

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

### IRELAND



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Secret

10 November 1977

Dear Ambassador

Seán Donlon has asked me to forward to you the attached reports from the U.S. concerning the main conversations during the Minister's recent visit there.

Yours sincerely



Hugh Swift

His Excellency P.J.G. Keating  
Embassy of Ireland  
LONDON



TELEPHONE  
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PR.11/1/3/6

CONSULATE GENERAL OF IRELAND

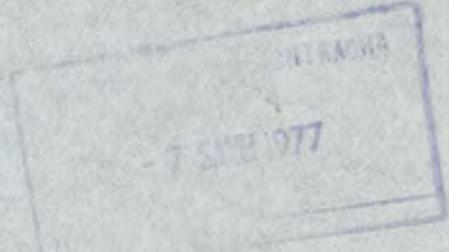
580 FIFTH AVENUE

NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036

November 1, 1977

The Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs  
Dublin

Attention : Mr. Hugh Swift



MEETING WITH IRISH-AMERICAN LEADERS :

*Exp. per our confidential  
telex of October 19, 1977*

1. On Sunday, October 2, the Minister hosted a lunch in the apartment of the Press & Information Officer, Mr. Smyth, for : Mr. John Lawe, President of Local 100 of the Transport Workers' Union of the City of New York; Mr. Tom McNabb, former New York State President of the AOH and presently the leading candidate to assume the office of National President in 1978; Mr. Martin Higgins, National Chairman of the Freedom for All-Ireland Committee of the AOH; Mr. Jack Irwin, National Coordinator of the AOH Freedom for All-Ireland Committee; Mr. William Brennan of the Commodore John Barry Society of Philadelphia; Mr. Ed Malloy, President of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in Philadelphia; Dr. John Campbell, President of the Irish Institute; Judge James J. Comerford, Chairman of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee. The Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretary Donlon, Consul General O Clerigh and Deputy Consul General Collins also attended.

2. The following were invited but did not attend : Mr. Joe McGlynn, Honorary Consul, St. Louis, Missouri; Mr. Thomas (Teddy) Gleason, President of the International Longshoremens' Association; Mr. Matthew Guinan, President of the Transport Workers' Union of America; Mr. Jack Keane, National President of the AOH; Mr. John Henning, a West coast officer of the AFL-CIO; Mr. Paul O'Dwyer, President of the City Council of New York; Mr. John J. Kelly, President of the Massachusetts State Board of the AOH;

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Mr. Paul Sullivan, President of the Gaelic Arts Society of Pittsburgh, and Mr. Michael O'Shea of the Irish Centre of Pittsburgh. All sent apologies : Sullivan and O'Shea spoke to the Consul General; Gleason, Henning and O'Dwyer spoke to the Deputy Consul General and explained their inability to attend because of other commitments. The Minister subsequently had an opportunity of seeing O'Dwyer briefly at a reception given by Ambassador Kennedy on Tuesday, October 4.

3. The Minister opened the discussion by explaining the Government's position on Northern Ireland. He said that the Government's eventual aim was a united Ireland through peaceful means and by consent. The Minister said that the Government understood and appreciated the interest and concern of the Irish-American community in regard to the problem of Northern Ireland and he had been anxious to meet Irish-American community leaders to let them know the position of the Government in regard to Northern Ireland. He said that the Government and people of Ireland realized that the problem was a complex one and he knew that the majority of Irish-Americans would appreciate that decisions on the best method of achieving the Government's aim could be made only by the elected representatives of the people of Ireland. The Minister said that the Government appreciated President Carter's recent statement on Northern Ireland and the Minister went on to name Senators Kennedy and Moynihan, Speaker T. P. O'Neill and Governor Hugh Carey. He said that he wished to place on the public record the Government's appreciation of their efforts in bringing about the statement. He explained that the Government welcomed the statement because, first, it recognized the role of the Irish Government in regard to finding a just solution to the problem of Northern Ireland; secondly, the offer of economic assistance in the event of a just settlement being found was encouraging as economic stability would be of great assistance in producing political stability. The Minister then went on to outline the background to the meeting between the Taoiseach and Prime Minister in London on September 28. He said that, before the meeting, the Government had had several concerns. The two major concerns were the situation of constitutional stalemate which had existed in Northern Ireland for the past

