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Visit by Senator George Mitchell and Senator Patrick Leahy
US Investment Conference 24-26 May 1995

Steering Note

Summary

1. The US Investment Conference, Washington 24-26 May 1995, is part of a package of economic measures announced on November 1 1994 by President Clinton to assist in the consolidation of the peace process in Northern Ireland.
2. The other main elements of the package were:
 - (1) Commerce Secretary Ron Brown's attendance at an investment conference in Belfast in December 1994 and a visit to Dublin for political consultations
 - (2) a planned commitment of \$20 million to the International Fund for Ireland in 1995 and, if approved by Congress, an additional \$10 million for 1996 and 1997
3. On 1 December, President Clinton appointed Senator George Mitchell to be Special Adviser to the President and to the Secretary of State for Economic Initiatives in Ireland. The Investment Conference is one of the most significant aspect of his brief.
4. 1,000 invited guests are expected to attend, 700 from the US and 300 from Ireland (North and South). Invitations are expected to issue in mid-March to key business personnel in the US, Northern Ireland and the southern border of counties.
5. The US side has given preliminary ideas on arrangements for the Conference involving short Plenary Sessions and workshops [see Section 5 of this brief]. In particular, the US side has suggested the following themes for Conference workshops:

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- Fair Employment
- Tourism
- Information Technology
- Service Industries and General Manufacturing
- Agribusiness/aquaculture
- Investment in Disadvantaged Areas (to be called "Community Development")

There would be three workshops on each day. In addition, on both days Irish agencies would run a fourth workshop on programmes (including EU programmes) available for investment.

6. These general areas appear broadly acceptable to both the British side and ourselves but we may in informal discussions, following Senator Mitchell's visit, seek for some additional areas to be incorporated [e.g. medical/pharmaceutical areas; small and medium sized enterprises (covering business partnerships, marketing alliance, joint ventures etc.); telecommunications and environment products and services].
7. The British side appears tacitly resigned to Fair Employment being addressed in one of the Sessions but are concerned that controversy about the subject should not overshadow the Conference.
8. Irish Government policy is that there is nothing objectionable in the MacBride principles. Through the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference, the Government made a major contribution to the strengthening of the 1989 Fair Employment Act and have suggested further improvements in the context of the five-year review of the Act.
9. Fair Employment need not be a contentious issue at the Conference and the Irish Government will work with the US

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and British sides to ensure that it is dealt with in a fair and sensitive way.

Meetings of Ministers with Senator Mitchell

10. Ministers meeting Senators Mitchell and Leahy (who is on a separate visit to Ireland but who will accompany Senator Mitchell) may wish to draw in general terms on the following themes in discussions with the US side:

- The Washington Trade and Investment Conference is an outstanding expression of US support for the peace process.
- It is difficult to exaggerate the critical importance of the US in encouraging the peace process. It has been indispensable.
- The President's personal role has been of particular and special importance.
- The personal involvement of the President in the Washington Conference will help to highlight the unique nature of what has happened in Ireland since last Autumn and the rich potential it offers to US investors.
- The Conference will offer a major opportunity to attract new US investment to Northern Ireland and the border counties.
- North-South economic cooperation is of enormous importance in helping us on this island to deploy limited resources to best mutual advantage.
- Both [the Irish and British] Governments will be availing of the Conference to reinforce the message that there is now a lasting peace in Northern Ireland and that this dramatically improves the environment for US trade and investment in Ireland.

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- We will be working closely with the British Government and relevant bodies in Northern Ireland so that, in the interests of all the people of the island, full advantage is taken of the Conference to sell a positive image of both parts of Ireland to the US business community.

- The Conference will provide a unique forum to show the exceptional attractions of Ireland, North and South, as an investment location.

- We will be adapting a closely co-ordinated approach to the Conference involving the various Government Departments and State agencies. We look forward to working closely with the US side as preparations for the Conference gather momentum.

- Irish State agencies and the Irish corporate sector are well experienced in trade promotion and inward investment sourcing in US. They are fully involved in the preparations for the Conference and are fully aware and ready to exploit the opportunity it presents.

[If Senator Mitchell raises existing programmes for the border counties:

- The Government is targeting considerable resources at tackling infrastructural weaknesses in the southern border counties such as the roads to further enhance their attractiveness as an investment location. The EU Interreg programme is an essential element of our approach. The recently announced special EU Aid package and the Washington Investment Conference will greatly complement existing programmes.]

