single goal of British policy. He also emphasised that any initiative would have to be well prepared because of the absence of common ground between the Northern Ireland political parties and because he would probably only have one opportunity during his tenure of office to launch an initiative.

2. In the event, the launching of the initiative in Westminster on 25 October seems to have been rather rushed. We received a few hours notice and the Northern Ireland M.P.'s seem also to have had very little notice. It has been widely rumoured that the Northern Ireland Office and indeed Mr. Atkins himself thought it too soon to unveil the initiative but that Mrs. Thatcher insisted that the process be begun.

3. As regards the timing of the initiative, British tactics can be presumed to have taken account of three dates: the SDLP Conference on 5-7 November, the Taoiseach's official visit to the U.S. and Mrs. Thatcher's own U.S. visit 17-19 December. Because of the procedural nature of the announcement of 25 October, the fact that such an initiative is under way will tend to limit the criticism of the British Government that will be made on each of the above occasions.

4. The full text of Mr. Atkin's statement of 25 October is given in Annex I. In essence what he proposes is to summon a conference of the principal political parties in Northern Ireland to seek the highest level of agreement on proposals for a transfer of responsibility back to locally elected representatives in Northern Ireland. The proposed conference would have before it a document setting out the range of powers and responsibilities which the British Government would be prepared to see transferred

and a range of options on how the transferred powers might be exercised. Responsibility for security would not be transferred. Publication of the document is awaited but Mr. Atkins wishes the conference to convene before the end of November.

5. The initiative was immediately attacked as mere temporization. It delays still further the adoption of firm proposals by the British Government and can be interpreted as a further attempt, along the lines of Mr. Mason's five point plan, to saddle the Northern politicians themselves with responsibility for the impasse.

6. The text of the statement issued by the Government Information Services is given in Annex II. This statement was drafted with two main considerations in mind. First, to bring out the procedural nature of what Mr. Atkins has proposed, and second, not to assert at this early stage an Irish Government position which could be used either to undermine or to justify the initiative.

7. The reactions of the main Northern Ireland political parties can be summarized as follows:-

SDLP

Fitt was pessimistic and critical of Conservative policy, at Westminster but did not reject the proposal. Seamus Mallon on November described the proposals as "a pitiful mouse-like nibble at the problem". The SDLP may take a more definite line at their party conference but some at least of their leading members are aware of the desirability of the proposed conference being rejected by unionists, rather than the SDLP.

OUP

Both in Westminster and subsequently have rejected the idea of participating in the conference which Molyneux described as time-

wasting and window-dressing. Molyneaux's has been the most explicit rejection of the proposals, presumably because of his fear of being outflanked by Paisley and because the proposal runs counter to his own integrationist line. The NIO seems to attach the greatest importance to persuading the OUP to participate and indeed have said that without them the conference would be pointless.

DUP

Paisley used the Westminster debate to project his own view of the form an initiative should take. However, while critical on the detail of Mr. Atkin's initiative he has not rejected it.

Alliance

Napier has said he welcomed the initiative with reservations. Alliance would of course participate in the proposed conference.

8. In a departure from the classical position that Northern Ireland is an internal British problem, the British Foreign Office briefed a number of Foreign embassies in London on the initiative and in the case of at least some of them, sought expressions of support. The principal embassies briefed (apart from our own) were the U.S., the other community member states, Australia and Canada. Both the U.S. and the Netherlands have made statements about the proposal, the texts of which are in Annex III. France, the only other country whom we know to have been asked for an expression of support, appears to have decided against making a statement.

9. The effect of British lobbying has been to give the proposal a very high profile in official and other interested circles in the U.S. It is to be anticipated that there will be pressure during the Taoiseach's visit to put disproportionate emphasis on the initiative and even to employ forms of words which would commit the Irish Government to endorsing the initiative. However,

the actual content of the initiative is as yet unknown and all that is known is the proposed procedure, which has when looked at objectively, very limited chances of success. Any endorsement by the Government, or indeed ostentatious endorsement by the U.S. Government, would tend to diminish still further the chances of the initiatives being successful. Certainly it is difficult to see any advantage either in general or to the Government in departing from the "wait and see" attitude of the G.I.S. statement of 25 October. For the British to attempt to exercise indirect pressure to make such a change in our attitude would tend to show the Atkins' initiative as a cynical manoeuvre aimed principally at opinion in the U.S.

Department of Foreign Affairs
November 1979

11. THE DOCUMENT WILL SET OUT THE RANGE OF POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES WHICH THE GOVERNMENT FOR ITS PART WOULD BE PREPARED TO SEE TRANSFERRED FROM WESTMINSTER.

12. THE DOCUMENT WILL SET OUT AS OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE CONFERENCE A NUMBER OF WAYS IN WHICH THE TRANSFERRED POWERS MIGHT BE EXERCISED; AND IN EACH CASE WITH WHAT H.M. GOVERNMENT WOULD REGARD AS RESPONSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE INTERESTS OF THE MINORITY.

13. RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAW AND ORDER IN THE PROVINCE, WHICH - AS I INDICATED IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS EARLIER TODAY - REMAINS THE GOVERNMENT'S OVERRIDING PRIORITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND, WOULD NOT BE TRANSFERERED.

14. I SHALL SHORTLY BE APPROACHING THE PARTY LEADERS CONCERNED TO DISCUSS WITH THEM THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR A CONFERENCE TO BE CONVENED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND, I WOULD HOPE, BY THE END OF NOVEMBER.

