

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## IRELAND



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# ROINN AN TAOISIGH

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## NORTHERN IRELAND

## AMERICAN PRESSURES

*Handwritten initials and date:*  
MK  
14/12

Taoiseach,

Please see the copy letter under from the Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs.

The essential point is whether we stay with Speaker O'Neill, Senators Kennedy and Moynihan, and Governor Carey - the Big Four - or let the Irish National Caucus say they are the voice of the Irish people and Government in America.

These four men are among the most powerful politically in the United States. Speaker O'Neill is, in fact, the second most powerful man after the President. They have been extremely helpful to Ireland in the past. They have always consulted us on the Government's line and have strongly supported it - at some political cost to themselves. I have told the Ambassador the facts of the telephone call and given him the gist of the statement on Northern Ireland, which, I understand, you intend to make in the Dail shortly. While this is useful, he is not sure if it goes far enough. The Caucus are extremely slick propagandists.

A second question is what, if anything, we wish Speaker O'Neill to say to President Carter about the visit by Mrs. Thatcher which is due to take place on 17th December.

On this, my inclination would be to say that, so far, the arrangements for the Conference on Northern Ireland are inadequate in that they did not provide sufficiently for the Irish Dimension but that our understanding is that this will now be taken into account in the Agenda and, if so, we support the idea of the meeting, in principle. (This need not be said too loudly because, as an axiom, anything that pleases Dublin too much displeases hard line Unionists and our public acceptance could mean their public rejection. It would do no one any good if Dublin were to be blamed for a break-down).

We could also say that you tend to favour more emphasis on the Irish Dimension and follow closely the text of your remarks at the Press Conference on 7th December about violence and security. Essentially, the lines on the 1975 policy document are being followed.

It would be desirable if at all possible to fill out the concept of withdrawal a little more, as in the draft speech I left with you yesterday.

# ROINN AN TAOISIGH

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It is a pity that an issue like this comes up so quickly.<sup>4</sup> The way in which it develops could well determine the extent and direction of Government influence in America, on Northern Ireland - and on other extremely important issues which can come up like, for example, American Taxation Policy.

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13th December, 1979.