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Personal and Confidential

July 13th 1972

Dear Assistant Secretary

I made a call at 5.30 p.m. yesterday at his request on Mr Anthony Royle, M.P., Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign Office, and our talk lasted about forty-five minutes. Mr. Royle was accompanied by his Private Secretary and by Mr. Kelvin White who, as you know, deals with Northern Ireland affairs.

At the outset, Mr. Royle said he welcomed the opportunity for a general chat with me. He thought we should get together about once a fortnight to discuss developments in relation to the Northern situation. While his own responsibilities are mainly on the European front, he takes a close interest in the North and is in regular touch with Mr. Whitelaw about it. The Government here much appreciates the access which Ambassador Peck is able to have in Dublin. Were it not for the ending of the Provisionals' truce, Mr. Royle said he would probably be having a very different chat with me. The ending of the truce had greatly upset their calculations. The best they can hope to do in the immediate future is to try and bring the Northern situation more under control. Moves in the direction of a solution will inevitably have to be postponed for the moment because of the new outbreaks of violence.

Mr. Royle went on to say that the situation at present in the North could hardly be more serious. What is badly needed is that somebody should emerge on the Protestant side who could give political leadership. Faulkner

certainly cannot do this. He has been most unhelpful in the whole situation and must be regarded as of diminishing significance. There can be no question now of the restoration of confidence in him by Mr. Heath. Craig does not count. At this point I remarked that it seemed to me strange that Craig can still remain a Privy Councillor while going about preaching sedition. Mr Royle made no comment. He said they in the Government were having increasing faith in Paisley who, because of the moderation he has shown in the House, has lost a fair bit of his own following. I asked Mr Royle if he thought Paisley has really changed, as many of the views expressed to me by people in the know is that he is at heart the same hardliner as he always was. Mr Royle said he believes Paisley has undergone a genuine change and, anyhow, nobody else seems to be emerging as a likely leader on the Protestant side. It could well be that in three or four years time Robin Baillie or Sir Robert Porter could have a leading role to play. At this moment, however, they are regarded by the Protestants as less acceptable than the most extreme Catholics.

Mr Royle then made a brief reference to Mr Whitelaw's meeting with the Provisionals. He hoped that this did not cause us any embarrassment. Mr Whitelaw had explained to the House the reasons for his having the meeting and he got a surprisingly good reception. Once he had met the UDA delegation he had virtually opened the way for a meeting with the Provisionals.

I asked Mr Royle who the six Provisionals were and how they got to London. His reply was that he knew I would ask this question and that he purposely refrained from seeking details as he did not want to withhold

information from me. He said that Ambassador Peck had given some information in Dublin on the matter. Mr. Royle then asked if I had any details. I said I only had bits and pieces I had heard from the press. I had been told that the six were transported to London in an R.A.F. plane, that O'Connell and Stephenson were two of the six and that most of the talking was done by Stephenson.

Mr Royle again repeated that, if it were not for the ending of the ceasefire by the Provisionals, talks on a possible solution of the Northern problem might have ~~to~~ commence very soon. In the new situation, with the UDA ready to explode, all that seemed possible in the next month or so was "a total effort to prevent a holocaust." A holocaust is now a very real danger.

At this point, I said to Mr Royle that I have been personally a little worried in recent weeks that the Government here may be tempted to give inadequate regard to our interest in being involved in any solution attempted for the North. I said I hoped he did not mind my speaking very frankly to him on this. To me it would be absolute madness for Westminster to attempt a solution without, in the process, ensuring the goodwill and support of the Dublin Government. The only way in which this goodwill and support could be ensured would be by involving the Dublin Government actively in the settlement of the proposed solution. The involvement of Dublin at political level was a matter of crucial importance because a solution which did not have our backing could well be doomed from the start. He said he had taken particular note of my remarks and added that, if we keep in regular touch, we will be able to discuss how things can best be worked out.

Kelvin White saw me out. On the way to the lift he remarked that he had noted the emphasis I had placed on the need to bring Dublin in at political level in the fixing of any settlement. He thought this a very valid point as "your Government could sabotage a solution with which it disagreed."

I also took the opportunity in my separate talk with Kelvin White to bring up two points which Eamonn Gallagher had mentioned to me when he was here on Monday. These were, the desirability to provide the Community Relations Committee with its own adequate budget and the granting to it of the necessary freedom in relation to its use. I also mentioned to him that I had seen in the papers that Maurice Hayes had been appointed a Deputy Head of the Ombuds^{man} Office. Dr. Hayes is, I said, a person of the greatest integrity and ability. He is a person whose advice to Mr Whitelaw in present circumstances could be invaluable and it struck me as strange that he had not been given a very senior post in Stormont Castle. Kelvin White said he would think over these points.

I might mention here that, in the course of talks which I have had in recent days with Merlyn Rees, Stan Orme, Jock Stallard and Maurice Foley (all of whom will be in Dublin next week), I made a particular point of stressing to them the need to bring the Dublin Government actively into the fixing of any solution for the North. There seemed, I said, to be in recent times an almost automatic acquiescence by the Labour Party in everything the Government is doing in relation to the North. If there should be any thought of reaching a solution on the North without bringing Dublin in, this could be a grave mistake. All of them fully accepted my view and said they hoped

there would be an opportunity to discuss this matter in Dublin next week.

Towards the end of my conversation with Mr Royle he said that his main purpose in wishing to see me at this stage (and this, of course, was far from the truth) was to talk about increased cultural cooperation between our two countries in the EEC context. A sum of £6m has been set aside here for improved cultural relations with Britain's partners in the Ten. Already an arrangement has been come to with the French for the holding somewhere near Paris (I think) of regular seminars on matters of Community interest. Then, there will be Fanfare for Europe in January next in which our participation to the maximum extent would be greatly welcomed. I have had earlier correspondence with Assistant Secretary Morrissey on the question of Fanfare.

The Government here is very anxious to explore with us ways in which our cultural contacts can be strengthened. Mr Royle asked if we could make some early and tentative suggestions to him about the type of cultural cooperation which we would like to see established. I told him about the recently formed British Irish Association (Assistant Secretary Keating has the relevant papers). I also undertook to ask the people on the cultural side of the Department to give early thought to the matter and I suggested that, as a follow-up on the reaction I receive, it might be well to have a meeting between their cultural side and ours. He readily agreed to this and thought that a meeting of officials might take place in late September.

This concluded the substantive part of our conversation. Mr Royle asked if I intended to make a statement to the press. I said there were several calls from the press to

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the Embassy during the afternoon and we had simply told them that I was to see Mr Royle at 5.30 p.m. at his request. Mr Royle felt that, if approached again, I should tell the press that he had asked to see me for a talk on strengthened cultural relations in an EEC context. One of the Irish editors phoned on the private line yesterday evening and was told I was out. I felt it better to say nothing to him than to give him a story about which he may have doubts.

Yours sincerely

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Ambassador

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