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REPORT OF MEETING BETWEEN THE TAOISEACH AND ACCOMPANYING PARTY AND THE

U.S. PRESIDENT AT THE WHITE HOUSE ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1979

- (1) Meeting took place in the Cabinet Room in the White House and commenced about 11.00 a.m. Those present on either side are shown in lists appended to this report.
  
- (2) The President, Mr. Carter, welcomed the Taoiseach and the accompanying Irish party. He referred to the many ties of kinship between Ireland and the United States. He said that the United States Government appreciated the easy and natural way in which the Irish Presidency of the European Community had dealt with the U.S. Administration on a range of issues of mutual interest. He said that some of the international issues on which they might touch in their discussions could be discussed in greater detail over lunch with the Secretary of State, Mr. Vance. He referred to the opportunities for private conversation with the Taoiseach of which he had already availed and the further opportunities to come. He noted that very many members of the U.S. Congress also felt very close to Ireland, as would be apparent from the meetings arranged between the Taoiseach and his party and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and Senate Committee on International Relations and the breakfast meeting arranged by Speaker Tip O'Neill. He thanked the Taoiseach for the hospitality shown to his mother, Ms. Lillian on her visit to Ireland the previous year, from which she had returned full of enthusiasm for the very warm welcome she had received. He said that his wife, Mrs. Rosalynn Carter, had asked him to convey her very deep regrets at her inability to meet the Taoiseach. Only a very important mission of mercy would have led her to miss the pleasure. She had gone, accompanied by the Surgeon-General of the U.S. to visit the camps

in Thailand where the starving refugees from Cambodia were being received and cared for. She had not gone to represent the United States Government but would be bringing back a personal report on the situation, which could form the guide for relief action by the various voluntary and international aid bodies.

- (3) The Taoiseach responded that the pleasure felt by the President in welcoming his party was fully reciprocated on the Irish side. The Irish people continued to have a particularly warm feeling for Americans. The United States was held, without reservations, in genuine high regard and had no better friend in Europe, or perhaps in the entire world, than Ireland. This flowed from the close ties of kinship, deriving from the very great numbers of Irish people who had made a new life in the United States over very many years.
- (4) Perhaps unfortunately for the United States but, in a sense, happily <sup>thinning</sup> for Ireland these direct ties based on Irish emigration to America were ~~seen~~ out. The partial Census conducted in Ireland earlier this year had indicated that we had in excess of one hundred thousand more people than previous estimates had suggested. They indicated that net emigration had been replaced by net immigration. This, of course, was indicative of the increasing prosperity in Ireland. Alone in Europe, our population was expanding at the rapid rate of 1.5% a year. This in turn was attributable to a considerable extent to the results of our membership of the European Community. Consequent on this membership, our farmers were experiencing considerable prosperity while there were also considerable benefits to the industrial sector of our economy.



- (5) Taoiseach said that in our capacity as the current Presidency of the Community, our traditional close ties with the ~~Capitol's~~ United States were strengthened by a common action being taken in very many fields. He referred to the ~~Capitol's~~ Multilateral Trade Negotiations (MTN) which we hoped would be finalised on Community side at the Council meeting on 20 November; to the mandate agreed by the Council for an agreement with the ASEAN countries, to the recent signature of the Second Lome Convention for economic aid to the developing ~~capitals~~ African, Carribean and Pacific countries, to the joint efforts under way to overcome energy problems and to combat inflation which had been given a fresh impetus by the second major hike in the price of oil in the course of this year. Of vital importance was the effort being undertaken in conjunction with the ~~Capitol's~~ United States and Japan to stabilise imports of oil, especially for the OPEC countries. The Taoiseach referred to the decisions taken at the European Council Meeting in Strasbourg in June and at the subsequent World Economic Summit in Tokyo.
- (6) The Taoiseach referred to the considerable investment by United States Corporations in Ireland. This was very healthy and very buoyant at the present time and represented about 50% of the total foreign investment in industry in Ireland. This investment was not harmful to United States interests and the experience, in fact, was that the companies which were expanding employment most <sup>vigorously</sup> ~~of the industry~~ in Ireland were also those which were increasing the numbers they employed within the United States. Through investment in Ireland, they secured access to large and lucrative markets in the EEC which might otherwise be denied to them.

