

Mr. McAnally P/A

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9 February 1993

Draft
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Mr R P Ralph
WASHINGTON

071 270 2359

PA Clinton
cc Policy file

cc Mr Loughran

cc PS: Mr Clinton
Mr Gimson
Mr Taggart

PRESIDENT CLINTON AND NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Thank you for your letter of 27 January which we drew on for a discussion with the Northern Ireland Secretary on 4 February. The Northern Ireland office have been in touch with you separately about dates for a visit by Sir Patrick Mayhew to the United States.
2. We agreed with the general line of your recommendations on handling the Northern Ireland issue with the new Administration. In particular we are content to try to play the issue long and that we should recommend to the Prime Minister that he should raise the subject briefly during his call on the President. We think that his line of approach to the call and during his visit to the Hill, if Northern Ireland is raised there, should be to welcome American support for the Talks process and to explain our commitment to keep this going forward. He might make clear that we should prefer not to have this difficult process complicated by new initiatives.
3. We think it better not to offer a line on a fact finding mission unless the matter is raised with us. It is doubtful whether Unionists would welcome even a well judged "how can we help" mission and if we then felt obliged to give it some support ourselves, this could add to the difficulties of getting them back to the table.
4. We recognise the pressures on the President to do something and his possible need to find a way of saving face. These may be enhanced by the unwelcome development reported in Jonathan Powell's letter of 5 February to David Cooke about the Irish Americans for Clinton proposals, but we hope that a strong statement backing the talks process might hold the ring for the present. A new US endorsement might also fit in well with Irish efforts to provide reassurance to the Unionists and to get them talking again.

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Visa for Gerry Adams

5. The Northern Ireland Secretary is content with the line taken with the State Department on a visa for Gerry Adams. It will, however, be awkward if the election court were to find against Dr Hendron opening the way for Adams to win a by-election.

Contacts for the Ambassador

6. We agree that the Ambassador should keep in touch with Tony Lake and Peter Tarnhoff and we shall be interested in due course in a read out on any attitudes which the latter brings to his new job. The essential message to get over is that the talks process remains delicately poised, which is why the Americans should consult us before they do anything.

7. We also agree that it is well worthwhile continuing to keep tuned into Speaker Foley. We would not expect that a Foley visit to Ireland would have the same problems that we would anticipate with almost any other visitor. His past helpful role is widely recognised in Northern Ireland. Our preference would still be to avoid giving any Foley visit a specific fact finding role. But if this were necessary as a means of heading off likely alternative fact finders we would understand this.

MacBride

8. The Northern Ireland Secretary is content with the line that has been taken on MacBride. In this context we are grateful for the further effective intervention to head off for the moment the Connecticut Contract Compliance Bill. There is probably no alternative to deciding exactly how to deal with individual threats and what effort to mount against them on a case by case basis. However, Northern Ireland officials are continuing to look to see if any refinements of broad policy are possible. I have again stressed to the NIO the desirability of having a clearly understood policy on MacBride as we develop our links with the new Administration. As guidance the Northern Ireland Secretary has recorded his view that it would be a mistake to try to rubbish the whole of the MacBride lobby. This would only polarise opinion. The important thing is to strike a positive stance on what is being done to tackle discrimination.

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9. We recognise that forecasting in this area is difficult, but it would be helpful if you are able to let us have up to date views on the likely scale of the MacBride campaign in coming months and on any particular aspects of this likely to cause us problems.

SIGNED

G R ARCHER
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND DEPARTMENT

cc	Sir T Daunt	PS/Mr Chilcot	B
	Sir J Coles	PS/Mr Feill	B
	Mr Beamish	Mr Thomas	B
	Mr Greenstock	Mr Ledlie	B
	Mr Pellew, NAD	Mr Watkins	B
	Mr Owen, BOSTON	Mr Williams	B
	Mr Kirk, BIS NEW YORK	Mr Steele	B
		Mr Maccabe	B
		Mr Dodds	B
		Mr Brooker	B
		HMA Dublin	B

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