couple of years and the impression of a drift towards the integration of Northern Ireland into the United Kingdom. He said that there had been firm assurances from the British Prime Minister that the policy of the British Government was against such integration. In line with the Minister's appreciation of the concern of the Irish-American community regarding Northern Ireland, he stated that he looked forward to keeping them informed in the future also.

4. The Minister's statement was followed by statements from each of the individuals present and these were conducted in a friendly atmosphere although Dr. John Campbell, President of the Irish Institute (who had arrived late) accompanied his questions in regard to the treatment of Irish prisoners in Britain with emotional and critical observations.

5. (a) Mr. Martin Higgins, Chairman of the Freedom for All-Ireland Committee of the AOH, although basing his concern on sentimental considerations, as is his wont, said that insofar as he and his Committee were concerned, they wished at all times to meet with and be advised by, the elected representatives of the people and he expressed the hope that he and other members of his Committee could, if they considered it necessary, meet with Irish political leaders in Ireland.

5. (b) Mr. John Lawe explained that there was grave concern in regard to Northern Ireland among his union members of which he said there were 40,000 - a majority of whom were Irish. He said that they were particularly concerned about the issues of civil rights and prison conditions, both North and South. Mr. Lawe went on to state that it seemed to him that there was much support for fund-raising among the Irish-American community and that it was his view that, because of the concern felt among the community at the situation in Northern Ireland, there would continue to be a response to appeals for funds. He said that he did not know where money raised for Northern Ireland went. He proceeded to read two Resolutions which had been passed respectively by the 15th Constitutional Convention of the Transport Union

of America of the AFL-CIO and a Resolution presented by the International Longshoremens' Association to the AFL-CIO. (Copies attached). The Minister said that he appreciated Mr. Lawe's frankness but that he was aware that money collected in connection with Northern Ireland did go to buy arms and that there could be no ambiguity in regard to the Government's position on that issue. Lawe intervened at this stage to say that his point was that there were such strong sentiments in the community in regard to Northern Ireland that fund-raising would continue among the Irish-American community. Lawe's point seemed to be that there were a goodly number of Irish-Americans who would continue to raise money among the community without asking questions as to where that money went. Lawe thanked the Minister for meeting with Irish-American community leaders and said that he would wish to continue these meetings. The Minister in turn undertook that he would reply in writing to the Resolutions which Mr. Lawe had given him.

5. (c) Mr. William Brennan of the Commodore John Barry Society of Philadelphia and the Federated Irish Societies of the Delaware Valley, said that insofar as Philadelphia was concerned, the general membership of Irish organizations there were not supporters of the IRA. Many of the members, however, had come in recent years from Northern Ireland. They received regular reports on the ill-treatment of relatives and friends who had been arrested in Northern Ireland and there was a general feeling that very little was being done about such ill-treatment by the Irish Government. He said that, for him as an Irish-American community leader, responding to such allegations was the main problem. The Minister and Assistant Secretary Donlon explained to him the procedures adopted by our Department in dealing with allegations of torture and Mr. Brennan seemed to accept that the situation was being dealt with.

5 (d) Dr. John Campbell, President of the Irish Institute, who was under the impression that the Strasbourg case had been finalized, stated that he believed that it had received no publicity and that there was still widespread torture and ill-treatment of prisoners in both Northern Ireland and in Britain. The Minister explained to him the status of the Strasbourg case and stated also that the issue of the

ill-treatment of Irish prisoners in Britain had been raised with the British Government during the meeting between the Taoiseach and British Prime Minister on September 28. Assistant Secretary Donlon explained in some detail the machinery which the Department had established for dealing with such complaints.