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15. OUR AIM WILL BE TO SECURE FROM THE CONFERENCE, DRAWING ON SUGGESTIONS IN QHDUKGN SULTATIVE DOCUMENT, WORKABLE AND ACCEPTABLE ARRANGEMENTS FOR RESTORING TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND GREATER RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONDUCT OF THEIR OWN AFFAIRS WHICH WE CAN THEN RECOMMEND TO THIS HOUSE IN FULFILMENT OF OUR COMMITMENT IN THE QUEEN'S SPEECH.

U.S. Administration and Northern Ireland

1. In recent years the U.S. administration has had to attempt to balance in its approach to Northern Ireland two quite conflicting approaches. On the one hand, the traditional U.S. establishment approach has been to regard Northern Ireland as an internal U.K. affair. On the other hand, Northern Ireland has become a subject of some popular interest and concern in the U.S. and the articulation of this interest and concern by certain politicians has obliged the administration to adopt a more positive stance. However the State Department and other elements in the U.S. establishment tend to revert to non-intervention and acceptance of the "internal nature" for the UK of the Northern Ireland problem. The indications available to us would suggest that the British authorities are very sensitive to any suggestion of overt U.S. administration involvement in Northern Ireland and it is therefore to be presumed that the British engage in forceful and sustained lobbying to inhibit such a development.

2. During the 1976 U.S. presidential election campaign, the then Governor Carter responded to pressure from the Irish National Caucus (see separate paper) by agreeing to meet with Caucus supporters in Pittsburg. Following approaches by the Irish Government and in consultation with four major Irish-American leaders (O'Neill, Kennedy, Moynihan and Carey), Carter as President refused to have any further contact with the Caucus. On the other hand, and again in consultation with the Irish Government and the four Irish-American political leaders, in August 1977 President Carter issued a statement in which he called for an end to violence and to American support for organisations involved in violence. President Carter's statement is in Annex I.

3. The formulation of President Carter's policy had proceeded over several months and took the following form. The initiative was formally taken by the four Democratic leaders of Irish descent who co-ordinated their approach at every step with the Irish Government. This relationship was well known both to the Executive, i.e. State Department and White House - as well as to the British, although it was never formally acknowledged by either.

Detailed diplomatic negotiations subsequently took place with both Governments. The permanent levels of the Administration and notably the State Department in keeping with tradition, strongly backed British efforts first of all to quash and later, acknowledging the reality of O'Neill's enormous influence with Carter, to limit the range of the statement. The statement that emerged on 30 August, although unprecedented in committing the Administration to an eventual role in helping solve the problems, nevertheless fell short of the desiderata of the Irish Government and the four U.S. politicians. In short, Irish Government influence as exercised through the four leaders had proved to be, for the first time on this issue, very considerable but not absolute. President Carter in his tribute to O'Neill screened at the Ireland Fund dinner on 10 May 1978 formally acknowledged the Speaker's role in formulating Administration policy on Northern Ireland. This acknowledgement effectively disposed of the Caucus claim to have played a role in the initiation of the Presidential statement.

4. A press disclosure towards the end of May 1979 that the U.S. State Department had authorised the Sturm Ruger Corporation of Connecticut to sell 3000 .375 magnum handguns and 500 .223 semi-automatic rifles to the RUC provoked Speaker "Tip" O'Neill to issue a statement on 1 June on the merits of supplying arms to any group or persons in Northern Ireland, a copy of which is attached (Annex II).

5. The Speaker's remarks were widely misinterpreted by British and Northern Ireland political figures and reactions were generally negative. The Northern Ireland Secretary of State, Mr. Atkins, maintained that the arms were to defend the Northern Ireland community and the RUC from attacks while at the same time he defended the impartiality of the force. The DUP MP for East Belfast, Mr. Peter Robinson, urged the FCO to protest to the U.S. Government about the continual meddling of "this supposedly responsible American" in Northern Ireland affairs. Mr. Peter Jay, the then British Ambassador in Washington met Speaker O'Neill on 5 June and rejected his alleged imputation that the RUC was a sectarian force and an instrument of repression of the Catholic

minority in Northern Ireland. The Speaker's point that the sale would make more difficult the attainment of the common objective of reducing support in the U.S. for the IRA was not acknowledged. However, in the U.S. the Speaker's comments were broadly supported even in the normally pro-British, establishment press.

6. In mid-July during a debate on the 1980 Appropriations Bill for the State, Judiciary and Commerce Departments Congressman Biaggi tabled a resolution to prevent funds being voted to the State Department from being used to sanction the sale, transfer or gift of arms to the RUC. He withdrew his resolution following an assurance that the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House would investigate the question of arms deliveries to Northern Ireland. On 30 July, the Secretary of the Committee held an informal meeting at which Nimitz of the State Department indicated that the State Department had suspended all private sales of arms to Northern Ireland pending a review of policy on such exports (Annex III). Both Biaggi of the ad hoc Congressional Committee and Fr. Seán McManus of the Irish National Caucus claimed credit for the suspension. There has been considerable confusion as regards the precise undertakings which have been given by Congressman Zablocki to Biaggi, nor has it been possible to obtain any hard information on the form the review of policy may take. It would appear to be the case that U.S. officials are unwilling or unable to say where policy on the arms issue will go from here as they cannot reconcile the requests of the RUC (which U.S. officials regard as legitimate) and the constraints of domestic politics, as expressed by both the Speaker and Biaggi. Recent press speculation has suggested that arms sales ban may remain in force indefinitely, although on a temporary basis.

