

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



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TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
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REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

CODED MESSAGE	
IMMEDIATE URGENT	
CONFIDENTIAL	
DATE: 11/2/80	TIME: 0909
INITIALS: S.B. Bailey	

YOU ARE AWARE THAT AT THEIR CONVENTIONS, EACH OF THE MAJOR PARTIES ADOPTS A PLATFORM (OUR NEAREST EQUIVALENT IS THE MANIFESTO) WHICH SETS OUT THE POLICIES ON WHICH THEIR CANDIDATE IS SEEKING ELECTION. IN 1976 THE REPUBLICAN CONVENTION PLATFORM CONTAINED NO REFERENCE TO THE NI SITUATION. THE DEMOCRATIC PLATFORM CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING REFERENCE:

"THE VOICE OF THE UNITED STATES SHOULD BE HEARD IN NORTHERN IRELAND AGAINST VIOLENCE AND TERROR, AGAINST THE DISCRIMINATION, REPRESSION AND DEPRIVATION WHICH BROUGHT ABOUT THAT CIVIL SQRIFE, AND FOR THE EFFORTS OF THE PARTIES TOWARDS A PEACEFUL RESOLUTION OF THE FUTURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND. PERTINENT ALLIANCES SUCH AS NATO AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THE UNITED NATIONS SHOULD BE FULLY APPRISED OF THE INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES WITH RESPECT TO THE STATUS OF IRELAND IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF NATIONS.

OUR PAPERS DO NOT INDICATE THE NATURE OF THE DEVELOPMENTS LEADING TO THAT REFERENCE THOUGH IT IS CLEAR THAT THE REFERENCE WHICH WE SOUGHT INCLUDED THE SENTENCE QUOTE THE US SHOULD ENCOURAGE RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE TWO COMMUNITIES IN NI AND AN AGREED POLITICAL SOLUTION WHICH WOULD INVOLVE THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH COMMUNITIES IN THE GOVERNMENT OF NI. IN THE LONGER TERM, THE US WOULD WELCOME THE UNIFICATION OF IRELAND BY AGREEMENT UNQUOTE.

2. CONTACT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BOTH WITH THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES WITH A VIEW TO A SUITABLE REFERENCE TO IRELAND IN THEIR 1980 DOCUMENTS. ON THE REPUBLICAN SIDE, DOCUMENT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF A PLATFORM COMMITTEE, ONE OF FOUR COMMITTEES OF THE CONVENTI N. THE COMMITTEE CONSISTS OF TWO REPRESENTATIVES PER STATE AND NOT ALL HAVE YET BEEN SELECTED. MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS APPOINTED A TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (SENATOR TOWER OF TEXAS) AND AD HOC MEMBERS WHO ARE HOLDING TEN HEARINGS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO ELICIT VIEWS AS TO WHAT THE PLATFORM SHOULD INCLUDE. ON THE BASIS OF THESE HEARINGS AND DIRECT LOBBYING, SENATOR TOWER'S STAFF WILL PREPARE A DRAFT PLATFORM WHICH WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE FULL COMMITTEE A WEEK BEFORE THE CONVENTION OPENS IN DETROIT ON 12 JULY. THE DRAFT AS FINALISED BY THAT COMMITTEE WILL THEN BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONVENTION FOR FORMAL ADOPTION.

