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IMMEDIATE

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15 JANUARY 1993

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
FOR ASST SEC O HUIGINN FROM AMBASSADOR

CYCY

PLEASE COPY ASST SEC ANDERSON (RE U.S. AMBASSADOR ASPECT)

DISCUSSION WITH MAYOR FLYNN

1. WHILE IN BOSTON ON THURSDAY FOR A SPEAKING ENGAGEMENT, I CALLED ON THE MAYOR, RAY FLYNN. THE MAYOR WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MIKE QUINLIN WHO HAS RESPONSIBILITY IN HIS OFFICE FOR IRISH ISSUES, WHILE THE CONSUL GENERAL JOINED ME AT THE MEETING.

2. THE MAYOR OPENED THE DISCUSSION BY ASKING ME TO CONVEY HIS CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY TO THE TAOISEACH AND THE TANAISTE. HE SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO EARLY MEETINGS WITH BOTH MR REYNOLDS AND MR SPRING.

LITTLE ROCK MEETING

3. THE MAYOR BRIEFED ME ON WEDNESDAY'S MEETING ON IRISH ISSUES WITH CLINTON AIDES IN LITTLE ROCK: HE HAD, HOWEVER, VERY LITTLE TO ADD TO THE COMPREHENSIVE REPORT WHICH BRENDAN SCANNELL FAXED TO THE DEPARTMENT YESTERDAY.

MEETING WITH PRESIDENT-ELECT

4. OF MORE SIGNIFICANCE PERHAPS THAN THE ABOVE MEETING, THE MAYOR WAS SEPARATELY RECEIVED BY THE PRESIDENT-ELECT. CLINTON WAS APPARENTLY VERY WARM AND PERSONABLE AND TOLD FLYNN THAT HE HAD COME EXTREMELY CLOSE TO BEING APPOINTED TO THE CABINET.

5. THE MESSAGE THE MAYOR TOOK FROM THE PRESIDENT-ELECT WAS THAT HE WAS VERY AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE IRISH VOTE IN THE LAST ELECTION (AND, BY INFERENCE, FOR 1996), AND WISHED TO BE KEPT INFORMED ON AN ONGOING BASIS ON IRISH ISSUES. HE SEEMED IN PARTICULAR TO WISH TO HAVE A FEEL FOR THE RANGE OF VIEWS AND THINKING IN THE IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY: FLYNN'S SENSE IN THIS REGARD IS THAT CLINTON WISHES TO AVOID HAVING TO RELY UNDULY ON POLITICAL FIGURES IN WASHINGTON, SUCH AS SPEAKER FOLEY AND SENATOR KENNEDY, FOR HIS INFORMATION. FLYNN ADDED THAT HE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERLINE THE KEY IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING TO THE VIEWS OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT, AND HE ALSO EMPHASISED THE WORK OF THE EMBASSY IN THIS AREA.

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CONFIDENTIAL
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SPECIAL ENVOY/AMBASSADOR TO DUBLIN

6. TURNING TO THE SPECIAL ENVOY PROPOSAL, FLYNN SAID THAT THE PRESIDENT-ELECT FACED AN ACUTE POLITICAL DILEMMA IN HOW TO RESPOND TO THE IDEA, HAVING IMPLICITLY ENDORSED IT IN HIS STATEMENT OF 23RD OCTOBER. THE STRONG ADVICE FROM THE BRITISH, AND PROBABLY FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WOULD BE NOT TO ACT ON THE PROPOSAL. FLYNN UNDERSTOOD ALSO THAT THE SPEAKER HAD ALREADY CAUTIONED CLINTON AGAINST THE IDEA (OTHER SOURCES HAVE ALSO CONFIRMED THIS TO US). ON THE OTHER HAND, THE POLITICAL CREDIBILITY OF BILL CLINTON AMONG MANY IRISH-AMERICAN GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS WILL BE RELATED IN LARGE PART TO HIS FOLLOW THROUGH ON THE COMMITMENTS IN THE 23RD OCTOBER STATEMENT.

7. FLYNN WENT ON TO WONDER - AND HE SAID THIS ALSO REFLECTED THE THINKING EMERGING FROM SOME MEMBERS OF THE GROUP WHO WENT TO LITTLE ROCK - IF THE ROLE OF THE SPECIAL ENVOY COULD SOMEHOW BE SUBSUMED INTO, OR GRAFTED ONTO, THAT OF THE U.S. AMBASSADOR TO DUBLIN. IN OTHER WORDS, THE DUBLIN POST MIGHT BE GIVEN RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN THE U.S. SYSTEM FOR THE NORTH, BUT WITH ADDITIONAL TERMS OF REFERENCE RELATED TO THE SPECIAL ENVOY PROPOSAL.

