



**CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Belfast BT1 6EQ, Northern Ireland

February 22, 1993

Rt. Hon. Sir Patrick Mayhew  
Secretary of State for Northern Ireland  
Stormont Castle  
Belfast BT4 3ST

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SOS/0.162/93

Dear Sir Patrick,

I want to ensure that you have a copy of the speech which Ambassador Raymond Seitz delivered to the Institute of Directors at the Culloden Hotel on Friday, February 19. I believe that this is a significant statement of U.S. policy toward Northern Ireland. I would appreciate hearing any reactions which you have to the speech.

My best regards,

Sincerely yours,

*D. Archard*

Douglas B. Archard  
Consul General

Encl.

Speech to the Institute of Directors  
by Raymond G. H. Seitz  
U.S. Ambassador to the Court of St. James's  
Culloden Hotel, Belfast  
February 19, 1993

There is a lot of speculation these days in London about the future direction of the Anglo-American relationship.

Part of this is predictable. There is almost always a measure of international anxiety when a different party takes over the Administration in Washington. After all, the President is in charge of the world's biggest economy and greatest military force, and whomever we Americans elect to that job can have as great an effect on the security and well-being of the citizen of Birmingham or Belfast, as on the citizen of Boston or Boise.

For outsiders, however, our electoral process remains impenetrable, interminable, wide open and tumultuous, and at the end of all the ballyhoo and balloting, we are likely to choose someone who no one has ever heard of. It could be a peanut farmer from Georgia or a retired movie actor from California or even a Rhodes Scholar from Arkansas. Suddenly this individual becomes President of the United States of America and no one is quite sure what it means.

The periodic electoral apprehension on this occasion coincides with a second, more basic anxiety, especially in Europe. It is the sense that the world around us is changing fundamentally, and that new challenges are marked more by ambiguity than by clarity. Compounded by an intractable recession, the future does not easily inspire confidence, and the old guideposts no longer seem so reliable.

In looking at the relationship between our two countries, I know from experience that substance outweighs sentiment. The shape of our relationship is fashioned by international realities, not flickering images or contented reminiscences. And throughout most of this century our two countries have shared a similar global and strategic perspective. Though not always harmonious, the relationship has prospered through mutual reinforcement.

The Prime Minister will meet with President Clinton on Wednesday in Washington. Both leaders have set aside a lot of time for this first encounter. The agenda is complicated and pressing. Many of our interests are parallel. I have no doubt that Wednesday will mark the beginning of a new chapter in a long, fruitful history of close collaboration between our two nations. Arguably, we are going to need each other as much now as at any time in the past.

- 2 -

Within this broad, varied, rich relationship there has always been a particular Irish dimension. I have visited this Province enough to believe that all forty-two American Presidents were born here; or if they weren't actually born here, they should have been. And just as the United Kingdom has always had a special position in our continent, through our Canadian neighbor, America has always enjoyed a special position in this neighborhood, through our deep attachment to things Irish. This is a geographic parallel, not a legal one. Given our Irish-American community of forty million people and the immense cultural legacy passed on from Ireland, it is a simple political fact that we will always have a special regard for this green island.

Many of our ties to Ireland, North and South, are romantic and stem from an incurable nostalgia in the furthest corner of the Celtic soul. The language of music and the language of poetry easily stir a primal memory. So strong is the phenomenon that it extends well beyond the confines of the Irish-American community. A melancholy rendition of "Danny Boy" has been known to shut down all of Oklahoma City; and it is quite likely that Mr. Benedetti, Mr. Goldberg and Mr. Kowalski will wear a green tie on St. Patrick's Day.

But as with the overall relationship, it is the political and economic substance that drives our respective interests. American companies, for example, are a striking prospect on the economic landscape of Northern Ireland. Over eight thousand people -- almost a tenth of the manufacturing work force of the Province -- have jobs in American companies. These range from the well-established and familiar corporations, such as Ford and DuPont, to more recent high tech enterprises, such as Seagate, which has just announced its \$65 million investment in Londonderry. In almost every instance, these American economic enterprises in the Province have planted themselves in fertile economic soil.

This is part of a much broader and spectacular pattern of world growth. In the last four decades, international trade has ballooned ten-fold to a current value of about \$7 trillion; and international investment has increased six-fold to \$1.6 trillion. If we can maintain and enhance the global economic order, rather than descending into a snake pit of recrimination and retaliation, all nations will benefit.

