

Ms. M. H. Henderson's letter

*RH 207 DCI
MR Windsor*

In last evening's discussion the Minister was happy with the intention as developed. He now wishes to write

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to Dr. H. Henderson for his suggestion, and referring briefly to present arrangements (with note also referring to our recent use of

BRIEF FOR DISCUSSION WITH MINISTER ON 16 MAY 1989

well-placed US citizens) & inviting him to suggest names of US

MACBRIDE: DR BRUM HENDERSON'S VIEWS ON NI REPRESENTATION IN THE US

candidates in the letter following.

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BACKGROUND NOTE

1. During recent discussions with Mr Viggers, Dr Brum Henderson repeated a point he has made previously in correspondence (summarised below); namely that the presentation of the Northern Ireland case against MacBride sometimes lacks credibility. More specifically he has suggested that we fail to use senior and respected friends in the United States and rely instead upon flying in our own "advisers" from Northern Ireland who lack weight in the eyes of the Americans.
2. Early in 1988 Dr Henderson wrote to the Secretary of State about a MacBride Bill which had surfaced in Florida, suggesting that there was a necessity to have someone on the ground in Tallahassee State Capitol and expressing the view that the "IDB would do well to employ retired American businessmen, well connected in social and public circles, who could receive a retainer and expenses and be indoctrinated into Northern Ireland by a crash course of a month, with an annual refresher".
3. The Secretary of State responded advising that the IDB continued to keep the position under review but remained persuaded that a knowledge of the Province which a salesman from Northern Ireland can bring to the job was paramount. He also pointed out that the IDB had developed a network of contacts, built up over many years in the local business community including the headquarters of the many US companies in NI, whom it had not been necessary to remunerate

CURRENT POLICY AND PRACTICE ON MACBRIDE REPRESENTATION

4. The IDB funded opposition to the MacBride Campaign until August 1987 following which DED took responsibility. Industrial promotion and opposition to the MacBride campaign are two separate functions which do not sit well together. The IDB does not take an active part in opposing the campaign

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since this would divert resources from its primary role in the promotion of investment. The campaign has, up to the present, been fought at State level and what is required is people who have influence in the relevant State legislatures and Irish-American circles.

5. In addition to the involvement of NI lobbyists/witnesses the Department has employed professional lobbyists at various stages since January 1988 (in 12 States at an average cost of £8,000 in each, for the period required in any one year). Professional lobbyists are highly respected people of some influence in State legislature circles and each has a detailed knowledge of the workings of the legislative systems in his/her State - (State legislature regulations vary from State to State). They know many of the Assemblymen and Senators personally and can advise on the best tactics to pursue, contacts to exert influence etc.
6. It is the Embassy view that Northern Ireland witnesses have a great deal more credibility in the US than many of the Americans who are willing to speak out publicly against MacBride. It has been their experience that most senior and respected Americans are not willing to speak against the Principles in public. Pressure is often exerted by Irish American groups on those who oppose the campaign and they endure heckling, letter writing campaigns, offensive telephone calls, attacks on their character and even threats.
7. Suitable American nationals who volunteer to speak at hearings/lobby are encouraged to do so. Some convincing US speakers of good standing have volunteered or been recruited eg^o Cardinal Law's Secretary (Fr Helmick), Professor John Gleeson, Wisconsin; Mr S Bartlett (ex US Consul Belfast); Mr C P Quinlan retired State Department official (Minnesota); Mr J Conlin Swiss Bank Corporation (Pension fund management expert); Professor S McConville, Illinois; Paul Long (Michigan Catholic Conference lobbyist), Chamber of Commerce representatives^p in various States.

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LINE TO TAKE

8. Our principal objective in relation to MacBride bills at State level is to ensure that the legislation does not get through - either through outright defeat of the bill or by the use of delaying tactics that keep it blocked in committee.
9. To achieve this objective we seek to ensure that legislators are as fully informed as possible on the true facts of the Northern Ireland situation, legislatively, politically, economically and socially.
10. The approach adopted is:
 - (i) to ensure that all relevant information is made available;
 - (ii) to collaborate closely with colleagues in the Consular and diplomatic services who have the responsibility for ensuring that the information is effectively disseminated and who, in the process, involve themselves in carefully planned and targeted lobbying of key interests;
 - (iii) to reinforce the efforts of FCO staff through the use in appropriate circumstances of professional lobbyists in the US who have an intimate knowledge of the political processes and personalities in State capitals;
 - (iv) to augment the lobbying efforts of US-based people through Northern Ireland people with appropriate credentials politically, religiously or otherwise who have the ability to develop and exploit networks and contacts with individuals at State level;
 - (v) to have evidence presented at hearings by NI witnesses of good standing who, out of experience, knowledge and conviction, are able to put the record straight in the face of untruths and distortions by MacBride proponents.
11. Credibility, whether in lobbying or testifying at hearings, seems by all accounts to have been achieved. At Committee hearings in particular it is very important that those testifying to the facts of the NI situation speak

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with authority out of first hand experience and in accents that are unmistakably Irish. Those who have given evidence - lawyers, academics, business people and trade unionists - have in all cases articulated their positions well and made a good impression. During 1988 six bills failed to pass and the provisions of four of the five Bills which did pass were weakened. In 1989 legislation has emerged in 12 States - so far only one (weakened) Bill has passed, although it is likely that another will pass shortly. We know that at least 5 of the 12 cannot succeed this year and are hopeful of a bigger tally. *Seven have failed so far*

- 12. It is not at all clear who the "senior and respected friends" that Dr Henderson refers to are. In that it is effectiveness at State level that seems to be at issue the "friends" would need to have the appropriate locus and standing. Does he have a general policy in mind or does he wish to put forward names of specific people? If the latter, then the Minister might seek further details. Dr Henderson may not be aware of our policy of employing professional lobbyists who would seem to meet most of his criteria and it is difficult to see how the policy of using spokespersons from NI complemented by the employment of professional lobbyists and where possible by volunteers from the relevant local State community can be bettered.

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