7. The President, while travelling on a train from Washington on 7 August to an Italian-American meeting in Baltimore to promote his energy programme and to meet with blacks, met Biaggi on the train in what the White House termed a "casual encounter". Subsequently, Biaggi claimed that they discussed "the plight of the people of Northern Ireland" and that he "was heartened by the

President's interest and concern about the Irish tragedy and was encouraged with his stated intention to maintain a continuing dialogue on the issue". Biaggi said that he had urged the President to "undertake an initiative to help bring all the groups together for discussions towards the achievement of a consensus solution".

8. U.S. reaction to the events of Monday 27 August were unanimous in their condemnation of the outrage. Copies of the statements of President Carter, Senator Kennedy, Speaker O'Neill, Governor Carey and the State Department are in Annex IV.

9. The latest statement of U.S. Government policy on Northern Ireland was made at a Press Conference in Washington on 5 September by Secretary of State Vance:-

Question: Mr. Secretary, as you know, Prime Ministers Lynch and Thatcher are meeting today. You or the Department recently suspended arms sales to the Royal Ulster Constabulary. In the meantime, people like Governor Carey have even stepped in to offer mediation. My question is, when will this study that you are doing now on this be completed, and are you contemplating suggesting to Mrs. Thatcher and the British Government a new political initiative to try and solve the problem?

Secretary Vance: The answer is that we are not planning to suggest a new political initiative. Our position has been - and President Carter stated it very clearly in 1977 - a position of impartiality. It is a position which supports the bringing together of the various factions in an attempt to try and move towards a peaceful solution.

It is an immensely difficult problem, as all of us know - one of the most difficult of these types of problems that exist throughout the world.

The position which we have taken is supported by the British Government, by the Irish Government and by the political parties in both Ireland and Northern Ireland. For us to intrude ourselves in

at this point into the Irish situation, in my judgement, would not be wise. I think it would be resented by the parties concerned, and they are the ones that should deal with this issue".

10. During the Papal visit to the U.S. in October, President Carter and the Pope discussed Northern Ireland. A White House press statement quotes them as jointly condemning "resort to violence, by any party, for any reason". President Carter also referred publicly during the visit to the search for peace in Northern Ireland as in Rhodesia, in Nicaragua and the Middle East. While such references have been interpreted as an "internationalisation" of the Northern conflict, no more concrete attitude on the part of the U.S. administration has emerged.

11. It must be anticipated that Biaggi and the Caucus will attempt to use next year's U.S. elections, and possibly the primary run up, to enhance their position. In the event of a close fight between, say, President Carter and Senator Kennedy for the Democratic nomination, there will be an obvious temptation for the President's campaign planners to try to use an alliance with Biaggi to wean Irish-American voters away from the Kennedy camp.

Department of Foreign Affairs  
October 1979

Relations with Speaker O'Neill, Senators Kennedy  
and Moynihan and Governor Carey

1. In recent years the influence of four leading Irish American politicians Tip O'Neill, Ted Kennedy, Pat Moynihan and Hugh Carey have played an increasing role in the creation of a more balanced and influential lobby which in turn has countered the effect of the Provisional lobby among Senators and Congressmen.

St. Patrick's Day Statement 1977

2. In the early part of 1977, the supporters of the Provisional IRA maintained an intensive campaign of lobbying U.S. politicians to win support for their viewpoint or at least to achieve a position where they could claim in Ireland to have influential contacts in the U.S. Administration and Congress. The Provisional IRA political campaign in the United States suffered a series of reverses in 1977 beginning with a call for an end to violence in Ireland from the four U.S. political leaders of Irish descent and of outstanding national importance, Kennedy, O'Neill, Moynihan and Carey. The text of this appeal is in Annex I. Senator Kennedy and the Governor of the State of New York Carey followed this initiative by major speeches on Northern Ireland on similar lines in New York and Dublin respectively.

President Carter's Statement of August 1977

3. In consultation with the Irish Government and the four Irish-American political leaders, in August 1977 President Carter issued a statement in which he called for an end to violence and to American support for organisations involved in violence. The formulation of President Carter's policy had proceeded over several months. The initiative was formally taken by the four Democratic leaders who co-ordinated their approach at every step with the Irish Government. This relationship was well known both to the Executive, i.e. State Department and White House - as well as to the British, although it was never formally acknowledged by either.

The permanent levels of the Administration and notably the State

Department, in keeping with tradition, strongly backed British efforts first of all to quash and later, acknowledging the reality of O'Keill's enormous influence with Carter, to limit the range of the statement. The statement that emerged on 30 August, although unprecedented in committing the Administration to an eventual role in helping solve the problems, nevertheless fell short of the desiderata of the Irish Government and the four U.S. politicians.

#### St. Patrick's Day Statement 1978

4. A further statement on Northern Ireland was issued on St. Patrick's Day 1978 by the same four leaders, joined on this occasion by a Democratic party grouping of nine Senators, seven Congressmen and two Governors, condemning violence and endorsing President Carter's statement of 30 August. The statement, the text of which is in Annex II, together with a statement welcoming it issued by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, also called for a more effective leadership by the British Government to achieve a settlement that would be fair to both communities in Northern Ireland.

5. The four leaders issued a further statement on St. Patrick's Day 1979 in which they were joined by a number of other U.S. politicians. The text of the statement is in Annex III.

