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TANAISTE'S MEETING WITH SECRETARY OF STATE, WASHINGTON DC,
16TH NOVEMBER, 1993

Northern Ireland

1. Following a warm welcome from the Secretary of State to the Tánaiste and his party, Mr Christopher opened the discussion by referring to the situation in Northern Ireland. He said it was "not always easy" for the United States to decide on a position in relation to the issue. Indeed, when considering policy, Washington tended to look to the Irish Government and to those closer to the scene for advice, as against being guided by groups in the United States.
2. The Tánaiste emphasised that the interest and concern of the President and the Administration on this issue was always extremely welcome to the Irish Government. Most recently, Dublin had been very pleased with the President's statement encouraging the two Governments in their efforts to move the peace process forward.
3. The Tánaiste went on to say that his visit to Washington at this time reflected the importance we attached to this interest on the part of the Administration; we felt in particular that we should update the Secretary of State and his colleagues on the developing situation. In this regard, Mr Spring outlined the twin-track approach of (a) the framework for peace process and (b) the efforts to resume the round-table dialogue. While the latter track was languishing somewhat at the moment, the prospects for the peace process were encouraging, with all the indications being that there was a strong possibility that the IRA, in the right circumstances, could be got to declare a cessation of

violence. We were 90% on the way to securing an agreement that would be acceptable to both Governments and would achieve this objective .

4. The alternative to achieving peace now was to see a new generation take over the conflict; this could well mean that another twenty-five years might pass before the situation would be as amenable again to a solution.
5. The Tánaiste also spoke about the forthcoming Dublin Summit, and the preparations for this meeting. He expressed concern that the British for a number of reasons, including the Parliamentary arithmetic at Westminster, were somewhat hesitant about the peace process. Any encouragement therefore that could be given to them, especially from the U.S., would be particularly welcome and important.
6. The Secretary of State asked if, in circumstances where a ceasefire had been called, the IRA would have sufficiently good discipline to control its members, or whether individuals would strike out on their own (this was a point which came up on other occasions including at the meeting with the National Security Adviser, Tony Lake, and presumably reflected British briefing of the Administration). The Tánaiste responded that all the indications available to us suggested that there would be 100% support for a ceasefire if one were called.
7. The Secretary of State asked the Tánaiste if he would interpret the British Prime Minister's remarks at the Mansion House the previous evening, and indicate how they fitted into the overall picture. The Tánaiste replied that he very much welcomed the Prime Minister's remarks, which in many areas had echoed the language the Taoiseach and himself had been using about the need for courage and risk-taking in seizing the

present opportunity for peace.

GATT

8. Mr Christopher said that the 15th December fast-track deadline was "very stark". He hoped that Commissioner Brittan would have flexibility during his visit here this week - flexibility he didn't have the last time.
9. The Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs, Dan Tarullo, who was asked to convey his assessment by Mr Christopher, emphasised that the issue was now one of political will. The parameters for compromise were laid out; it was now a question of taking the hard decisions. He again said forcefully that there was no basis for re-opening Blair House.
10. The Secretary of State, in response to the strongly conveyed view of the Tánaiste that flexibility was required on all sides, agreed that pain would have to be widely distributed. It would be tragic, he said, if the agreement were to go down over one or two issues.
11. The Tánaiste, summing up, said he envisaged that the passing of the NAFTA agreement in the House would give a new and urgent momentum to the GATT negotiations. This should be quickly seized on and exploited. He again emphasised the need, particularly in the context of Leon Brittan's forthcoming visit, for both sides to show the necessary flexibility.

Yugoslavia

12. There was a brief discussion of the situation in Yugoslavia, with the Secretary of State emphasising in particular that the Administration was now devoting very considerable attention to the humanitarian side of the problem.

Iran

13. In a quite forceful presentation, the Secretary of State said that the role of Iran was becoming more and more corrosive. Washington had increasing evidence of Teheran's exportation of terrorism, including far from the Middle East and down "the back side of Africa". (Its negative attitude was most recently reflected in its response to the Middle East peace process).
14. Mr Christopher said he would like to offer a word of caution about in any way facilitating Iran's "breaking into the family of nations". It was a country which did not keep its engagements and obligations and it needed a message to this effect from the civilised community.
15. The Tánaiste said he understood the concerns of the United States. He had taken the opportunity on a number of occasions recently, including his meeting with the Iranian Foreign Secretary during the UN session and a call by the Iranian Ambassador in Dublin, to raise these and other issues. He had indeed gone "beyond the call of duty" in emphasising the Irish Government's deep concern about the Iranian approach to issues.

Adams visa

16. The Tánaiste touched lightly on the President's letter to Mayor Dinkins about the Gerry Adams visa case and, in particular, the view in the letter that the Irish Government were not in favour of a visa being issued. Mr Spring made the point that the Government had not been consulted adding that we were, of course, always available to be sounded out on issues of this kind. The Secretary of State asked what view we would have conveyed if we had been consulted. The Tánaiste responded that, while the question of a visa was one between

the individual applicant and the U.S. Administration, views on issues of this kind can change from month to month.

Special Envoy

17. In a brief discussion on the Special Envoy issue, the Tánaiste said that our position had not changed from that set out by the Taoiseach last March. As said earlier, we warmly welcomed the interest and concern of the Administration on Northern Ireland, including the fact that the peace Envoy option was "still very open".

Soccer visas

18. The Tánaiste outlined the background to the almost certain Irish participation in the World Cup next year and the considerable number of Irish people who would wish to travel to the United States to support the national team and would need visas for this purpose. The Secretary of State said he hoped that a satisfactory solution could be worked out. Assistant Secretary Oxman added that his colleague Mary Ryan, the Assistant Secretary of State for Consular Affairs, would be travelling to Dublin in early December and would be prepared to discuss all aspects of the issue.

DOE
21 November 1993