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17 February 1993

Mr Jonathan Powell
British Embassy
Washington

Dear Jonathan,

VISIT BY THE FOUR IRISH CHURCH LEADERS

1. Please refer to your letter of 10 February to David Cooke about the visit of the four Irish church leaders to Washington. They visited Boston from 12-15 February. They gave a press conference at the airport, called on Mayor Flynn, held an open forum at Fontbonne Academy in Milton, attended a dinner hosted by Cardinal Law, a book presentation at Boston College, visited the Tyrone Crystal shop and as a last engagement a lunch hosted by the Irish American Partnership.
2. In Boston the visit of the church leaders was under the control of Father Hiles, Vicar of the Church of our Saviour in Milton. As you probably know he invited Cardinal Daly and Archbishop Eames to Boston in March of last year for St Patrick's week, but in the event because of an increase in violence at the time the two cancelled their visit. Archbishop Eames told me that he and Cardinal Daly had felt under an obligation to Father Hiles to reinstate the visit and decided to include the other two church leaders, and to extend it to other US cities. Father Hiles has a reputation for being an eccentric. He was out of his depth but refused offers of help. He went out of his way to make life as difficult as possible for those who wanted to play a part in the church leaders' programme such as the Irish American Partnership. As a result there was little TV coverage and the press coverage was limited to the press conference on arrival and the forum. Despite this the visit was a success, the symbolic nature of which came across clearly. The message of the four leaders in Boston was centred



on a need to accept and accommodate differences, and to get talks going again for which there was strong support from both communities. Their main theme however was economic investment geared to job creation.

3. Terri Evans attended the forum at Fontbonne Academy in Milton, at which each of the four church leaders spoke for a half-hour, with a question-and-answer period at the end of the programme. The audience of 150 was largely older, many with religious or cultural affiliations.

4. Cardinal Daly first stressed the importance in satisfying the national identities of both communities. He cited the need to give the legitimate aspirations of nationalists a voice. He and Eames spoke of the alienation of 'two minorities'; Eames and Moderator Dunlop discussed the Unionist perspective and the balancing of both communities' aspirations. Daly called the 'Brits Out' cry unrealistic, epitomising the failure of its proponents to come to terms with the million-plus British-Irish of the North. He was vehement in his condemnation of violence, and urged those present to carefully consider the ultimate use of any funds when donating to Irish causes in the US. Archbishop Eames echoed the sentiment, noting the decline in such support in recent years. He also condemned attempts to politicise their visit, including allegation in the press that the four leaders were in the US to 'quash' MacBride and the envoy proposal. He noted (as he has in the past) the importance of (the US government) taking into account "all parties' sensitivities" when developing such proposals.

5. Both Eames and Dunlop made mention of the fact that only the nationalist story was known in the States, and urged the audience to learn more about both communities. Eames reinforced Daly's remarks about the need for a substantial role for both communities in a future Northern Ireland government. Reverend Ritchie spoke anecdotally and added little of additional substance to the dialogue.

6. Several NORAIID representatives were present, and their flyer, a copy of which is enclosed, were left at a table at the auditorium entrance. It is much more coherent than previous items from the Boston chapter, and its relatively restrained tone and focus on MacBride as a tool to encourage US investment may signal a new approach.

7. The dinner hosted by Cardinal Law was mainly for members of the clergy but included Liam Canniffe, the Irish Consul-General and myself. There were no formal speeches. I sat next to Archbishop Eames who told me that when they called on Mayor Flynn, they found the Mayor "agitated". His aides explained this away by saying that he was in the middle trying to rescue



the Boston Garden project which had fallen apart that morning. But Archbishop Eames thought that the Mayor may have expected to be attacked over his Republican leaning. Archbishop Eames said that Mayor Flynn gave him a copy of the joint letter (second version), which Flynn and Bruce Morrison had written to President Clinton, and asked for Eames' comments. The Archbishop said that he would study it and let him have his comments later.

8. I also spoke today to Mike Quinlin, the Mayor's Irish adviser, who told me that the meeting also covered special envoy and MacBride Principles. In their response the church leaders stuck to their agreed line on both issues. Quinlin added that John Dunlop made a "strong" impression on Mayor Flynn. He explained the Unionists point of view and spoke about the need to accommodate differences. Flynn said that he would welcome more Unionists visiting Boston so that the Unionist view would not go unheard. When pressed Quinlin confirmed that the Mayor would want to see Unionist visitors (when Ken McGinnis was here last year, the Mayor refused to see him).

9. The book presentation at Boston College was a low key affair, and there were no speeches. The Irish American Partnership lunch to which I was also invited, was attended by leading Boston CEOs with an interest in Ireland. Main speeches were given by Cardinal Daly, Archbishop Eames and John Dunlop. They were all centred on the need for more economic investment in the island of Ireland. They made no mention of special envoy, MacBride, etc. At the end of the lunch Cardinal Law however decided that it was time to add a political flavour to the lunch. He said that Northern Ireland must be higher on the political agenda of the United States, particularly as there was now a new administration. He said that if there is not to be a peace envoy, then the United States needs a "strong Consul" in Belfast. When I spoke to him after the lunch, he told me that after our last conversation, he accepted that the appointment of a peace envoy could be counter-productive, but he felt that a political appointee in Belfast with a fact-finding brief could be helpful. We agreed that he would get in touch with me to discuss this and other issues.

John Owen

c.c. Mr D Cooke, SIL, NIO, London
Mr G R Archer, RID, FCO, London
Mr M E Pellew LVO, NAD, FCO, London
Mr B Kirk, BIS, New York
Mr D McNeill, NIB, Washington

Two Decades of American support
for the oppressed people of occupied Ireland

American Committee

February 12, 1933

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

On behalf of the membership of Irish Northern Aid in Boston, we welcome the arrival of the leaders of several Christian denominations to our city.

It is encouraging to see Irish religious leaders working together. As part of their visit to America, and as a gesture of solidarity, we invite the church leaders to join with us in issuing a strong condemnation of religious discrimination in all its evil manifestations but especially in employment and in the allocation of public housing.

We ask the church leaders to support the Mac Bride Principles, which encourage the investment of American money in those companies that have taken a stand to end religious discrimination and bigotry in the work place. Our experience with the Sullivan Principles in South Africa has shown us that economics can be used to motivate Christian principles of equality and fairness.

We in Irish Northern Aid support the church leaders' stated goal to promote economic growth on both sides of Ireland's border. We feel we should add, however, that without a concurrent commitment to end religious discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity, investment in Ireland will exacerbate the problem and only cause more strife and bitterness among our brothers and sisters in Northern Ireland.

In light of their stated goal to promote economic growth on both sides of Ireland's border, we call on our Christian brothers to condemn the on-going destruction of cross-border roads by the British military which has caused so much economic hardship to our people; breaking up communities, dividing farmlands, and separating farmers and craftsmen from their markets in nearby towns.

Finally, as the church leaders travel through our country they will find there are many Americans concerned about Northern Ireland and desirous to help bring peace and justice to the people living there. We feel confident they should give their whole-hearted support to the Envoy of Peace that President Clinton intends to send to Northern Ireland. What better way for Americans to find out about Northern Ireland and to promote the cause of peace than to have an unbiased observer who will report back to President Clinton and to the American people on the conditions there.

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TOTAL P.05

*How they have
speaking to
Gregory Campbell,
perhaps, or just
re-running old tapes.
disgusting to
see this appeal
in Novato's
mouth.*