Visit by Senator George Mitchell and Senator Leahy

16-17 February

US Economic Assistance for Northern Ireland
and the Border Counties

Background Note

Introduction

1. In a statement on 31 August, President Clinton welcomed the "watershed announcement" by the IRA and said that "it can mark the beginning of a new era that holds the promise of peace for all the people of Northern Ireland".
The United States continued to stand ready "to assist in advancing the process of peace in Northern Ireland".
2. The Tánaiste briefed President Clinton on political developments at a meeting in Martha's Vineyard on 2 September. The Tánaiste had further meetings with the President and Vice-President Gore in Washington on 29 September.

President Clinton's announcement of economic aid package

3. On 1 November, President Clinton announced a package of economic measures to assist in the consolidation of the peace process. The President in his statement said that "this present opportunity for lasting peace in Ireland is the chance of a generation; it must be seized and supported".
4. The main elements of the President's package were as follows:
 - The President would host a White House Conference for Trade and Investment in Ireland planned for April 1995 in Philadelphia (later changed to 24-26 May in Washington D. C.)

- The Conference would "aim to show US companies that sustained peace is dramatically improving business opportunities on the island of Ireland and, particularly, in Northern Ireland and the border counties".
- Commerce Secretary Ron Brown would attend an investment conference in Belfast and also visit Dublin in December 1994
- In addition to a planned commitment of \$20 million to the International Fund in 1995, the Administration would seek Congressional approval for an additional \$10 million for 1996 and 1997, (i.e. bringing the total US contribution to the IFI to \$30 million in each year). This increase will bring the total US commitment to the Fund to \$100 million.

Appointment of Senator George Mitchell as Special Adviser for Economic Initiatives in Ireland

5. On 1 December, President Clinton appointed Senator George Mitchell to be Special Adviser to the President and the Secretary of State for Economic Initiatives in Ireland. In a statement, the White House said Senator Mitchell would:
- advise the President and Secretary Christopher on the progress of the US economic initiatives announced by the President on 1 November;
 - lead the efforts of all US Government agencies that are promoting economic development in Northern Ireland and the border counties;
 - establish a dialogue with the EU and its member States, and with other countries, to encourage continued cooperation in the economic development of

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Northern Ireland and the border counties most affected by years of violence;

- consult with Congress and the Irish and British Governments to help strengthen and target the Fund's programme to provide maximum support to the peace process.
6. Senator Mitchell, accompanied by a number of key US Administration personnel, is visiting Ireland this week as part of his preparations for the Conference. During the course of his visit he will meet the President, Taoiseach, Tánaiste and the Ministers for Finance and Enterprise and Employment. Senator Mitchell will attend the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation and visit Derry and Clones. He will be joined for most of his visit by Senator Leahy, who is also visiting Ireland this week.

Arrangements for the Washington Conference

7. The Investment Conference is now scheduled to take place in Washington 24-26 May. President Clinton will address the Conference on 25 May and Commerce Secretary Ron Brown will present a "strategic plan" for US trade/investment in Ireland. Secretary Warren Christopher also seems likely to attend.
8. The Department of Foreign Affairs are coordinating with the other relevant Government Departments and State Agencies here, the US Embassy and the British Government on the arrangements for the Conference. The Embassy in Washington is in close liaison with the US administration and is coordinating the approach of Irish State agencies in the US.
9. It is envisaged that the Conference format will involve short, focused plenary sessions, with the substantive work being conducted in workshop sessions covering a range of topics. The latter could include: Fair

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Employment (or related topic), Tourism, Information Technology, Service Industries and General Manufacturing, Agribusiness/Aquaculture, Investment in Disadvantaged Areas (to be called "Community Development").

The moderators of the workshops could include US business people currently involved in investment in both parts of Ireland.

10. There will be a company database drawn up on an all-Ireland basis and a central secretariat to facilitate networking between individual companies. In the margins of the Conference, there will be an exhibition area for the use of agencies, community groups and local interests. Ideas for a cultural programme are under consideration. There will opportunities for Irish corporate sponsorship and hospitality at the Conference.
11. The Conference is expected to involve 1,000 invited guests of whom 700 would be from the US and about 300 from Ireland (North and South). We are working on recommendations for the guest list. An initial letter of invitation will issue from President Clinton between 15 and 20 March followed by a more detailed letter from Senator Mitchell or Secretary Brown shortly after Easter.
12. The American organisers' expect that the Irish and British Government delegations would be led at slightly below Head of Government level. We have indicated our working assumption that the Tánaiste would lead the Irish Government delegation. The Secretary of State for NI will lead the British Government delegation. The timing of speaking opportunities for the Heads of Delegation is currently under discussion with the Conference organisers.

Anglo-Irish Division
Department of Foreign Affairs
14 February, 1995

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