But this begs a more local question. If conditions in Northern Ireland are so attractive, why don't Americans -- or anyone else for that matter -- invest more here? There are perhaps some marginal geographic disadvantages, but these are surely less material these days than in the past. Costs are as

- 3 -

competitive here as anywhere else in Europe. The labor pool is more than ample, and the education level and technical talent are as high here -- higher in fact -- than most places on the mainland. The transportation and communications infrastructures are adequate, and almost top rank. Government inducements, through investment and tax incentives, are generous; and if you don't mind umbrellas, the climate is as temperate and considerate as anyone might wish.

Scotland, which is an apt if not exact parallel to Northern Ireland, is the home of about 200 American companies. The oil and gas of the North Sea are an obvious pole of attraction, but the \$2.5 billion of American investment in Scotland is by no means confined to energy. The Glasgow-Edinburgh corridor fairly bristles with American companies, mainly light manufacture and high technology, and Silicon Glen, extending eastwards from Edinburgh, is a garden of international ingenuity.

By any objective measure, Northern Ireland offers the same advantages and then some. So what's the problem?

When a company from across the seas decides to make a major investment abroad, it naturally weighs all factors; and American companies, as they enter the European market, have a remarkable range of choice. Why Spain and not Poland? Why Munich and not Manchester?

The point about Northern Ireland of course is political conditions. This is a bizarre observation for anyone who has visited this gentle land and enjoyed its civility and hospitality. But it is a rare investor who will discount the political environment. And when assembling a foreign venture, a business must evaluate risk at the margin. One can make the argument that economic growth is a precondition for political stability, but this is only partly true, and the fact of the matter is that political altruism rarely affects the calculations of a private enterprise as it tests new waters. An investor says, "This is one headache I don't need."

It is a disturbing statement that the phrase "Northern Ireland" conjures up the sense of political intractability, communal strife and violence. Television and the other media naturally cover what is wrong and not what is right, so that the impression gained from any distance is a narrow perspective. Is this an accurate picture? No. Is it fair? Of course not. Does it matter? Very much. This is an economic problem only likely to go away through multiple acts of political will.

- 4 -

So the basic issue in Northern Ireland is not a question of economic allure but political will. There are no other real inhibitions. I am convinced there are now enough people in Dublin and London and in the communities of Northern Ireland to transform the passions of the past and to take history by the scruff of the neck. There will always be people who find uncompromising conviction a safe haven from the challenges of negotiation and the search for practical solutions, but I would wonder these days how representative they really are.

As an outsider I have watched events in Northern Ireland, off and on, for the last twenty years. While respectful of the huge undertow that has made political progress here so difficult, I am now more encouraged than I have ever been. I have not made any bets yet, for sure, but I am keeping a close eye on the narrowing odds.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement was a genuine breakthrough, less importantly in its substance, perhaps, than in its alignments. American enthusiasm was quickly underscored by substantial and continuing contributions to the International Fund for Ireland. And there is a direct connection between the successful establishment of the Anglo-Irish Conference and the three-strand talks initiated in 1990 and now in the determined, creative hands of Sir Patrick Mayhew.

For the first time in years, all the critical players are at the table, even if in variable combinations. My sense is that there is also now more popular sentiment in Northern Ireland for a settlement and more impatience with impasse. Cynicism is slipping out of fashion; scepticism still holds a strong and rightful position; but practicality, persistence, confidence and good faith have also come on to the scene.

I have myself witnessed this phenomenon in the community centers and workplaces of the Province. The recent joint trip to the United States by two MPs, one Nationalist and one Unionist, made a deep political impression, as did the just ended ecumenical visit by four Irish church leaders. Things are different these days. The intercommunal stereotypes are breaking down, and both economic and political goals move closer.

We Americans take great interest in all of this. It goes beyond our economic involvement in Ireland. It even goes beyond our natural cultural affinities. The sharp issues of Northern Ireland have a deep resonance in our own national experience.

All of our political history, and a good part of our legal and constitutional history, center on the problems of relations between and among communities and the shifting balances of majority and minority. Our constitution and government are designed to accommodate diversity in recognition that genuine democracy is as much about the protection of the minority view as about the expression of the majority's. Our system is convoluted but it works.

*I'm not sure we have learned this.*

We have also learned that embedding sectarian or minority rights can have the perverse effect of perpetuating divisions in our society and even deepening them. We have discovered that the best guarantee for the rights of the community, the rights of the minority, the rights of the majority or the denomination or the clan or the group lies most safely in the rights of the individual. Like any society, we fall short of our ideals; but we know if the basic rights and freedoms of the individual are constitutionally assured, and judicially enforced, the rights of a community naturally follow.

