

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## IRELAND



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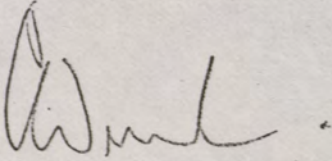
Note

Bishop Hurley sent me the attached copy letter with the following manuscript note :

"Dear Mr. D

Checked with Cardinal. He preferred present text for reasons I'll tell you when we meet

+ MJH"



Seán Donlon  
12 October 1984



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NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS  
1312, Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005

October 11, 1984

The Secretary,  
Alliance Party,  
88, University Street,  
Belfast 7.

Dear Sir,

The Catholic Bishops of the U.S.A. have asked the Irish Episcopal Conference to be their hosts during a pastoral visit to Ireland. Four of us under the leadership of Bishop James Malone, President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, will arrive in Ireland on October 21. Archbishop John O'Connor, Bishop Francis Stafford accompanied by Monsignor Daniel Hoye, General Secretary of the NCCB, and myself will serve on the visiting committee.

We are most anxious to meet and listen to representative people in Ireland who desire peaceful progress towards solving this nation's difficult problems and who share the ideal of justice as the foundation of peace.

It seems almost superfluous to say that there is an American dimension to these problems. Our people, 43 million of whom claim Irish ancestry from all of Ireland, increasingly have questioned the silence of the Church in America towards Ireland. Customarily, the American Bishops have sent committees to foreign countries to observe conditions, to listen to qualified spokesmen from all sides.

These visits go a long way towards assisting the American bishops in helping to form public opinion in the USA and ultimately to seek substantial support both within and without the Government.

Our Conference, in this way, has visited such diverse countries as Poland, Chile, The Philippines, South Africa, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Sri Lanka and others. It is our hope and prayer that we can be of substantial assistance in seeking a peaceful solution to the vexing problems that beset the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

The American dimension is illustrated constantly by the fact that the U.S. Congress and many state legislatures have proposed legislation on Ireland; the courts, too, are currently trying cases involving transfer of funds and the shipment of arms; the executive is wrestling with immigration and the granting or denial of visas to prominent leaders on the



Irish scene. Finally, meetings between presidents and prime ministers almost inevitably include mention of the "Irish Question".

Our committee would be honored to meet two representative members of your political party on Monday evening October 22 between 5.30 and 7.30 at an hotel convenient to Belfast. We would appreciate hearing from you at your earliest convenience so that we can make final arrangements to receive you.

Father James Clyne, on behalf of our Committee, will be happy to receive your response. His telephone number is (0861) 522045.

Sincerely yours,

Bishop Mark J. Hurley  
for the USA Bishops' Committee