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Seo an fhreagra chun:—
(Address any reply to:—)

AN RÚNAÍ
(The Secretary)

faoin uimhir seo:—
(quoting:—)



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
Department of Foreign Affairs

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH, 2.
Dublin 2.

30 November, 1980

Dear Frank,

As mentioned on the telephone today, I am enclosing a paper which relates to the question of instructions to Ambassador Donlon following the US elections earlier this month. Consideration needs to be given to instructing the Ambassador now that the new Reagan Administration will come to office in Washington in the next six weeks or so.

You will recall that following the election results, Ambassador Donlon sent home three reports, copies of which went to your Department. Arising from these reports the enclosed paper was prepared here and is intended to form the basis of an instruction to the Ambassador. The paper is an outline of what his instructions might be and is not yet in comprehensive form.

I would be grateful if over the next few days you could give some thought to this question. Naturally your advice and direction would be appreciated. We would hope to be able to issue instructions to Washington at the earliest possible date.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Frank Murray
Department of the Taoiseach
Dublin 2

U.S. Election results and role of the
Washington Embassy

The analysis of the U.S. election results submitted by the Ambassador in Washington leaves little doubt that when the new Congress and Administration come to office in January 1981 we will have to contend with a new situation involving:-

1. A Reagan Administration with strong pro-British leanings, a number of whose key members will have an ideological affinity and close personal links with the Thatcher Government.
2. A distinct reduction in the influence of many of our traditional Democratic Party friends in Congress. However, the position and role of Speaker O'Neill will henceforth be of even more critical importance to us than it is now.
3. Continuation of the activities of the Biaggi group (and their friends outside Congress) with the possibility of an extension of those activities into the U.S. Senate.

Parallel with these developments will be the continuing interest in Irish affairs on the part of the Irish-American community. The general sympathy and support for the Irish Government's position on Anglo-Irish affairs, elicited by the Taoiseach in his Cork address and by the Minister in New York (in September 1980) has been beneficial, but means of shoring-up and extending that support need to be considered.

Against this background, the Embassy's activities should be concentrated on the following objectives:-

- to persuade the Reagan Administration to (at least) keep up the level of pressure exerted on the British Government by the Carter Administration
- to maintain the already close working relationship with our Democratic Party friends, and in particular Speaker O'Neill,

Senator Kennedy, Governor Carey and Senator Moynihan

- to develop good relations with new and re-elected members of Congress, paying special attention to those in the Republican Party
- to continue to inform and as desirable to involve Irish-American opinion on Anglo-Irish affairs and to unite that opinion behind Government policy.

The Ambassador's analysis contains a number of suggestions which would give practical expression to these broad policy objectives. A point to be considered at the outset is whether the Ambassador should not return to Dublin at an early date for consultations on the questions involved. This Section would recommend in favour of his coming home for a few days, preferably before the end of the year. Pending a decision on this, the Ambassador's instructions might be based on the following:

(A) Briefings

1. Longer-term strategy:

The principal target groups are:

- the Reagan Interim Foreign Policy Board (and later the Administration generally)
- the in-coming Congress
- the 'Four Horsemen' and their associates
- other leaders of Irish-American opinion

In the nature of things early contact should be established with the Interim Foreign Policy Board in view of its importance and the fact that a number of its members will almost certainly form part of the new Administration. It is imperative that those on the Board who are likely to have a professional interest in Anglo-Irish affairs should be fully and accurately informed of our position. Briefings should be based on the Taoiseach's speeches and particular emphasis should be placed on these elements:-

- our desire to see an informed American Government interest and involvement in securing a lasting settlement to the Northern Ireland problem
- our commitment to the eventual unity of Ireland to be achieved by peaceful means

- our firm repudiation of all forms of violence or terror to achieve political objectives in Ireland

At the discretion of the Ambassador, briefings along these lines should continue to be given to the other target groups as appropriate.

2. Current concerns:-

We are particularly anxious that the Government's position on the following issues should be fully understood:-

- H-Blocks issue: a separate instruction is to be forwarded on this
- Arms sale to the RUC: The line to be taken is as follows:-
 1. Although the question of the suspension of arms sales from the USA to the RUC is essentially a matter between the American and British Governments, it is one in which we have a legitimate interest.
 2. We appreciate the genuine concern of responsible leaders of Irish-American opinion at the conditions now prevailing in Northern Ireland generally, including the lack of community-wide consensus behind policing of the territory, and we understand the reasons for that concern.
 3. At the same time, we are conscious of efforts made by certain lobbyists and others in the USA who, for their own questionable ends, have endeavoured to exploit this issue for propaganda purposes to the advantage of those who sponsor or connive at violence on this island. We have carefully avoided any course of action which would tend to encourage or enhance the propagandist efforts of these elements.
 4. We would not favour efforts of the British Government to press this issue in the USA where the risks of misrepresentation and confusion are very considerable. We feel that the legitimate munitions requirements of the RUC can be met from other, non-American sources, where the propaganda consequences would be minimal if they existed at all.
- Border security/extradition:

It is certain that the new Reagan Administration will be strongly anti-terrorist in attitude. Consequently it is imperative that the new administration be made aware of our commitment to border security and internal security here generally, as well as our position (should the question arise) on extradition.

(B) Visits:

1. To Ireland

The Ambassador should be instructed to submit proposals for a programme of visits to Ireland during 1981 in respect of:

- a small number of traditional friends in the Democratic Party
- one or two small groups of Republican Party members
- other
- / leaders of Irish-American opinion, including some editors of Irish-American newspapers,

When examining this question, the Ambassador will no doubt take into account the possibility of visits by individuals who are not necessarily supportive of Government policy but who are influential and who could in time be rallied to our viewpoint. Clearly, the Ambassador would not wish to consider those who are wholly intransigent and hostile to Government policy.

2. From Ireland

The Ambassador might be advised that we are examining, in consultation with the Department of the Taoiseach, the question of Ministerial visits to the USA during 1981, and especially in March, not excluding the possibility of a visit by the Taoiseach himself. The Ambassador might like to comment on how such visits should be structured (e.g. venues, choice of audience, topics for speeches, etc.). Although such visits would to a certain extent follow the traditional pattern, there is much to be said for working on a thought-out programme ⁱⁿ 1981.

(C) Other Activities:

The Ambassador has suggested several areas of activity which may provide ^{other} opportunities for getting across the Government's position in an effective manner. These include:-

1. A newsletter specifically designed for Irish-Americans. The Ambassador might be advised that while the idea has considerable appeal, the cost element will inevitably

pose problems. However he might be requested to submit a detailed proposal. Our tentative estimate is that, to be effective, a newsletter would have to reach on a regular basis around 30,000 readers.

2. Official Entertainment: Specific proposals have already been submitted by the Ambassador on which a decision is awaited

3. An American-Irish Parliamentary Association: We are prepared to examine this possibility, in consultation with the Department of the Taoiseach. The Ambassador might be asked to supply further information on how such an association would operate in practice. The question of funding is obviously relevant here.

The above comments might form the basis for a comprehensive instruction to Ambassador Donlon. As mentioned above, consideration should be given to bringing the Ambassador home for consultations, but in any case we should be in a position to issue an instruction to him shortly which would cover the main areas of concern.

AM
13/11/80