#### Congress

6. Within the United States Congress, Northern Ireland has been a greater subject of interest and of lobbying in recent years than had previously been the case. Lobbying by Provisional IRA supporters has, however, been of limited effectiveness because of the influence of Speaker "Tip" O'Neill. O'Neill has by general consent emerged since his election as Speaker as one of the most powerful exponents of that office. President Carter has frequently acknowledged him to be his most powerful ally on Capitol Hill and the President has been heavily dependent on him for the promotion in Congress of the Administration's policies. In a Spring 1978 Survey Report by U.S. News and World on the most powerful figures in the U.S. he was voted second only to the President. The tribute to Tip O'Neill sent by President Carter to the Ireland



Fund annual dinner on 10 May 1978 is an expression both of the importance of the Speaker to the President and of the significance which the Speaker has caused to be given to Northern Ireland questions within the U.S. Administration.

7. It is to a considerable extent because of the Speaker's influence on the organisation of the work of Congress that Provisional IRA lobbyists and sympathisers have not succeeded in recent years in having hearings on Northern Ireland organised. The attitude of successive Irish Governments to the question of hearings has been that while the question of holding hearings was one for the U.S. Congress to decide, the witnesses heard should be confined to those whom the Irish people North and South had designated to speak for them, namely those people democratically elected as representatives North and South or those whom they might nominate to speak on their behalf.

8. A Congressional delegation composed mostly of members of the Committee on International Relations and led by Congressman Zablocki visited Dublin in January 1978 and met the Taoiseach and other members of the Government and were briefed on the Government's Northern Ireland policy. (In the course of the visit, a member of the delegation, Congressman Dodd, had a private meeting with Mr. Ruairí Ó Brádaigh).

#### U.S. Elections, November 1978

9. Governor Carey was among those who had to seek re-election in the 1978 mid-term elections. Although in the event he was re-elected comfortably (54% to 46%), commentators had predicted a close result and consequently the Governor had to withstand considerable pressure from Biaggi, the Caucus and Noraid. The Governor's principal rival Perry Duryea although a Republican was endorsed by Biaggi during October. In the event, however, Carey attracted to his campaign strong Irish-American supporters such as Teddy Gleeson (Longshoremen's Union and chairman of Irish-Americans to re-elect Governor Carey) and Paul O'Dwyer, both of whom had been closer to Biaggi and Noraid than to "Tip" O'Neill and his associates. Finally, a week before the election a staged

reconciliation between Biaggi and the Governor was held at which Biaggi endorsed the Governor's candidature and the Governor praised Biaggi's work for inter alia human rights in Ireland. Biaggi maintained that he and the Governor were committed to working together for congressional hearings on Ireland. Although the Governor subsequently maintained that this went beyond what had been agreed, his rapprochement with Biaggi was a cause of some friction with O'Neill and Kennedy. Indeed he appears to have believed also that it had aroused hostility also on the part of the Irish Government and a period of sensitivity ensued in his relations with the Washington Embassy.

10. In April 1979 Tip O'Neill led a Congressional delegation of approximately 17 persons to Ireland. The lack of political progress in recent years was given renewed emphasis by the visit and by the statements made during it. A copy of the Speaker's address at Dublin Castle is in Annex IV. The Speaker's remarks were however widely misinterpreted by British and Northern Ireland political figures and reactions were generally negative.

11. Governor Carey's initiative in August of this year to launch talks in New York between representatives of the British and Irish Governments is dealt with elsewhere in the brief.

Department of Foreign Affairs

October 1979

~~Mr. Swift~~ P.S.M.  
P.S.S.

50 ✓

cc Mr. W. White  
Mr. C. Feltgen  
Mr. S. Swift  
Mr. S. Swift

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5300G ESTR EI  
440026 HIBERNIA

COULD MESSAGE  
IMMEDIATE/URGENT  
CONFIDENTIAL  
DATE 25/10/79 TIME 2166  
INITIALS G. H. Brough

QQQ~~~~~QQQ

URGENT

C.318

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON  
FOR ASST SECY NELIGAN FROM AMBASSADOR

cc'd Mr. Nally  
Hugh Kennedy

MMMEKMCL

I ATTACH COPY OF LETTER DATED OCTOBER 17 FROM ASSISTANT SECY J BRIAN ATWOOD, DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO CONGRESSMAN CLEMENT J ZABLOCKI REGARDING ZABLOCKI'S LETTER ON THE SALE OF ARMS TO THE RUC (COPY ALSO ENCLOSED). THERE WAS MEDIA SPECULATION YESTERDAY, ESPECIALLY FOLLOWING REPRESENTATIONS BY REV MCMANUS THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAD MADE A PERMANENT BAN ON SALES TO THE RUC. AS YOU CAN SEE, STATE DEPARTMENT'S LETTER COULD NOT BE CONSTRUED IN THIS WAY AND WHAT IT DOES SAY IS THAT THE REVIEW ON ARMS SALE IS CONTINUING. THIS POSITION WAS CONFIRMED LAST NIGHT BY ROBERT FUNSETH, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NORTHERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, AT A MEETING OF THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT WHICH I ADDRESSED ON THE SUBJECT OF ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS. I UNDERSTAND THAT CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI CIRCULATED THE STATE DEPARTMENT LETTER TO AMONGST OTHERS CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI AND THAT THIS COVERING LETTER MAY HAVE ATTRIBUTED MORE CONTENT TO ATWOOD'S LETTER THEN WAS WARRANTED.

his?

OCTOBER 17, 1979

DEAR MR CHAIRMAN:

I AM REPLYING FURTHER TO YOUR LETTER OF AUGUST 2 ADDRESSED TO SECRETARY VANCE REGARDING THE SALE OF ARMS TO THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY, FOLLOWING UPON MY INTERIM RESPONSE OF AUGUST 17.