- (7) The Taoiseach recalled that in previous interviews he had welcomed and advocated investment by U.S. firms in Northern Ireland also. The situation there was the most pressing problem facing the Irish Government. It had an economic as well as political dimension. In some parts of the Northern Ireland area unemployment was *andemic*. The percentage rate was as high as 30%. This contributed to the extent of a violence, as in the words of the old saying "the Devil made work for idle hands". In this connection, the Taoiseach recalled the welcome he had given to the generous statement of August 1977 by President Carter in which he had indicated that the United States would give every encouragement to investment in Northern Ireland, as soon as the basis had been established for a modus vivendi between the two sections of the community.
- (8) President Carter enquired whether the United States Government should restrain U.S. investment in Northern Ireland. His August 1977 statement could be interpreted in that way. "On the contrary" was the reply from the Taoiseach. He referred to an interview he had given to U.S. News and World Report recently in which he had advocated U.S. investment in Northern Ireland. Such investment would help to eradicate violence. Young people without worthwhile employment had been attracted to join the ranks of the *provisional* IRA and had even been given a wage for participation in the campaign of violence.
- (9) President Carter's statement had been particularly valuable because he was seen as somebody outside the situation, with no *vested* interest. An important element in the statement had been the strong warning to people of Irish descent in the United States to the effect that they should not, in any way, support those who were engaged in violence in Northern Ireland. Similar warnings and appeals had been made by



successive governments in Ireland, by the Government headed by the Taoiseach up to 1973, by the Coalition Government which had succeeded them and again by the Taoiseach's present Government. These efforts had had some success in reducing the amount of funds flowing from the United States to supporters of the Provisional IRA, so far as could be judged from the returns which the U.S. based fund-raising organisations were compelled to make to Federal Agencies <sup>under</sup> ~~on their~~ U.S. law. The Taoiseach concluded by saying that he fully understood the reason for the absence of Mrs. Rosalynn Carter and the important nature of the mission on which she was engaged.

- (10) President Carter enquired whether the codes for implementation of the MTN would be cleared by the European Community by 20 November. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. O'Kennedy, indicated that the Community Council had completed the mandate for finalisation of the negotiations at the last meeting. They had instructed the European Commission to make contact with the appropriate U.S. Departments with a view to finalising the matter. Secretary of State Vance enquired whether the French were now "on-board". The Minister replied that, in respect of the details, they were now in line but that they were standing back a little on principles and also continued to show some hesitation in relation to the question of "mixed competence", which referred in particular to the role of the European Commission. These difficulties were procedural rather than substantive in nature and they will not ultimately be of crucial consequence. Mr.            recalled that the U.S. legislation implementing the MTN agreements had been passed some time ago but that this involved certain deadlines which were coming close and which made them anxious that the Community should complete the procedures for finalisation rapidly. The Minister responded that the Irish



Presidency had been acutely aware of /<sup>these</sup> deadlines and had consequently been pushing the finalisation of the negotiations within the EEC very firmly during the Irish Presidency. Mr.            acknowledged this and expressed the appreciation of the U.S. Administration for Irish efforts. The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that he would be very disappointed if at the next meeting on 20 November, the Community Council did not tie the matter up.

- (11) The President asked for the Taoiseach's assessment of the prospects for the initiative which had recently been announced by the British Government led by Mrs. Thatcher. In reply, the Taoiseach first recalled the previous initiative undertaken by the Conservative Government headed by Mr. Edward Heath. Their initiative on that occasion had led to the establishment of the power sharing Executive in Northern Ireland. However, that power sharing administration had been undermined by the continuing intransigence of the Unionists. Through the so-called Ulster Workers Strike which had paralysed ~~the~~<sup>vital</sup> services, they had brought about the fall of that administration. Subsequently, the British Labour Government headed by Mr. Harold Wilson had brought together a Convention of the political parties in Northern Ireland to explore what basis could be found for the establishment of a ~~devolved~~<sup>devolved</sup> administration. Here again, the Unionists had continued to seek domination. One had a situation where 2% of the combined population of Britain and Ireland were defying the wishes of the great majority of that population. Subsequently, however, Mr. Wilson had retired and been succeeded by Mr. Callaghan who, however, did not have a working majority in the British House of Commons and had been dependent on the support of the Unionists to stay in power. In these circumstances, the Irish Government had appreciated that his capacity to take any new initiative was very limited. The task entrusted to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Roy Mason, had been simply to contain the situation. When earlier this year, the Tories had returned to power, the Irish Government had acknowledged that they would need some time to read themselves into the situation and had not initially pressed them strongly for a political initiative. However, at the end of August, there had been the murder of Lord Mountbatten within the jurisdiction of the Irish Government but near the border and of eighteen British soldiers



at Warrenpoint, on the Northern side of the border. These events had injected a note of urgency into the approach of the British Government. It appeared that Mrs. Thatcher had pressurised her Secretary of State, Mr. Atkinson, to take a political initiative earlier than he otherwise might have done. While he had had initial contacts with all the political parties in Northern Ireland, it appeared that in laying the groundwork for his initiative he had talked only to the leaders of the parties. If he had had more time, he would probably have sought to broaden the basis of these discussions and to prepare more carefully the ground for the proposed initiative. At any rate, the proposed initiative had now been announced.

