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Taoiseach
Mr. [unclear]
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Taoiseach
23/7*

ROINN GNÓTHAÍ ÉACHTRACHA
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Mr. W. J. Murray
BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
DUBLIN 2

23 July, 1980.

*25-7-80
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Dear Wally,

Following our telephone conversation this morning in regard to the Taoiseach's speech next week-end, I am forwarding you herewith, as you requested, the rough draft reply to the Leader of the Opposition which I had worked on yesterday following a discussion with Dermot Nally, I understand that a brief reply has since issued but you mentioned that it might be helpful to have a copy of my draft in connection with the preparation of the Taoiseach's speech.

Since I talked to you on the phone this morning, I have tried my hand as a quick effort at re-casting the draft letter in the form of a draft speech and I am also enclosing this herewith.

As I mentioned to you on the phone, I feel that what the Taoiseach says on this issue in his speech is essentially a matter for political choice at this stage. As I see it, the Leader of the Opposition in his letter has tried to pin the matter down by asking the Taoiseach formally to repudiate by name Noraid, the Irish National Caucus and Congressman Biaggi. I gather that the interim reply to Deputy FitzGerald's letter says that the Taoiseach proposes to deal with these matters in a speech at the week-end. Accordingly that speech will be taken as the public reply to the letter.

It seems to me therefore that any formulation which stops short of naming these organisations and individuals will attract criticism from the Opposition. The question of how to handle this - whether to name names or not - is therefore, as I mentioned above, very much a matter for policy choice by the Taoiseach.

My rough draft attached is based on my understanding from our phoned call this morning that the Taoiseach does not want to identify organisations or individuals by name. The latter part of the draft accordingly tries to take the matter as far as possible without actually mentioning names. If the Taoiseach wishes to go further - and as you know this Department in the past had so recommended - it would be easy to adapt the text accordingly by naming any group he wishes.



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I have also taken the liberty of including in the rough draft a final paragraph mentioning Ambassador Donlon by name. I feel that some such reference in the first major public statement by the Taoiseach on the whole affair could play some part in defusing the unfortunate controversy which has arisen as well as helping to vindicate Ambassador Donlon's own position which is of course also an important consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Noel Dorr

Mr. Walter Kirwan,
Assistant Secretary,
Taoiseach's Department
Government Buildings,
DUBLIN.

DRAFT

When I took office as Taoiseach in December last, I stated publicly that the effort to promote a solution to the problem of Northern Ireland would be a matter of priority for my Government. Since then on several occasions - and most notably in my speeches of 16 February and 29 May - I have stated clearly and publicly the policy of the Government. I might summarise it as follows:

1. We believe that the experience of 60 years has shown that the problem of Northern Ireland will remain intractable so long as it is approached within the narrow framework of Northern Ireland. What is needed is a wider and fresher approach which sees the problem in its true context as a legacy left by our troubled history to the peoples of these two islands.
2. We believe that the only longterm solution is an agreed Ireland, worked out on a basis of discussion and negotiation between elected representatives and in close and friendly relations with the people and the Government of Great Britain.
3. Such an Ireland could come about only by consent and by agreement. It cannot be brought into being by violence or by coercion.

Indeed such methods far from helping are a major obstacle to what we hope to achieve and the Government in the name of the Irish people repudiate those who use or support them.

4. Our aim instead is to develop closer cooperation between the peoples of these islands. In particular, we believe that the two sovereign Governments should so develop and build on the unique relationship between our peoples that a wholly new framework is set within which the hereto insoluble problem of Northern Ireland may be resolved - peacefully, by agreement, and in cooperation.

5. We hope to get the British Government to see that this approach offers the best hope of peace and reconciliation in Ireland and longterm stability in these islands. We urge the British Government to encourage the people of Northern Ireland to think in these terms, with full respect for the principle of consent for any constitutional change which might ultimately be involved.

This is the policy which the Government seek to promote and the policy to which I myself am committed. I would emphasise in particular our commitment to peaceful means. It follows that we repudiate any recourse to violence and that we cannot support those who encourage it.

Questions have been raised in recent days about the attitude of the Government towards certain organisations and individuals in the United States who have been involved in activities in relation to Northern Ireland. It will be clear from what I have said publicly, and repeated again here most emphatically that we wholly reject violence as futile and wrong in itself. It follows that we can give no support whatever to groups or individuals at home or abroad insofar as they in any way support or encourage violence in any part of this island. To the extent that any individuals or groups abroad, well meaning or not, have done this, or may do so in the future, we cannot condone or accept their approach.

On the other hand we value the support and understanding which successive Irish Governments have received from responsible Irish American leaders and we would want as far as possible to maintain and broaden that support. In particular we value and want to maintain the support we have received from such eminent figures as Speaker O'Neill, Senators Kennedy and Moynihan and Governor Carey. It is, and will be, the aim of the Government, with their help, through our diplomatic representatives, through Ministerial visits and otherwise to make our policy on the Northern Ireland problem more widely known.

In particular we want to ensure that friends of Ireland and people of good will in political life in the United States come to understand our approach. We

want all of those who interest themselves in Irish affairs - and we greatly value that interest - to know the vital importance we attach to peaceful means and to the principle of consent.

As we succeed in this effort, I would hope that all friends of Ireland in Congress and generally in public life in the United States will come to see that the approach I have outlined which rejects violence and seeks unity by agreement and with consent is the only one which offers real hope of peace and reconciliation in this island and lasting friendship and cooperation between the peoples of Britain and Ireland.

It should not be necessary to do so but because the issue has become a matter of controversy and to avoid any possible misunderstanding I want to repeat here again something said recently by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Government have complete confidence in Ambassador Donlon, our Ambassador in Washington, who has at all times carried out his instructions fully. We value his abilities as representative of Ireland and he has and will continue to have the full support of the Government in carrying out the policy I have outlined.