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE IS GLAD TO ADDRESS THE QUESTIONS YOU RAISE AND TO COOPERATE WITH YOU AND THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN CONSIDERING THIS QUESTION. AS YOU KNOW, IN LIGHT OF THE CONCERN THAT YOU AND OTHERS IN CONGRESS HAVE EXPRESSED, WE ARE REVIEWING OUR POLICY ON SUCH SALES, AND FOR THE TIME BEING WE ARE TAKING NO ACTION ON EXPORT LICENSE APPLICATIONS FOR ARMS SALES FOR THE RUC. THIS REVIEW SHOULD FURTHER CLARIFY VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THIS MATTER. IN THE MEANTIME THE FOLLOWING RESPONSES TO YOUR QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN PREPARED.

“(1) WHAT IS THE PRESENT US ARMS TRANSFER POLICY WITH RESPECT TO GREAT BRITAIN FOR USE BY THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC) IN NORTHERN IRELAND?”

DECISIONS ON APPLICATIONS FOR ARMS SALES ARE MADE ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. AS A GENERAL RULE WE WOULD APPROVE SUCH REQUESTS FROM A FRIENDLY AND DEMOCRATIC ALLY. IN ADDITION, ARMS SALES FOR THE RUC ARE CONSIDERED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS:

- (1) OUR GENERAL POSITION ON NORTHERN IRELAND OF IMPARTIALITY, OPPOSITION TO VIOLENCE AND SUPPORT FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AS STATED BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN AUGUST, 1977 (A COPY OF THIS STATEMENT IS ATTACHED):
  - (2) US GOVERNMENT POLICY AND LEGISLATION WITH REGARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS, WHICH CALL FOR CAREFUL CONSIDERATION OF THIS ASPECT OF ANY ARMS SALE:
  - (3) OUR POLICY OF OPPOSITION TO INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM: AND
  - (4) THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE WEAPONS IN QUESTION FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.
- 
-

52  
"(2) DOES THE JANUARY 31, 1979 APPROVAL BY THE OFFICE OF MUNITION CONTROL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE OF A COMMERCIAL LICENSE, TO SELL 3,000 .357 MAGNUM HAND-GUNS AND 500 .223 RIFLES TO THE RUC, CONTRADICT THIS US ARMS TRANSFER POLICY?"

NO. THE RATIONALE FOR THIS APPROVAL WAS CONTAINED IN THE PAPER PROVIDED YOU BY COUNSELOR NIMETZ ON JULY 31, A COPY OF WHICH IS ATTACHED FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE.

"(3) TO WHAT EXTENT HAS US POLICY ON THIS ISSUE BEEN INFLUENCED BY OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN US RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN?"

WE OF COURSE DESIRE TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH GREAT BRITAIN, WITH WHOM WE COOPERATE CLOSELY IN DEALING WITH MAJOR ISSUES ALL OVER THE GLOBE. ALSO, IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR GENERAL POLICY OF OPPOSITION TO TERRORISM, WE STRONGLY SUPPORT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO COMBAT TERRORISM. HOWEVER, OUR MAIN CONCERN IS FOR A SOLUTION TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH THE CATHOLIC AND THE PROTESTANT PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY.

"(4) WHY HAVE THE PARTICULAR TYPES OF ARMS, DESCRIBED ABOVE, BEEN PROVIDED TO THE RUC?"

IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE .357 CALIBER REVOLVER IS A STANDARD POLICE ITEM USED BY MANY POLICE FORCES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THIS REVOLVER IS CARRIED BY MANY US GOVERNMENT SECURITY PERSONNEL IN PERFORMING PERSONAL PROTECTION DUTIES. WE ARE INFORMED THAT THE NEW YORK CITY AND WASHINGTON POLICE FORCES HAVE RIFLES SIMILAR TO THAT SOLD TO THE RUC, AND THAT SIMILAR RIFLES ARE ALSO USED BY MAJOR POLICE FORCES CONFRONTED WITH TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND THREATS SUCH AS FACE THE POLICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

"(5) HOW DO THEY COMPLEMENT THE RUC'S ROLE AS NORTHERN IRELAND'S CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE?"

WE HAVE NOTHING ON THIS POINT TO ADD TO THE STATEMENTS IN THE PAPER TRANSMITTED BY COUNSELOR NIMETZ ON JULY 31, SPECIFICALLY THE FIRST THREE PARAGRAPHS ON PAGE 2 (SEE ATTACHMENT 2 TO THIS LETTER).

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“(6) WERE ALTERNATIVE TYPES OF WEAPONS CONSIDERED? IF NO ALTERNATIVES WERE CONSIDERED, PLEASE EXPOUND ON THE DEPARTMENT'S DECISION NOT TO EXPLORE ANY ALTERNATIVES.”

OUR RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 4 AND 5 ABOVE INDICATE THAT WE DECIDED THE TYPES OF WEAPONS LISTED IN THE APPLICATION FROM AN AMERICAN EXPORTER WERE APPROPRIATE AND NEEDED BY THE RUC. - THERE WAS THEREFORE NO NEED TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES.

“(7) WERE THE CITED ALLEGATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND BY SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION AND COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AS WELL AS THE BENNETT COMMISSION IN GREAT BRITAIN ITSELF, TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT BEFORE THE COMMERCIAL LICENSE WAS APPROVED?”