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The Taoiseach referred to the four main political parties in Northern Ireland, the official Unionist Party, the Democratic Unionist Party headed by the Reverend Ian Paisley, the Alliance Party and the SDLP which represented the minority. The Official Unionists had reiterated on more than one occasion that they would have nothing to do with the Conference which Mr. Atkins proposed to convene. As yet, the Irish Government did not know the content of the proposed initiative. The British had simply said that they proposed to devolve to a local administration in Northern Ireland some of the powers at present exercised directly from London. The nature or extent of these powers was as yet unknown. Apart from the attitude ~~evincd~~ <sup>evincd</sup> by the Official Unionists, the initiative had been treated with scepticism by the other political parties. If it was intended solely to ~~return~~ <sup>return</sup> substantial powers to the local government level which, as it had operated in the past, had practised widespread discrimination against the minority, the initiative <sup>would receive</sup> ~~no~~ support from the SDLP. Again, if as appeared possible, it envisaged solely the establishment of a consultative assembly, it was unlikely that it would attract the support from the political parties. Given these attitudes and the continuing intransigence of the Official Unionists, the Taoiseach gave, as his candid assessment the view that the prospects for the initiative were not good. He feared that it had been somewhat premature and would suffer ~~e~~ from the failure to undertake sufficient preparatory work before it was launched.

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President Carter said that Mrs. Thatcher seemed to have a real interest in getting a solution to the situation. She had discussed the matter with him, not in any great detail, but had indicated a firm wish for a solution. The President enquired as to the likely results of the visit to Ireland of Pope John Paul II. The Taoiseach referred to the appeal made by the Pope at Drogheda for a cessation of violence and to the immediate reaction of the ~~British~~ <sup>Provisional</sup> IRA which had been to reject that appeal. The Taoiseach underlined here that the Provisionals also had their gunsides trained on the democratic government of the Republic. They were motivated by an ideology not shared by the Irish people. They might be impervious to appeals but he would hope that over the next year or so, the appeal of the Pope might lead to a tempering off of the

(14)

President Carter enquired whence the Provisionals were getting aid. Was it from Libya? Did they continue to get assistance from the U.S? The Minister for Foreign Affairs said that there were indications that assistance had not been received from Libya in recent times. He referred to the interception by the Irish police of a shipment of arms which had apparently originated in the United States.

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The President enquired whether the Irish Police Force had good co-operation with the RUC in Northern Ireland and the Taoiseach confirmed that there was in fact a close co-operation. The President referred to the reported agreement on surveillance by helicopter along the border. The Taoiseach said that these reports related to the meeting which he had had with Mrs. Thatcher about closer security co-operation on 5 September. In the view of the Irish Government, the British tended greatly to exaggerate the extent to which violence in Northern Ireland originated within the Republic. The reality was that the vast majority of the violence was well within Northern Ireland and was perpetrated by residents of the area.

The Taoiseach said that while the RUC had been securing acceptance from the minority in Northern Ireland, there was still some discriminatory treatment of that minority. He recalled the misdeeds ~~of~~ which members RUC had been established to have committed in the past. On foot of a case taken by the Irish Government, the European Commission and subsequently Court of Human Rights, while stopping short of a finding of torture, had found that suspects in Northern Ireland had been subjected to both "inhuman and degrading treatment" by the RUC. Even after the conclusion of that case, there had been evidence of continuing violations of human rights at a number of the interrogation centres in Northern Ireland. This had led the British Government to institute a further enquiry headed by one of their judges, named Bennett and the report of that group had again established that malpractice had continued. Despite these successive findings of ill-treatment, not a single member of the RUC has been brought to justice for their misdeeds. President Carter asked was it not better if the British were to leave, that the RUC should be a well-trained and well armed police force. He also asked whether there was any recent evidence of continuing ill-treatment of persons held in custody. The Taoiseach and the Minister responded that the most recent cases related to 1978 but that, in political terms, one had to allow for the residual appealings of the minority in relation to a pattern of malpractice in the past.