5. (e) Judge James J. Comerford stated that he agreed with the previous speakers and that he himself had been involved in the sending of funds to Ireland which he knew had been used for legitimate purposes although he had no doubt that some money sent over was used for violence. Comerford, in his statement, adverted to allegations which have been current among the more militant AOH members that the money raised by that organization for the Northern Ireland Resurgence Trust Fund was used by the late Cardinal Conway for other purposes. He said, without implying that it was his view, that there had been a feeling among the community that the funds had not been properly accounted for. It is worth noting that at least two reports have been presented to the AOH accounting in full for the funds and that a film made by the trustees has been in the possession of the AOH for some years. This allegation, which was presumably introduced by Comerford to show that feelings about the misuse of funds are not limited to one organization, has been raised again recently by the NORAIID faction in the AOH to counter the moves of the moderates to give any money collected to the Northern Ireland Resurgence Trust Fund.

5. (f) Mr. Tom McNabb thanked the Minister for the opportunity of meeting him and presented him with documentation in regard to what he described as a 'soon-to-be-created ad hoc Committee for Irish Affairs'. (Copy attached). Mr. McNabb stated that 35 Congressmen had already agreed to participate in the Committee which he said had been created at the request of the AOH. During the course of his presentation, he remarked that, while the AOH had been lobbying for the Committee on Capitol Hill, they had been opposed by the House Speaker, Tip O'Neill, and by an officer of the Embassy in Washington. (Before departing from the United States, the Minister spoke to Mr. Jack Keane, National President of the AOH, on the telephone and we understand that the Minister will write to him nominating an officer of the Department in Dublin and in the United States to liaise with him on Northern Ireland matters).

5. (g) Mr. Ed Malloy, President of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in Philadelphia, confined himself to giving a brief description of the Society and stated that it was non-political and composed of catholics and protestants. He said that the Society saw its main endeavour now as helping Irish people through scholarships, etc.

6. All the participants felt that the meeting had been a worthwhile one and they expressed themselves as grateful for the opportunity of meeting the Minister and of putting their point of view. All expressed a desire to continue such meetings in the future and all stated that the Minister had won their personal goodwill.

Consul General

GOC/nps  
Encls :

c.c. Mr. Michael Lillis, Counsellor, Embassy, Washington, DC

MARIO BIAGGI  
10TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEES:  
EDUCATION AND LABOR

SUBCOMMITTEES:  
LABOR STANDARDS  
POST SECONDARY EDUCATION  
LABOR MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

MERCHANT MARINE AND  
FISHERIES

SUBCOMMITTEES:  
CHAIRMAN, COAST GUARD AND NAVIGATION  
MERCHANT MARINE  
PANAMA CANAL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON AGING

Slot # 20

## Congress of the United States

### House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

September, 1977

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(202) 225-2464

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(212) 931-0100

QUEENS  
SECOND FLOOR  
21-77 31ST STREET  
ASTORIA, NEW YORK 11105  
(212) 932-4448

The Honorable  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear :

I am writing to enlist your membership in a soon to be created Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs.

The Committee is being created at the request of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, representing hundreds of thousands of Irish Americans throughout the United States. I have been requested to serve as Chairman of the Committee by National President John M. "Jack" Keane. A copy of Mr. Keane's letter is enclosed.

Such an Ad Hoc Committee is needed to insure that the U.S. Congress continues to focus attention on the complex and multi-faceted Irish question. Among the Committee's early objectives will be a formal request to the House International Relations Committee to convene comprehensive hearings on Ireland with special emphasis on the following matters.

- 1) Issue of human rights violations employed by Britain, violations which continue today despite Britain's admission of guilt before the European Commission on Human Rights.
- 2) Investigation into the State Department's policy of denying visas to leading Irish political figures seeking to visit America, most recently Ruairi O Bradaigh, President of the Sinn Fein Party.
- 3) The question of self-determination for Ireland to decide the reunification question.
- 4) A discussion and analysis of the President's recent statement on Ireland including his call for possible U.S. economic aid for Ireland.
- 5) An examination of U.S. "neutrality" in the Irish question.

