



hc Garry [Signature] 1/10

HCS/843/98

FROM: PS/MR SEMPLE
30 SEPTEMBER 1998

NI PERMANENT SECRETARIES

THE NI ASSEMBLY TRANSITION PROGRAMME

I attach, for your information, a leaflet outlining the American aspect of the Transition Programme.

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☎ 28146

The Transition Programme will avail itself of Boston College's business and political science faculty to create an interactive forum for analysing the system of government in the United States, current thinking on delivering services to citizens, building productive relationships between legislators and administrators and improving communication and administrative skills.

This experience will be complemented by working site visits to practitioners at state legislatures, City Hall and state and private agencies where members will get the opportunity to discuss the administration's policy with both elected policy makers and their staff and administrators. We will use our contacts in Massachusetts, Maine, Rhode Island, Washington, DC and New York State to give a multi faceted view of the United States System of government and administration.

The American portion of the Transition Programme will not deal with political issues or conflict resolution. Programmes will focus on functional areas of government and the nuts and bolts of good governance. Party representatives indicated a desire to focus on particular aspects of government, possibly by department or committee. Many parties asked that we devise a programme for senior staff and researches so that they would benefit from the experience that the members gained in the United States. But it was suggested that it would be better idea to mix civil servants and elected members and allow party staff to experience a programme tailored to their administrative and policy development needs.

We will make every effort to respect individual party's wishes and will structure the programme to ensure that everyone can benefit from the programme in a way that is comfortable and appropriate for them. The Institute intends the programmes to be low-key, professional and businesslike with the minimum of inconvenience for the participants. The parties may want to take advantage of the visit to the United States to meet Americans that are interested in the new government of Northern Ireland and to familiarise Americans with the many positive aspects of Northern Ireland. Privacy will be respected and social and public events will be limited.

Every party that met with us was positive about the programmes and saw a range of opportunities in visiting the United States and observing their many levels of government and administration. By travelling outside of Massachusetts we will give participants different viewpoints and show the range of challenges facing American representatives and their administrators. Many party representatives said that a trip to Washington, DC would present an unrealistic picture of legislative governance because of the vast scale of the US Congress. Therefore we will focus our visits on state governments and be mindful of the need to deal with issues and challenges that are similar to those faced by the members of the Assembly.

ANNEX I

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY TRANSITION PROGRAMME - UNITED STATES PROGRAMMES

REPORT ON THE SERIES OF BI-LATERALS AT JURY'S HOTEL, BELFAST ON FRIDAY 31 JULY 1998 AND SATURDAY 1 AUGUST 1998

in the course of two days of meetings in Northern Ireland, Dr Sean Rowland, Mr Gerry Cosgrave, Professor Marc Landy and Colm O'Comartun came away with extremely useful feedback and a sense of great enthusiasm for what Boston College thought could be offered to Assembly members in the United States. We have looked at the issues that the party representatives have said would be helpful to them and have noted some of the pitfalls that party representatives have pointed out to us. Thanks to their advice we expect to be able to avoid those pitfalls.

The portion of The Northern Ireland Assembly Transition Programme that will be held in the United States has the following simple objectives:

1. To analyse and discuss the best practices and models available in functional areas of government focusing heavily on skills and competency.
2. To bring together elected representatives and administrators from Northern Ireland in a non political environment to discuss public policy, policy analysis and policy formulation.
3. To visit legislatures and meet representatives and administrators and discuss their successes and failures in attempting to deliver good government.
4. To look at federalism in the United States and discuss relevant issues for Northern Ireland's legislators.
5. To analyse, discuss and observe good examples of public private partnership, legislative relations and legislative resources.

TRANSITION PROGRAMME FOR THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

UNITED STATES PROGRAMMES

“THE TASK OF GOVERNMENT”

SECTION I

Autumn 1998 Schedule

September 8, 1998

Launch of the Programmes

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Dr Marjorie Mowlam, MP, will launch the American component of the Northern Ireland Assembly Transition Programme. The Launch of the schedule will take place in Massachusetts.

October 27-29, 1998

Briefing Visit

Professor Marc Landy, Chair of the Department of Political Science at Boston College will meet with representatives of the newly elected political parties to the Northern Ireland Assembly to brief them on the upcoming programmes and discuss needs and goals for the programmes. Professor Landy will attend the Equality session on the 28th and will use this experience to discuss the successful aspects of the Northern Ireland component.

November 18-25, 1998

The Legislative Task

This week-long programme is designed to provide legislators from the Northern Ireland Assembly with tools and ideas that will help them carry out their legislative task by using United States legislators as a model. The week-long programme combines discussions with academic experts on legislative behaviour, federalism and legislative executive relations and policy analysis with field visits to legislative offices and other relevant working governmental organisations. Participants will meet with State Senators, State Representatives, City Councilors and their staff to discuss best-practices, public private partnerships and discuss successful working models for delivering good government. Specific

topics of analysis will include legislative oversight and accountability; information technology and communications; and intergovernmental relations. Extensive use will be made of case studies and simulations in order to give legislators the opportunity to participate actively in working through real problems of governance.

December 5-12, 1998

Effective Staffing for Legislators

This programme is designed to assist party staff in performing their vital role in the process of governance. It will combine focused sessions with academic experts and joint meetings with functioning political and legislative staffs. The objective is to enable staffers to acquire new skills in the areas of information technology and communications, policy analysis and to allow them to meet and talk with veteran staffers to exchange experiences and ideas and discuss best practices in government. In order to make the experience as lively and relevant as possible, extensive use will be made of case studies and simulations and to meet American peers at city, state and federal level.

