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NOTE FOR THE RECORD

- cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - M
PS/Mr Scott (L&B) - M
PS/Dr Mawhinney (L&B) - M
PS/Mr Viggers (L&B) - M
PS/PUS (L&B) - M
[PS/Mr Bloomfield 28/4
Mr Burns - M
Mr Fell, by DR
Mr Chesterton - M
Mr Elliott
Mr Bell - M
Mr Wilson, DED, by DR

McBRIDE PRINCIPLES - JOHN HUME'S LETTER TO ASSEMBLY SPEAKER
SACRAMENTO

I attach a copy of John Hume's letter to the Assembly Speaker in Sacramento. After protracted dealings Mr Hume was persuaded to prepare and sign the letter, and arrangements are now in hand to forward it to the United States in time for the hearings in California on 28 ~~May~~. *April*.

We are aware that a copy of the letter has already gone to Dublin and subject to any comments from addressees I would propose sending a copy to the Cardinal.

In order to facilitate his comments during media interviews yesterday Mr Hume signed the letter as at 17 April.

J E

J E McCONNELL
Political Affairs Division
22 April 1987

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17 April 1987.

Dear Mr. Speaker,

You will recall that we had a very interesting discussion on the problems of Northern Ireland and on Civil Rights a few years ago, when you so kindly received me in your office in Sacramento. Since I understand that your Assembly is due to debate the Mc Bride Principles dealing with discrimination against Catholics in Northern Ireland on April 29, I thought you might like to have my views as leader of the political party that represents the majority of Catholics in Northern Ireland, and that does so, totally committed to non-violence and the democratic process.

I myself am a Member of Parliament at Westminster. My district includes some of the highest unemployment in the Common Market — in the town of Strabane it is 50% and in the Bogside in Derry where I live it is 60%. I have therefore not only a deep but a direct interest, as have the people who elect me, in all matters relating to unemployment in Northern Ireland. I would therefore ask that those whom I know to be anxious to help us should take our views seriously into account.

I also represent the whole of Northern Ireland as one of three members in the European Parliament. My vote comes largely from the Catholic population. The areas of greatest unemployment in Northern Ireland in addition to Derry and Strabane, are places like Newry and West Belfast, all of them Catholic areas.

My political career began as a leader of the Civil Rights movement out of which was founded the party which I now lead, the Social Democratic and Labour Party.

I apologise for dwelling so much on my credentials,

but I do so in order to stress my deep experience over the past twenty years of the problems about which you are deliberating and about which I am writing to you.

The Civil Rights Movement, as did my own party at its foundation, had three basic aims — a fair electoral system, fair allocation of public housing and fair distribution of employment. Everyone would agree that we have made substantial progress on the first two objectives and I believe it reasonable to assume that we would also have made progress on the third had it not been for a number of factors.

The factors that have seriously militated against the reduction in unemployment in Northern Ireland in the past seventeen years have been the international recession with its effects all over Europe, and the campaign of violence in Northern Ireland itself, which has not only destroyed jobs directly but frightened off outside investors. Independent experts engaged by the New Ireland Forum estimated that the IRA campaign of violence in Northern Ireland cost 39,000 jobs in Northern Ireland, and did £11 billion worth of damage to the economy of Ireland, North and South. How many more of our young people would be in employment today if that campaign had not taken place?

We believe it to be self-evident that the problems of unemployment among Catholics in Northern Ireland cannot be solved by fair employment practices alone. If we had fair employment in all areas of Northern Ireland to-morrow, we would still have huge unemployment in Derry, Newry, Strabane, West Belfast etc., — the major Catholic areas. We therefore believe that any strategy to deal effectively with the problem must be a twin track strategy — the strongest application of fair employment practices and principles in Northern Ireland and a major effort in creating new jobs which means attracting substantial inward investment. That is why we have appealed to our friends in the U.S. to encourage American companies to invest in areas of high unemployment in N. Ireland. This is an affirmative action approach. That is why we are concerned about certain aspects of the Mo Bride Principles campaign. There is a serious danger that this campaign will discourage

or prevent industry coming to Northern Ireland.

We would point out that it is self-evident that any U.S. company interested in locating in Western Europe inside the Common Market will be, and is being, bombarded with attractive inducements from every region. By contrast, if they are led to believe that they will have political problems or problems with their shareholders if they locate in Northern Ireland, then they are more likely not to come at all but to go somewhere else.

We have no objection to the Mo Bride Principles as principles, indeed we have adopted a much more comprehensive set of principles ourselves (see enclosed SDLP document). Our difference put simply is that principles of fair employment for Northern Ireland should be applied in Northern Ireland and not in the United States.

In relation to ensuring the application of fair employment principles in Northern Ireland itself, we would believe that we now have a much fairer decision making process than we have ever had. The Anglo-Irish Agreement has set up the Anglo-Irish Conference of both British and Irish governments to deal with the problems of Northern Ireland. The whole democratic world, including your own national leadership in a major bi-partisan statement, applauded this significant development. Through this Conference we have submitted our own proposals. This has resulted in the production by the British Government of proposals in their consultative document. This is the first step in the process of producing new legislation. We have drawn up our proposals in response to the Consultative Document and the matter is now under active consideration at the Anglo-Irish Conference Table. We have every confidence that the Irish Government will do everything in its power at that Conference Table to ensure the emergence of more than adequate legislative proposals. The next step in the process, having considered this reaction, will be for the British Government to publish a White Paper setting out in detail its proposals for new legislation to deal with employment discrimination.

Could I therefore suggest that the best course of action that your Assembly could take at the present time, would be to withhold any action until you see the nature of the new legislative proposals? In that way, you

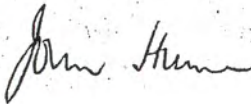
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will avoid any possible disinvestment damage and will strengthen the pressure for 'meaningful' Fair Employment legislation.

May I also point out, Mr. Speaker, that the approach of my party, firmly rooted in non-violence, has had the consistent support of your national leadership in the Senate and Congress, as offering the most constructive way forward in Northern Ireland. You will appreciate the deep difficulties in pursuing the path of non-violent democratic politics in a deeply divided society and one that is ridden with prejudice. There is however, no other way, for as Martin Luther King put it so well:— "The old doctrine of an eye for an eye leaves everybody blind".

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that our views will receive your serious consideration and that of your Assembly.

Yours sincerely,



John Hume.

The Hon. Willie Brown,
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