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3. THE PROSPECTS OF PERSUADING THE REPUBLICANS TO INCLUDE A REFERENCE TO IRELAND CANNOT AT THIS STAGE BE RATED VERY HIGH. THE DRAFTERS WILL BE RELUCTANT TO FACE A POTENTIALLY CONTROVERSIAL ISSUE WHICH THEY WERE ABLE TO AVOID COMPLETELY LAST TIME AROUND AND NONE OF THE MAJOR INFLUENCES ON THE DOCUMENT FROM WITHIN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY HAS SO FAR SHOWN ANY INTEREST IN BEING HELPFUL TO OUR POSITION. THE PROMINENT REPUBLICANS SUCH AS AMBASSADOR JOHN MOORE WHO HAVE SHOWN AN UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORT FOR IRISH POSITIONS IDENTIFIED THEMSELVES EARLY ON WITH BUSH AND CONNALLY AND ARE NOT NOW IN A GOOD POSITION TO INFLUENCE A REAGAN PLATFORM. THE PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN POLICY ADVISERS TO REAGAN ARE DRAWN PRIMARILY FROM EAST COAST THINK TANKS AND ACADEMIC INSTITUTES WHICH HAVE TRADITIONALLY CLOSE LINKS WITH THE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN BRITISH POLITICS. THERE ARE, OF COURSE, A NUMBER OF CONTACTS PREPARED TO HELP AND THESE INCLUDE THE USUAL CROP WHO HAVE THEIR EYES ON THE OFFICIAL US RESIDENCE IN THE PHOENIX PARK. IN THE WEEKS AHEAD, WE WILL MOUNT A DISCREET BUT INTENSIVE LOBBYING EFFORT DESIGNED TO CONVINCING THE PLATFORM COMMITTEE THAT (A) A REFERENCE TO THE NI SITUATION IS DESIRABLE (B) THAT REFERENCE SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THE ROLE OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AND (C) IT SHOULD SEEK SUPPORT FOR THE OBJECTIVE OF HAVING THE BRITISH DECLARE THEIR INTEREST IN THE ULTIMATE ACHIEVEMENT OF IRISH UNITY. IN INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS WITH ONE OF THOSE INVOLVED IN PREPARING EARLY DRAFTS, THE FOLLOWING POSSIBLE REFERENCE HAS EMERGED THOUGH IT SHOULD BE EMPHASISED THAT THE DRAFT HAS NO STATUS ON EITHER SIDE:

“THE UNITED STATES NOTES WITH CONCERN THE CONTINUING VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE POLITICAL PROBLEM THERE OF WHICH VIOLENCE IS BUT ONE SYMPTOM. FOR SIXTY YEARS THE PROBLEM OF NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BEEN A SOURCE OF INSTABILITY, REAL OR POTENTIAL, IN WESTERN EUROPE. BOTH SOVEREIGN GOVERNMENTS DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH THE PROBLEM, GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, ARE CLOSE FRIENDS OF THE UNITED STATES. IN THE LONG TERM THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ENCOURAGE PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE UNITY OF IRELAND BY AGREEMENT, IN PEACE AND WITH THE CONSENT OF ALL, IN PARTICULAR WITH THE CONSENT OF A MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND. THE US BELIEVES THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THIS OBJECTIVE IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WERE TO DECLARE THEIR INTEREST IN THE ULTIMATE ACHIEVEMENT OF IRISH UNITY. THE UNITED STATES NOTES THE CLOSE POLITICAL, SECURITY, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF IRELAND AND OF GREAT BRITAIN AND SHOULD ASSIST BY ALL APPROPRIATE MEANS THEIR JOINT EFFORTS TO CREATE IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE SHORT TERM POLITICAL STRUCTURES THAT ARE ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND TO THE ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND.”

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4. NO DOUBT YOU WILL LET US HAVE APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS IN PARTICULAR ON THE TYPE OF REFERENCE CONSIDERED DESIRABLE AT THIS STAGE.

5. THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS HAS PROPOSED THE FOLLOWING REFERENCE TO BOTH PARTIES AND IS LOBBYING TO ACHIEVE IT:

'' CONSISTENT WITH ITS TRADITIONAL CONCERN FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND SELF-DETERMINATION OF ALL PEOPLES, THE UNITED STATES SHOULD PLAY A POSITIVE ROLE IN SEEKING AN END TO INJUSTICES, DISCRIMINATION AND ALL TYPES OF VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

TO THIS END THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO EMBARK UPON INITIATIVES THAT WOULD END ALL VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND PROMOTE SELF-DETERMINATION OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF THE ISLAND OF IRELAND.

THE UNITED STATES SHOULD ENSURE THAT NO AMERICAN AID - ECONOMIC OR POLITICAL - WILL RE-ENFORCE DISCRIMINATION OR ANY OTHER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

FURTHER, THE UNITED STATES SHOULD MAKE CERTAIN THAT ALL UNITED STATES ENTERPRISES, OPERATING IN NORTHERN IRELAND, ARE IN FULL COMPLIANCE WITH US FAIR EMPLOYMENT LAWS''.

END OF MESSAGE