YES. WE FOLLOW THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND VERY CLOSELY. WE REPORT ON THIS QUESTION EACH YEAR IN THE ANNUAL COUNTRY HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT TO THE UNITED KINGDOM. A COPY OF THE REPORT SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS LAST JANUARY IS ATTACHED FOR YOUR INFORMATION. IN CONSIDERING THIS SALE WE CONCLUDED THAT THE BRITISH ARE TRYING TO MEET THE PROBLEM OF ALLEGED MALTREATMENT DURING INTERROGATION OF PERSONS SUSPECTED OF TERRORIST ACTS, AND THERE WAS NOT SUFFICIENT CAUSE TO DISAPPROVE THE APPLICATION.

“(8) IS THIS ARMS SALE TO GREAT BRITAIN CONSISTENT WITH, OR IN VIOLATION OF, SECTION 502B OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961 AS AMENDED?”

THIS LEGAL PROVISION CALLS FOR DISAPPROVAL OF ARMS SALES TO “A COUNTRY THE GOVERNMENT OF WHICH ENGAGES IN A CONSISTENT PATTERN OF GROSS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS.” AS NOTED ABOVE, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS FORTHRIGHTLY TRYING TO DEAL WITH ANY PROBLEM OF MALTREATMENT OF SUSPECTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE ALLEGATIONS INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS RATHER THAN GOVERNMENT POLICY. WE BELIEVE APPROVAL OF THIS ARMS SALE WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW.

“(9) IS THERE ANY EVIDENCE OF PAST OR ONGOING DIVERSIONS OF US ARMS BY THE RUC TO PARAMILITARY OR OTHER EXTRA-LEGAL GROUPS IN NORTHERN IRELAND?”

WE HAVE NO SUCH EVIDENCE.

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I HOPE THIS INFORMATION IS RESPONSIVE TO THE QUESTIONS YOU HAVE RAISED.

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DUBLIN WE WERE APPARENTLY CUT OFF. HEREUNDER CONTINUATION OF C318.

~~QQQ~~

MMMBKMDT

SINCERELY

(SIGNED)  
J BRIAN ATWOOD  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
FOR CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS

ATTACHMENTS

+ + + +

DEAR MR CHAIRMAN,

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER OF AUGUST 2 TO SECRETARY VANCE REGARDING THE SALE OF ARMS TO THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY.

AS YOU KNOW, WE DESIRE TO COOPERATE CLOSELY WITH YOU AND THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS IN CONSIDERING THIS QUESTION. YOUR LETTER IS BEING GIVEN CAREFUL STUDY AND YOU WILL RECEIVE OUR REPLIES TO YOUR QUESTIONS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

SINCERELY

J BRIAN ATWOOD  
ASST SECY  
FOR CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS

LETTER ADDRESSED TO: THE HONORABLE CLEMENT J ZABLOCKI  
CHAIRMAN

55

AUGUST 2, 1979

THE HONORABLE CYRUS R VANCE  
SECRETARY  
US DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEAR MR SECRETARY

I AM WRITING WITH REFERENCE TO OUR EARLIER CORRESPONDENCE REGARDING THE RECENT SALE OF ARMS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM WHICH WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC).

AS YOU MAY KNOW, ON JULY 12, 1979, DURING CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4392 THE STATE-JUSTICE APPROPRIATIONS BILL FOR FY 1980, CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI OFFERED AN AMENDMENT TO PROHIBIT THE USE OF STATE DEPARTMENT FUNDS TO APPROVE ANY SALES, EXPORT, OR TRANSFER OF ANY DEFENSE ARTICLES TO THE RUC IN NORTHERN IRELAND. CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI WITHDREW HIS AMENDMENT WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS WOULD CONDUCT A THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF THE MATTER OF U.S. POLICY WITH RESPECT TO ARMS TRANSFERS TO THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT WHICH WERE TRANSFERRED FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

ALSO ON JULY 12, 1979, DURING THE HEARING CONDUCTED BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST, CONGRESSMAN ROSENTHAL ADDRESSED SEVERAL QUESTIONS TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT WITNESS ON THE ISSUE FOR A RESPONSE FOR THE RECORD. IN ADDITION TO THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS POSED BY CONGRESSMAN ROSENTHAL, RESPONSES TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WOULD BE HELPFUL:

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(QUESTIONS LISTED IN MR ATWOOD'S LETTER TO CHAIRMAN
ZABLOCKI - FIRST LETTER IN ANNEX)

END OF MESSAGE
25 OCTOBER 1979
TIME SENT:::1525HRS#
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B/L

Irish Northern Aid Committee (NORAIID)

1. The Irish Northern Aid Committee (NORAIID) is the principal fund-raising organisation in North America of the Provisional IRA. It was founded in New York in April 1970. Its founders were typically people who had emigrated from Ireland after the Civil War and who had participated in the 20's and 30's in the IRA support organisation in the US, Clan na Gael. They had remained aloof during the civil rights agitation of the 60's and, at the same time, were disenchanted with the leftward swing of the IRA. The establishment of the Provisionals prompted them to renew their connections. Noraid leaders publicly admit their support for the Provisionals although in recent years they have become somewhat circumspect: they now claim to be a relief organisation whose objective is to help the families of prisoners and others in need in the North. The Provisional IRA has looked to the US as a major source of funds and weapons since the current campaign of violence commenced although in recent years they have increasingly relied on bank raids in the southern jurisdiction.