SECTION II

Winter and Spring 1999 Schedule

Details and dates for Section II and III Programmes will be finalised in the light of discussions with Party Representatives, Executive Ministers and Committee Chairs.

February '99

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee on Finance

The Chairman of the Committee on Finance could lead a cross-party delegation of committee members and administrators to observe and discuss American models of oversight, planning and resource allocation. The group could meet their peers in the planning, finance and auditing agencies in Massachusetts and the state of Maryland.

March '99

Council of the Isles Delegation

A delegation of elected representatives from Northern Ireland, Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales could visit the United States and meet with peers and administrators to discuss common challenges in substantive areas.

April '99

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee on the Environment

A group, consisting of elected representatives and administrators charged with creating policy in the areas of environmental regulation, services provision, oversight and the interpretation and enforcement of EU guidelines, could visit the state of Maine to experience their model for environmental protection.

May '99

Northern Ireland Assembly Committee on Education

The challenges that Northern Ireland faces in the area of education are mirrored in some ways in the United States. The Education committee members could meet with peers and visit schools, school boards and analyse the current models for testing and regulation in the state of Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

SECTION III

Autumn 1999 Schedule

September '99

Administrators Programme

Senior Civil Servants from the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Irish Civil Service who are working in support of the structures of the Agreement could analyse current trends in public administration in the United States and could meet with peers, legislators and professional associations from the New England region.

October '99

US-Northern Ireland Delegation

A delegation of staffers, legislators and administrators from Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine and Rhode Island could visit Northern Ireland to discuss the results of the programmes, the emerging procedural and policy challenges and new needs of the Assembly members.

November '99

Young Political Leaders Programme

Representatives from all the parties in Northern Ireland, Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales could visit the state of Massachusetts and Washington DC to meet with staffers, elected representatives and observe structures, legislative resources and the political party system.

December '99

Dr Sean M Rowland and Professor Marc Landy will lead a debriefing delegation to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

GMC/363/TransProg/Aug98

ANNEX III

SECRETARY OF STATE'S VISIT TO BOSTON COLLEGE - 8 SEPTEMBER 1998

SPEAKING NOTES

1. Thank you for your invitation to Boston College today to announce details of a comprehensive series of United States sponsored 'educational' programmes for members of the New Northern Ireland Assembly.
2. The Good Friday Agreement was an historic milestone brought about with enormous help from the United States Government and President Clinton personally; and the Irish Government and the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern personally. - Opportunity to say thanks to both.
3. The Election of the Assembly itself on 25 June 1998 was the second milestone. We now have 108 Members fully representative of all sides of the community in Northern Ireland.
4. The Good Friday Agreement (paragraph 35) provides for a transitional period during which time Assembly members and Civil Servants can prepare together for the new responsibilities ahead. To assist this preparation I initiated the development of a "Transition Programme" with the objective of providing as comprehensively as is practical a background briefing about the responsibilities and issues facing the New Assembly.
5. Preparation for Government, and the Assembly to take on that role, is well under way. A four part Transition Programme has been devised with two parts currently operating in Northern Ireland. These comprise a short series of one-day seminars - what we call the core seminars - to lay the foundations for the Programme, followed by a second series focusing on key functional areas of government. The third element is an international programme with key components taking place in the United States and in Europe. Then we

envisage a supplementary, made-to-measure programme to meet the needs of individual members or groups.

6. So far 82 out of 108 members have elected to take part in the Programme (over $\frac{3}{4}$ of Assembly members), spread evenly across all Parties. The feedback so far is encouraging.
7. **OMAGH:** There is a long road ahead with pitfalls on the way; Omagh was one such pitfall. You will have seen the determination to succeed has been strengthened, not weakened.
8. The United States programmes launched today provide an opportunity for elected Assembly members and Civil Servants to analyse the systems of government in the United States and to be exposed to current thinking on delivery services to citizens. They will also provide insights into the processes for building productive relationships between legislators and administrators and for improving communication and administrative skills.
9. Delighted to have this opportunity to thank the people of the United States and President Clinton for their support in doing this. Particular thanks to Boston College for bringing together the expertise to deliver these programmes in the United States and for dedicating both federal funding and its own funding to assist the New Northern Ireland Assembly.
10. Over the past ten years this University has had extensive experience of programming in Northern Ireland in areas such as economic development and political leadership. I would like to say how grateful I am to President Leahy and his executive Vice President, Dr Campanella for their continued commitment to programming in Northern Ireland and for the practical support that they are giving to the peace process.

11. Because of this extensive programming experience we have been fortunate in being able to draw upon the services of Dr Sean Rowland, Director of the Irish Institute, Boston College, as a member of a small (five person) planning team which is overseeing the design and implementation of the Transition Programme. Sean and his Transition Programme colleagues will be working closely together in the coming weeks and months to ensure that the programmes remain responsive to the needs of Assembly members.

12. I am delighted to be here today to launch the United States programmes which we are entitling "The Task of Government" (details in your pack). They have my full support and the support of the political parties in Northern Ireland. I wish them every success.

13. I am available (for a short time) to answer questions. Thank You.

END

GMC/358/Transition Prog-New Assembly