



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
FOR A/SEC O HUGINN FROM AMBASSADOR

W.P. Hester (14)

CYCY

1. I DISCUSSED THE NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION AT THE WHITE HOUSE THIS AFTERNOON WITH NANCY SODERBERG.

DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER

2. MS SODERBERG CONFIRMED, AS SIGNALLED ORALLY LAST WEEK, THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD SPOKEN BY TELEPHONE TO PRIME MINISTER MAJOR ON WEDNESDAY. THE DISCUSSION, WHILE LARGELY ON GATT ISSUES, HAD CONCLUDED ON NORTHERN IRELAND. THIS FOLLOWED A NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION (LAKE AND SODERBERG) THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SEND A SIGNAL OF STRONG INTEREST IN THE DEVELOPING SITUATION, AND HIS SENSE THAT A HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE MIGHT NOW BE AVAILABLE, TO THE BRITISH.

3. IN HIS REMARKS, THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD BEEN SPEAKING TO DUBLIN, HAD BEEN BRIEFED AND UP-DATED BY THEM ON THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEACE THAT MIGHT NOW BE AVAILABLE, AND THAT HE HOPED THERE WOULD BE A SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME TO THE UPCOMING SUMMIT. HE ADDED THAT HE REMAINED WILLING TO BE HELPFUL.

4. MS SODERBERG SAID SHE PRESUMES THE PRIME MINISTER MUST HAVE BEEN VERY SURPRISED THAT THE ISSUE WAS RAISED IN THIS WAY BY THE PRESIDENT AND, HOPEFULLY, WILL HAVE TAKEN THE MESSAGE ON BOARD. MR MAJOR WAS HOWEVER, SHE ADDED, QUITE GENERAL IN HIS RESPONSES.

FURTHER SUPPORT

5. IN EXPRESSING GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE ABOVE, I SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO KEEP REITERATING THIS MESSAGE THROUGH OFFICIAL CHANNELS TO THE BRITISH, BOTH HERE AND IN LONDON. MS SODERBERG, IN AGREEING, ALSO ASKED THAT SHE BE KEPT INFORMED OF SUMMIT DEVELOPMENTS. IF THE OUTCOME WERE ALONG THE LINES WE HOPED FOR, THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD WISH TO ISSUE A STRONG STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT AND SUPPORT.

VISIT TO IRELAND?

6. THE PRESIDENT'S CORE VISITS SCHEDULE FOR NEXT YEAR IS LIKELY TO BE ANNOUNCED ON WEDNESDAY. THIS INCLUDES THE NATO SUMMIT, FOLLOWED BY A VISIT TO PRAGUE, MOSCOW AND MINSK IN JANUARY, THE FLANDERS ANNIVERSARY IN JUNE AND THE G7 MEETING IN ROME IN JULY. WHILE THE JANUARY VISIT WAS ALREADY LOADED, MS SODERBERG SAW A WINDOW FOR A VISIT TO IRELAND IN JUNE OR JULY, IF WE WISHED TO PURSUE IT. SHE (AND I PRESUME TONY LAKE) FAVOURED A VISIT TO IRELAND, HOWEVER BRIEF.

7. I BELIEVE STRONGLY WE SHOULD SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY. IF YOU AGREE, IT MIGHT BEST BE FOLLOWED UP VIA A LETTER FROM THE TAOISEACH TO THE PRESIDENT, IN WHICH MR REYNOLDS MIGHT ALSO OF COURSE EXPRESS GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE PRESIDENT'S ACTIVE INTEREST IN, AND SUPPORT ON NORTHERN IRELAND.

PX

Handwritten notes:
PRPP 03005
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Agreed
93720E ESTR EI
invitation be prepared.
If you agree we
letter of
A.H.

Handwritten notes:
PST
P/SK
Mr. F. Murray,
If the Taoiseach agrees to a
low. Mr. Hester a draft r.