Anglo-Irish Relations: Northern Ireland

I attach a copy of Mr McFarlane's reply to the message which I sent him at the beginning of the week on Northern Ireland.

2. It is an interesting thought that the signature of an Anglo-Irish agreement would help "ease opposition" to the United Kingdom/United States Supplementary Extradition Treaty. That would be a useful bonus, though not of course a reason for agreeing an agreement which in other respects fell short of being acceptable.

3. I am sending copies of this minute to the Private Secretaries to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

4 October 1985
STANDBY I AM NOW SENDING

SEC 1921
4 Oct 85

FROM THE WHITE HOUSE
TO THE CABINET OFFICE

S E C R E T VIA CABINET OFFICE CHANNEL 49219277

PLEASE PASS THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO SIR ROBERT ARMSTRONG FROM ROBERT G. MCFLANIE.

SUBJ: NORTHERN IRELAND

DEAR SIR ROBERT:

THANK YOU FOR THE MESSAGE ON NORTHERN IRELAND.

WE, OF COURSE, HOPE VERY MUCH THAT THE CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS WILL LEAD TO AN ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT, AS YOU INDICATE, THAT AN AGREEMENT WOULD NOT SOLVE ALL THE MANY COMPLEX PROBLEMS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT, IT CERTAINLY WOULD BE A POSITIVE STEP, AND ONE THAT I CAN ASSURE YOU WOULD BE WELCOMED PUBLICLY BY US.

ALLOW ME TO ALSO ASSURE YOU THAT WE ARE WILLING TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT. WHILE THERE IS DEEP CONCERN HERE OVER THE BUDGET DEFICIT, CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES CONCERNING A NORTHERN IRELAND RECONSTRUCTION FUND ARE GENERALLY POSITIVE.

WE FULLY UNDERSTAND THE POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO PROGRESS THAT PREMATURE DISCLOSURE WOULD CAUSE. WE DO, HOWEVER, HOPE THAT AT THE APPROPRIATE STAGE YOU FULLY BRIEF STATE ON YOUR PLANS. SHOULD WE BE ABLE TO WORK OUT AN OFFER OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT, THERE WOULD SURELY BE CONGRESSIONAL REACTIONS AND STATE WOULD HAVE THE LEAD IN TESTIFYING BEFORE CONGRESS.

AS AN ASIDE, PERMIT ME TO NOTE THAT AN ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT ON NORTHERN IRELAND WOULD, IN MY VIEW, HELP EASE OPPOSITION TO OUR SUPPLEMENTARY EXTRADITION TREATY.

BEST REGARDS,

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