2. Noraid was registered under the US Foreign Agents Registration Act in January 1971. In its statement of registration, its principal officers were listed as Michael Flannery, John McCarthy and John McGowan. (McGowan died in 1974 and was replaced by Matthew Higgins who died in March 1979 and he has now been replaced by John McElhone.) According to statements of Mr. Flannery, quoted in the Irish Press of 16 March 1972 and Irish Times of 18 January 1978, he and his colleagues are old school Republicans. He said that while he had some sympathy with Civil Rights agitation in Northern Ireland in the late sixties, he had not become deeply involved, taking the view that there could be no civil rights without a United Ireland. Mr. McGowan was head of the Old IRA in the US and it is understood that he and Messrs. Flannery and McCarthy fought on the anti-Treaty side during the Civil War. They were also deeply involved with the American IRA organisation Clan na Gael and other IRA-linked groups since their emigration to the US in the twenties and thirties. Other prominent members, Messrs. Gilmartin, Higgins and Enright, have similar backgrounds.

Noraid is deeply opposed to the Official IRA, which is represented in the US by a miniscule organisation, the US - Irish Republican Clubs and supported by the National Association for Irish Freedom which claims to speak for the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association.

3. Apart from New York where it has most of its support, there are some 80 other branches of Noraid concentrated in cities with large populations of Irish descent, such as Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago and San Francisco.

4. Since 1971, Noraid has been statutorily obliged to make return of its financial transactions twice yearly to the US Department of Justice. According to the returns in the period up to January 1972, the amounts raised (\$128,099.00) were sent to Joe Cahill, Joe Clarke and Kathleen White. In the period ended July 1972, remittances are described as having gone to the Northern Aid Committee, Belfast, which is a Provisional IRA front organisation. In the period ended January 1973, \$150,437.97 was sent to An Cumann Cabhrach (Prisoners' Dependents' Relief Fund), also a Provisional IRA front organisation. Since July 1973 recipients have not been named.

5. While Noraid spokesmen regularly contend that funds are being raised for relief of distress in Northern Ireland, the following statements, taken with what is known about relief of distress in Northern Ireland, would suggest that Noraid funds are not used exclusively to relieve distress:

- (1) "We were formed for the purpose of supporting the Irish freedom movement. We still support the Provisional IRA, no if's, and's or but's about that".

(Matthew Higgins, Noraid Vice-President, quoted in New York Times 16/12/75)

- (2) Asked whether money raised by Noraid goes for guns, Mr. Higgins is reported as saying: "It frees up our people on the other side to spend their money for arms. At least, I hope it's so".

(Interview in Newsweek, 1/12/75)

- (3) "We support the Provisional IRA - I support their policy, the Provisional IRA policy ... I support their use of violence to achieve that end, yes".

(Brendan McCusker, Noraid National Chairman, in ITV interview "This Week", 8/5/75)

- (4) "People have a duty to support the IRA and I'm 100% behind it".

(Michael Flannery, quoted in Irish Times 19 January 1978)

- (5) BBC Panorama 12.2.79 - Noraid Dinner January 1979 - Interview with Michael Flannery

Mr. Flannery : One of the principal things is that they can help to support the people whose dependants are in jail for instance or otherwise in hardship.

Interviewer : And if you feel that the families are taken care of then they can go on fighting

Mr. Flannery : Then they can go on fighting, we are giving them freedom to fight.

- (6) Wolfe Tone Commemoration, Bodanstown, June 1979 - Mr. Flannery said that the "junta government is Dublin", the British Government and the American Government were harrying them in nigglng and other ways. "But we consider opposition an incentive. We believe so thoroughly in the traditions of Tone that we will continue to help the men who le cunamh Dé are going to finish the job Tone so nobly began".

6. In most of the 19 convictions obtained in the United States for the illegal export of arms to Northern Ireland since Noraid's establishment, the defendants had some connection, however tenuous, with Noraid. There is reason to believe that some of its members, and indeed officers, are also involved in illegal arms trafficking. As well as pursuing such cases, the U.S. authorities have also pursued investigations relating to Noraid finances and accounting and on the illegal exportation from the U.S. of currency. In an article published in the New York Times on 24 September 1979 it is suggested that the bulk of the Provisionals military supplies are now purchased outside the U.S. but with U.S. money raised by Noraid. The belief is that money rather than arms are now transferred across the Atlantic and that the transfers are either via bank to bank transfers for amounts under \$10,000 - as U.S. banks are not required to report such transactions - or by individuals for amounts up to \$5,000. On a charter flight to

Dublin in March last, a customs search of a number of passengers is said to have found that every one searched was carrying between \$4,500 and \$4,900 in cash - so no violation of the law is involved. The U.S. authorities have on a number of occasions refused visas to prominent Provisional IRA spokesmen who were scheduled at Noraid-related functions in the U.S. (Such functions have in the past featured speakers such as Dáithí Ó Conaill, Seán Keenan, Ruairí Ó Bradaigh, Joe Cahill, John Joe McGirl. More recently Noraid has used the format of inviting Northern Ireland women to host press conferences (at which they tell reporters of the prison conditions at Long Kesh). Kieran Nugent (the first "on the Blanket" protester) also participated in a similar exercise in August last.

7. Attached in Annex I is a summary of the half yearly returns Noraid has been obliged to supply to the U.S. Justice Department. It is difficult to determine to what extent the returns represent accurately the absolute level of Noraid finances but it is considered likely that the downward trend reported in remittances to July 1979 (from a peak of 338,140-07 dollars in 1972 to about \$80,000 in recent years) probably indicates a real decline in the success of Noraid's fund-raising efforts. It is possible that large individual donations have been received by the Provisionals directly from a small number of wealthy Irish-American businessmen who prefer to keep their involvement secret. With the increasing interest taken by the U.S. authorities in Noraid, it is possible that the big donations are being kept away from the Noraid channel. In addition, the split between the Irish National caucus and Noraid may also have led to a reduction of American financial support for the organisation.