The Ad Hoc Committee will also serve as a research and information clearinghouse for Members interested in Ireland. However, its primary purpose will be as a political action organization working to insure that Irish-American interests are addressed by the Congress and the Administration.

I hope to formally announce the establishment of the Committee at a Washington press conference before the end of the month. I would therefore appreciate your promptly advising me of your interest and availability. Your work on behalf of peace and justice in Ireland is well known to me, and your participation in the Committee would be invaluable to its success. It is an important new initiative which needs your help and active input. Please call my office at 52464.

Sincerely,

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MARIO BIAGGI OF NEW YORK  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1977

I consider this to be a high honor and am both proud and pleased to accept. It is gratifying that already, the Committee boasts more than 30 Members of Congress. We are unified in support for peace and justice in Ireland and share the belief that not enough is being done by the United States to promote these goals.

The Committee's objectives are:

1. To gain full Congressional hearings on all facets of the Irish question with particular attention placed on human rights violations committed by Britain;
2. To gain a reversal of current policies used by the State Department to deny visas for leading political figures from Ireland; and
3. To have access to the President and give him a broader perspective on Ireland and the views of the hundreds of thousands of Irish Americans the Committee has been authorized to represent.

The Committee will be active and visible. We will stress unity of purpose. I now wish to introduce the Members of the Committee.



# NEWS

FROM CONGRESSMAN

# MARIO BIAGGI

10TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, N.Y.

EAST BRONX AND NORTH QUEENS

PRESS CONTACT: Bob Blancato  
(o) 202-225-2464

## NEWS ASSIGNMENT TIP

U.S. Rep. Mario Biaggi (D-N.Y.) will hold a press conference Wednesday, Sept. 28 at 2 PM, to announce the newly formed Ad Hoc Congressional Committee for Irish Affairs.

The Committee has been created at the request of the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a national organization representing hundreds of thousands of Irish Americans. Rep. Biaggi was asked to serve as Chairman by National President, John M. "Jack" Keane, who cited Biaggi's "longstanding commitment to peace and justice in Ireland".

The Committee, composed of more than 30 Members of Congress, will work for early Congressional hearings on the Irish question. Members of Congress serving on the Committee as well as several prominent Irish American leaders will participate at the press conference.

Updated list of Committee Members follows:

William R. Cotter (D-Conn)	Robert A. Roe (D-NJ)
James M. Hanley (D-NY)	Austin J. Murphy (D-Pa)
Edward P. Beard (D-RI)	Phillip Burton (D-Calif)
Bruce F. Caputo (R-NY)	J. Herbert Burke (R-Fla)
John G. Fary (D-Ill)	Christopher J. Dodd (D-Conn)
Jerome A. Ambro (D-NY)	Edward W. Pattison (D-NY)
Joshua Eilberg (D-Pa)	Thomas J. Downey (D-NY)
Silvio O. Conte (R-Mass)	Mary Rose Cakar (D-Ohio)
Charles B. Rangel (D-NY)	Doug Walgren (D-Pa)
Antonio Borja Won Pat (D-Guam)	Edward P. Boland (D-Mass)
Matthew J. Rinaldo (R-NJ)	Henry J. Hyde (R-Ill)
Lester L. Wolff (D-NY)	Joseph A. Le Fante (D-NJ)
Leo C. Zeferetti (D-NY)	James J. Delaney (D-NY)
Benjamin S. Rosenthal (D-NY)	Benjamin A. Gilman (R-NY)
William F. Walsh (R-NY)	James M. Collins (R-Tex)
Gladys Noon Spellman (D-Md)	Margaret M. Heckler (R-Mass)
Joseph P. Addabbo (D-NY)	Bob Traxler (D-Mich)
Peter W. Rodino, Jr. (D-NJ)	John M. Murphy (D-NY)

DATE: Wednesday, September 28, 1977

PLACE: 1324 Longworth House Office Building

TIME: 2:00 PM

COVERAGE WILL BE APPRECIATED