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MEMORANDUM

PA

Note of meeting between the Taoiseach and Governor Hugh Carey at the Irish Embassy to the Holy See, Rome, on Saturday, 12th August, 1978

Governor Hugh Carey called to the Irish Embassy to the Holy See at his request and discussed mainly the Northern Ireland situation for about half an hour. At the outset I referred to a statement attributed to him that matters between the AOH and the Irish Government were smoothed out since the Killarney convention. I had seen the reference to this statement in a telex and Carey apparently made it at Shannon on his way to Rome - "But now there was a very close relationship between the position of the AOH and the Lynch Government" - I told him as far as the Irish Government was concerned we had no contact with the AOH since Killarney nor were we very concerned about them. He immediately made a suggestion about the holding of a Peace Forum as an antidote to the congressional hearings which Congress man Biaggi was trying to have held. He said it could be such a forum embracing representatives of all bodies interested in the Northern Ireland problem. The Forum might be held under the aegis of Columbia University. He said he was acquainted with the President of the University (or some other person whom I cannot recall). He seemed to be rather naive about who would attend for example he said that possibly Father Sean McManus might be one of them. I told him that I would not favour the Irish Government being represented at any forum attended by him. In any event I told him that this was a matter which would have to be carefully and discreetly considered. Since our new Ambassador to Washington, Mr. Donlon, was extremely well informed on the situation in the North it might be better to let him have the opportunity of some experience in Washington in connection with Northern Ireland affairs before pursuing the idea. He seemed to suggest that he thought Biaggi would want to become a bit more responsible but he could understand the attitude "to this Italian ex-cop, forcing his way into Irish domestic politics".