8. Annex II is a copy of an advertisement which has appeared in recent issues of the Irish People, a N.Y. Provisional newspaper and which gives Noraid's current presentation of its operation.

Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin October 1979

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Northern Ireland and U.S. Gun-running

1. Since the early 70's the British security forces in Northern Ireland are understood to have seized some 10,000 weapons in Northern Ireland of which 2,300 were said to be of U.S. manufacture and about 1,500 of U.S. origin. British spokesmen have in the past estimated that 70-85% of the Provisional IRA arsenal is of U.S. origin but U.S. officials are believed to regard these estimates as far too high. In any event, these statistics are based on the ultimate origin of weapons, not on the more significant factor of the country or source from which the arms are obtained by Irish terrorists. The Department of Justice considers it impractical to make a reliable estimate of the amount of arms obtained by the IRA directly from the United States. Armalite semi-automatic rifles are particularly sought after by the Provisionals, in part because of their suitability for smuggling as they can easily be broken into small parts which can be transported separately. (Not all Armalites come from the U.S. - the weapon is also manufactured under licence in Japan and the Provisionals were believed at one stage to be buying these weapons in markets in Europe and the Middle East.) British Army intelligence is said to maintain that since 1972 the U.S. has become the Provisionals' main weapons source.

2. There is concrete evidence that arms are obtained by the Provisional IRA in the U.S. and smuggled to Ireland, either directly or indirectly. An article in the New York Times on 24 September 1979, stated that while there had been no large arm seizures in the Port of New York, where cargo examiners are most likely to look at shipments to Dublin or to ports in Holland and Belgium, from where weapons shipments are frequently shipped to Northern Ireland, a U.S. Treasury Department spokesman had indicated that the IRA does consign through New York arms purchased lawfully elsewhere in the U.S. Such arms might be shipped, for example in a container of household goods.

3. The U.S. authorities (at state and city as well as federal level) have investigated many cases of gun-running with an Irish connection and have brought prosecutions in 15 cases of which we are aware, involving several defendants in most cases. While investigations continue, we are not aware of any major prosecution since a case in 1977 in Philadelphia. The New York Times quoted a U.S. government source as speculating that the bulk of the IRA's military supplies is purchased outside the U.S. but the available information is not adequate to come to an informed opinion on this question.

4. A table is attached of the main convictions known to Department of persons charged in the U.S. with arms offences in an Irish context. Many of those convicted had some connection with Noraid and it is believed that there may be Noraid connection in other cases also. This view has been attributed also to the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Court of Appeals when confirming the convictions in the 1977 Philadelphia case said that Noraid was the centre of the IRA's armament purchase and transportation efforts.

5. There is active co-operation in relation to the international movement of arms between the Gardaí Síochána and various U.S. agencies, such as the FBI and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Firearms and Tobacco. This co-operation involves the tracing of the origin of illegally held arms recovered in Ireland and also covers the exchange of police information with a view to the apprehension of illegal arms dealers and smugglers and the interception of illegal arms. Similar co-operation exists of course with British and Northern Ireland police forces. During 1976 the U.S. Customs authorities proposed extending this co-operation to include inter alia the exchange of information about the Irish-American community with our offices in the U.S. This request was not proceeded with.

6. The two M60 machine guns which were recovered in the Summer of 1978 in Ireland (one in the North and one in Donegal) are of U.S. origin and were among guns stolen in August 1976 from a U.S.

National Guard armoury in Massachusetts. A total of seven M60's and about ninety advanced Armalites were stolen on that occasion. It is not known whether the raid was organised by the IRA, in which case they might be presumed to have control also of the other 95 weapons in the haul, or whether they obtained only some of the weapons stolen. There have been other similar major thefts of armaments in the U.S. (for example from an army camp in Florida in January 1978) but no connection with violence in Ireland has been demonstrated.

Department of Foreign Affairs

October 1979

Gun-running in the United StatesFort Worth Five (1972-)

The accused were allegedly members of Noraid. However, their refusal to answer grand jury questions prevented progress on gun-running charges. Contempt proceedings also appear to have failed and the accused were not indicted, although they were detained for some time.

Charles Malone (1973)

Was a Noraid member in San Francisco and was convicted of the illegal export of arms to Ireland.

James O'Gara (1973)

Noraid activist (New York) convicted of illegal purchase of arms. Not guilty of export of arms, although it appears to have been alleged that he was involved in the illegal shipment of arms found in Cobh (1971).

James Malin (1973)

Convicted of illegal purchase of arms in New York. Appears to have been an acknowledged member of the IRA but no obvious sign of Noraid record.

Baltimore Four (1974)

Convicted of conspiring to smuggle arms to Ireland. Prosecution alleged that crime was financed with Noraid money but this does not appear to have been proved.

Philadelphia Five

Of the two convicted, Cahalane was one time Philadelphia chairman of Noraid chapter. He and Byrne convicted of smuggling arms found in Northern Ireland. One other found not guilty, and two

others indicted with them are believed to be in Ireland. A charge of being unregistered agents of the IRA was not proven.

Patrick Purcell (1973)

Convicted of illegal dealing in arms. Apparently acting on behalf of Provisional IRA.

Agramonte (1972)

Our papers indicate that a Noraid connection was implied but do not give any evidence. Believed to be connected with Fort Worth Five.