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Mr Keenan
Personal



6 April, 1982.

Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

The Honourable Thomas P. O'Neill, Jnr.,
Speaker,
United States House of Representatives,
Washington.

Dear Tip,

It was great to see you again in Washington on the occasion of my recent visit. I want to express to you my deep appreciation for the characteristically warm welcome you personally extended to me and for organising such a numerous and prestigious group of Friends of Ireland to meet me on what was, for all of you in Congress, a normal working day. For me, it was, of course, a very special day. As Taoiseach and Head of the Irish Government, to visit the seat of the Congress of the United States on St. Patrick's Day and to be greeted by a Speaker whose work has, as I said in the Rayburn Room, truly justified for him the application of "greatest friend of Ireland of all", together with a numerous body of Friends of Ireland who are influential elected representatives, could not but evoke in me deep feelings of emotion and pride in the achievements of our people in the United States.

I should be grateful if you could convey my thanks to all the officials and staff of the Congress who made my visit as pleasant as it was moving.

I was very pleased with my visit and with the results achieved. I enclose a copy of a statement about the visit *enclosed* which I made to Dail Eireann on 25th March. You will see that I included a welcoming reference to the St. Patrick's Day statement of the Friends which I have also laid before both Houses of the Oireachtas. I am having my address in the White House printed and I hope to send copies to you and to other members of the Friends shortly.

In relation to Irish unity and peace in Northern Ireland, we would, of course, wish to maintain close contact with you and other leading members of the Friends of Ireland and I am writing separately to you in that context.

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Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

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I hope that if other pressures prevent you joining the delegation we look forward to welcoming soon, possibly over the Memorial Day weekend, you will be able to come to Ireland separately before too long. Please do not fail to contact me personally beforehand should you be coming.

With warmest good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Taoiseach.