Our interest is even more pressing these days. With the firm structure of the Cold War now safely behind us, we may be looking ahead to a world characterized by social disorder and civil conflict where, often, the nation state as we have known it becomes dysfunctional.

There are few countries in the world whose borders comfortably and neatly embrace a single, homogeneous community. This is a common defect in Somalia, Iraq and Yugoslavia. Lebanon, Cyprus, India, Sri Lanka, the West Bank, Angola are no less shameful for their familiarity. All of the Trans-Caucasus now seethes with ethnic animosity. Czechoslovakia broke up on the issue; Canada has wrestled with innumerable contortions to address the problem. And none of this is so very different from the disturbing rise of racism in Western Europe, or the stench of anti-semitism blowing in from the East.

Surely this cannot be the way of the future. And surely we cannot expect a world which simply fragments along the lines of prejudice.

Many of these conflicts may be so primordial in nature that they lie beyond the reach of rational resolution. Patently that is not the case in Northern Ireland. There is a genuine political process in place here. A little boldness can overcome a lot of suspicion. And I can assure you that this negotiation, for all its difficulties, will continue to have the strongest possible support from the United States.

- 6 -

There remain elements outside this process, however, elements bent on wrecking it. What a dreadful observation it is to say there has been an increase of violence in this Province because there has been an increase of hope.

Terrorism can only work effectively if it operates in a sea of sympathy. But here it seems to operate in the dark, outer edges of politics, furtively and obscenely. It aims to sabotage the political process and to obstruct communal reconciliation, purposes which are wholly negative.

These political renegades, from either end of the political spectrum, cannot possibly expect to achieve a just political outcome. A settlement imposed by force or an irredentism consummated by violence is no settlement at all. It is merely a formula for oppression and more violence.

More deeply, terrorism in a democratic society rides on the back of genuine aspirations and so exposes the dilemma of its political ambitions. A political objective in a democratic society finds legitimacy only inside the democratic process, not outside. I have not heard Her Majesty's Government rule out any democratic answer to Northern Ireland's problems. It is only their own choice of violence that excludes these people from the search for democratic solutions; and conversely, the renunciation of violence opens the way to the free expression of grievance or goal. Terrorism in a democratic society is a tightly tied knot of contradiction.

The terrorists cannot have any genuine or realistic strategic concept. Their operations are much more limited and tactical, and therefore all the more mindless. Their broad objective is to demoralize the population and to de-civilize the society. In an environment of fear, communities fall back on themselves and divide from others.

For some, terrorism is merely retribution and vengeance. It is murder dressed up.

Others aim to induce the security apparatus to intrude so excessively in the daily lives of ordinary people as to engender the resentment and alienation of the population; that is, to distort reality enough to make the treatment seem worse than the disease.

This is a malignant, vicious game, fundamentally desperate, with no chance whatever of success. Without violence, theirs is the stunted politics of graffiti. The blunt instrument of terrorism is implacably opposed by the United States because it is anti-democratic in nature and because our own citizens are subject to so much of it around the world.

The fullness of America's interest in Northern Ireland and the guidelines of our policy have been consistently sustained from one Administration to another over many years. Some may see the change of Administration in Washington as an opportunity for radical departure or new directions calculated to upset the balances or advance a favored outcome in the current talks. This won't happen because it won't work.

I do not think the United States would be tempted to adopt policies which did not enjoy the support of the responsible parties directly involved, both inside the Province and outside. President Clinton may indeed consider appointing an emissary or representative, an individual sensitive to the complexities and nuance of politics in the Province, someone who can gather the facts as they stand and report the situation directly to him and to the Congress. I would think such an expression of interest and support would be encouraged, and seen for what it is: a legitimate demonstration of concern. Equally, it is an opportunity to set in context the realities of the Province. It would certainly be reassuring to our investors, those whose economic inclinations hesitate before the political gateway of the Province.

One last word. My impression is that America's interest in Northern Ireland is understood and welcomed by most. By some it is resented because they are inclined to confuse support with interference. Given our historic bonds and our democratic values, the United States cannot strike a nonchalant pose of indifference.

Others may look to America for encouragement and succor in their revolutionary zeal. They will be disappointed. Those who seek approval of violence will have to search the back alleys of American politics. We have no truck with terrorism, here or anywhere else.

Our interest lies in the give and take of negotiation and the democratic process, and it is here that we must place our faith.