- (16) The Taoiseach again referred to the condemnation in President Carter's statement of August 1977 of assistance or support either direct or indirect for those pursuing violence. It was necessary here to have regard ~~and~~ not only to guns or money but to moral support. The Provisional IRA were anxious to have support from elected representatives in the United States and the slightest encouragement from such representatives would have had effects. The President said that he fully appreciated this and that indeed it had been for this reason that he had gone outside normal parameters in his statement to which the Taoiseach had referred.
- (17) Turning to other issues, the President said that he was in a position to assure the Taoiseach that there was no current proposal of the United States Administration that would have any adverse effect on American investment in Ireland. In this respect, he wished the Taoiseach every success in his efforts in Houston and elsewhere to induce further investment of this kind. If he could help in any way he would be very ready to do so. In his view, such investment did not create any problems or lead to increased unemployment in the United States.
- (18) The President referred to the many Americans who have ties of kinship with Ireland and who like to go there to visit their relatives and to vacation in Ireland. There was much to be said for making things easier for such travellers. Indeed, if there was one bilateral problem as between Ireland and the United States, it would be in the area of aviation relations. The President referred to the increase of 60% in traffic to Mexico when ~~decon/ro~~ had been introduced. Any loss of revenue to the Mexican National Airline, if there had been any such loss, was compensated many fold by the increased revenue in tourism generally. He felt that the Taoiseach's visit to the United States might help to boost the volume of tourists from the United States to Ireland which, in his view, was much less than the potential. The Taoiseach recalled that when he had last paid an official visit to the United States, the subject of aviation relations had also been topical. At that time, he <sup>had</sup> said things for which he would not gain a great deal of popularity back in Ireland. That was at a time when TWA and Pan American Airlines were seeking landing rights in Dublin. Subsequently, they had secured such rights. More recently



TWA even though they enjoyed these rights had decided to terminate their services to Ireland. However, new services, promoted by Trans International Airlines, had recently commenced. The President referred to the agreements which the United States had reached with a number of other countries, such as the Netherlands. These agreements, involving chapter fares have been reflected in the substantial increase in traffic to those countries. The modern traveller tends to shop about in order to secure the best possible value for his money and in this context, airfares were an important factor.

(19) Reverting to the subject of American investment in Ireland, the Taoiseach referred to some of the other advantages of such investment to U.S. firms. The average rate of return on such investment had been 29% over the last five years and there were no restrictions on the repatriation of profits or capital.

(20) The Taoiseach then referred to the demarche made by the Irish Presidency on behalf of the Nine in Tehran, in relation to the American hostages being held in the U.S. Embassy there. The President indicated that naturally the situation of these hostages was a matter of very great concern to him and to the United States. There were about 60 hostages involved but there were also something between 500 and 600 other U.S. citizens in Iran. The <sup>primary</sup> consideration had to be the safety of all these people and this heavily circumscribed the action which the United States could take in the matter. The Taoiseach inquired whether there was any further news as to the prospects of the U.S. envoy, Mr. Ramsey Clarke, being received in Iran. The Secretary of State Vance said that there was little advance in the position. Mr. Clarke had talked to <sup>a</sup> ~~personnel~~ <sup>who</sup> while not in the former Iranian Government, had been a close associate of the Ayatollah Khomeini and continued to have some association with him. In the course of this contact, some question had arisen as to whether Mr. Clarke might visit Iran in some capacity other than as an emissary of the President of the United States. The President said that he would be well prepared to consider this possibility, with the aim of <sup>saving</sup> ~~safe guarding~~ the <sup>lives</sup> ~~aim~~ of the hostages. The <sup>person</sup> to whom Mr. Clarke had spoken was to visit <sup>soon</sup> ~~soon~~ in the course of the day and to see Khomeini and had undertaken to phone Mr. Clarke again following his visit.



- (21) The Taoiseach recalled the most recent official meeting between a U.S. President and an Irish Taoiseach, <sup>that</sup> ~~back~~ between his predecessor and former President Ford and, in particular, that there had been an agreed communique following the meeting. He indicated that he would wish that there should be such a <sup>agreed</sup> joint statement on the present occasion. The ~~present~~ President readily <sup>agreed</sup> and it was confirmed by officials that a draft had in fact already been agreed by the two sides.
- (22) The Taoiseach indicated that in speaking to the Press following the meeting he ~~proposed~~ to say that he had expressed the hope that President Carter would find an opportunity to visit Ireland at some stage. The President agreed that this would be quite in order and that he would be very happy to accept such an invitation. The meeting concluded at this point.
- (23) <sup>In</sup> ~~In~~ brief remarks to the Press Corps after the meeting, ~~with~~ the Taoiseach briefly outlined the subjects which had been discussed, including the Multilateral Trade Negotiations, Energy, the proposed initiative of the British Government on Northern Ireland, U.S. Investment in Ireland, the campaign of violence in Ireland and other matters. The President in his brief remarks indicated that they had discussed the prospects for peace in the world and in Ireland, the problems of terrorism which affected both countries and which, in Ireland, were obstructing the realisation of the dreams and hopes for a prosperous Ireland for all the people of Ireland.
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