8. MR CANNIFFE AND I GAVE SOME PRELIMINARY REACTION TO THIS, INCLUDING THE LIKELY RESPONSE OF THE BRITISH AND THE UNIONISTS. I MUST EMPHASISE, HOWEVER, THAT FLYNN'S THINKING AND PRESENTATION OF THE IDEA WAS EXTREMELY TENTATIVE AND WOOLLY. (AS A GLOSS, IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THERE IS OBVIOUSLY A DISTINCTION TO BE DRAWN BETWEEN A FORMAL ARRANGEMENT, WHEREBY A DUBLIN-BASED AMBASSADOR WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NORTH, AND AN INFORMAL INTERNAL UNDERSTANDING - SUCH AS, I SUSPECT, IS OPERATED BY A NUMBER OF EMBASSIES IN DUBLIN - WHERE THE DUBLIN AMBASSADOR RATHER THAN HIS LONDON-BASED COLLEAGUE HAS PRIMARY REPORTING RESPONSIBILITY ON NORTHERN IRELAND).

CHOICE FOR SPECIAL ENVOY

9. FLYNN - IN CONTRAST TO BRUCE MORRISON - TOOK THE VIEW THAT, TO HAVE ANY CREDIBILITY, THE POSITION OF SPECIAL ENVOY WOULD HAVE TO BE FILLED BY EITHER MORRISON OR HIMSELF - THOUGH HE QUICKLY ADDED THAT BRIAN DONNELLY MIGHT ALSO BE ACCEPTABLE. HE OFFERED NO VIEWS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE JOB OTHER THAN TO SAY THAT HE ATTACHED CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO THE POTENTIAL FOR THE U.S. TO BE HELPFUL IN THE ECONOMIC AREA. HE ADDED IN THIS REGARD, THAT, AFTER AN UNFORTUNATE FIRST TERM, THE INTERNATIONAL FUND SEEMED IN RECENT YEARS TO BE A SUCCESS STORY.

10. AT VARIOUS TIMES DURING THE DISCUSSION, I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO TOUCH ON THE NEED FOR CARE, CAUTION AND CONSULTATION IF WE WERE TO ENSURE THAT THE HELPFUL INTEREST AND CONCERN OF THE UNITED STATES WERE TO BE USED TO ACHIEVE THE MAXIMUM GOOD. I EMPHASISED ALSO THE CLEAR PRIORITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO HAVE THE ROUND-TABLE TALKS RESUME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

CHOICE FOR AMBASSADOR IN DUBLIN

11. AS REGARDS POSSIBLE CHOICES FOR THE DUBLIN POST, THE MAYOR SAID WITH CONSIDERABLE EMPHASIS THAT THE NOMINATION OF EITHER JEAN KENNEDY SMITH OR ELIZABETH SHANNON WOULD SEND THE WRONG SIGNAL TO THE IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY. THIS COMMUNITY HAD EXPECTATIONS OF A HIGH PROFILE POLITICAL AMBASSADOR BEING APPOINTED, WHO WOULD FOCUS IN PARTICULAR ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC ISSUES. THEY WOULD, THEREFORE, BE VERY UNHAPPY WITH ANY SIGNAL TO THE EFFECT THAT THE 'SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS' OF THE JOB WERE GOING TO BE THE PRIORITY OF THE NEW PERSON IN THE PHOENIX PARK.

12. IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, IT WILL COME AS NO SURPRISE THAT RAY FLYNN IS STRONGLY SUPPORTING BRIAN DONNELLY FOR THE DUBLIN POST. INTRIGUINGLY ALSO, ONE HEARS SOME SUGGESTIONS IN BOSTON THAT FLYNN HIMSELF MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THE JOB, WITH BRIAN DONNELLY RECEIVING THE MAYOR'S BACKING IN THE SUBSEQUENT RACE FOR CITY HALL.

JIMMY CARTER

13. THE MAYOR SAID THAT, AT THEIR RECENT MEETING, THE FORMER PRESIDENT, JIMMY CARTER, HAD BEEN VERY ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE SPECIAL ENVOY PROPOSAL. CARTER ALSO URGED FLYNN NOT TO BE PUT OFF THE PROPOSAL BY ANY NEGATIVE REACTION, MAKING THE POINT THAT ALL SUCH IDEAS INEVITABLY MEET WITH SOME OPPOSITION. HE ADDED, IN AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO HIS OWN ROLE IN THE CAMP DAVID NEGOTIATIONS, THAT, COMPARED TO MENACHIN BEGIN, IAN PAISLEY WAS 'A PIECE OF CAKE'.

NEXT STEP

14. THE MAYOR'S ADVISER OF IRISH ISSUES (MIKE QUINLIN) IS PREPARING A REPORT ON THE LITTLE ROCK MEETING, WHICH WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION. THIS MAY INCLUDE A RECOMMENDATION THAT A FACT-FINDING MISSION TRAVEL TO DUBLIN, BELFAST AND LONDON IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WITH A VIEW TO REPORTING BACK TO THE ADMINISTRATION, IN PARTICULAR ON THE SPECIAL ENVOY PROPOSAL. QUINLIN WILL KEEP US CLOSELY INFORMED OF DEVELOPMENTS.

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