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Seo leon fhreagra chun:—
(Answers any reply to:—)

AN RÚNAÍ
(The Secretary)

faoin uimhir seo:—
(quoting:—)



AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
Department of Foreign Affairs

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH, 2.
Dublin 2.

ack'd by phone 18.6.79 19.6.79

15 Meitheamh, 1979

Dear Bertie,

With reference to our recent correspondence regarding the possibility of a Papal visit to Ireland, I am now enclosing for your further information a copy of a minute by the Secretary of our Embassy to the Holy See on a conversation with the Rector of the Irish College in Rome, Monsignor Marron.

It is difficult to assess exactly what weight we should give to Monsignor Marron's ~~views~~ ^{views}; I would not accept, for example, his opinion that "it was now up to the Government to take the initiative". His idea that the Pope will visit the U.N. on 4 September is obviously inaccurate. (See my letter of 13 June - apart from anything else the U.N. General Assembly will not begin until 18 September).

We are asking Ambassador Molloy at the Vatican to keep in touch with the Vatican Secretariat and with Fr. Magee on the question of a possible visit. It may also be useful for the Government to maintain contact with Archbishop Ó Fiaich on the question, especially now that he has had the opportunity to meet the Pope in the course of his visit to Poland.

Yours sincerely,

Tim Lorton

Mr. H.J. Dowd
Roinn an Taoisigh

I Ruffis 19/6

20 see please.

I propose to suggest to the Taoiseach later on that he might like to ask Dr. Ó Fiaich about this when he meets him after the Gardai's ~~the Garda's~~ return from Rome following the forthcoming Consistory.

II MA 27/179

19.6.79

Ambassador,

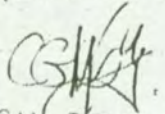
The following points were made during yesterday's conversation by Monsignor Eamon Marron the Rector of the Irish College and Representative of the Irish Hierarchy in Rome.

(1) - The Pope has by now made it absolutely clear that he wants to visit Ireland and to include Armagh in his itinerary. He is aware of the political implications of such a visit. At his last meeting with Msgr. Marron the Pope said that he wishes to go to Ireland but that "there are certain people in the milieu who don't want me there". The Monsignor himself firmly rejected the idea of the Pope going to Drogheda (in the Archdiocese of Armagh) as being an adequate substitute for a visit to Armagh.

(2) - A firm decision on a visit to Ireland is being delayed because not "enough" work has been done on preparing it" (see 3 below). However, a decision one way or the other must be made within a short time after the end of the Polish visit. Though the Monsignor is confident that the Pope is going to Ireland he referred to the danger, as he saw it, that the Pope would have to make a negative decision because the "preparatory work" had not been done.

(3) - Monsignor Marron went on to make perfectly clear his view that the Holy Father would have to be presented with a suitable programme before he decided to proceed with an Irish visit. This would obviously involve the Government in preliminary planning before it was publicly announced that a visit was going ahead. The Monsignor insisted that problems relating to the inclusion of the North in a programme could be solved by liaison between the Government and the U.K. authorities. He expressed the view that the visit should go ahead even if it involved the British in a formal way in Northern Ireland. The Pope had overcome more serious political problems in going to Poland and would probably return even more confident of his desire to visit the Church and people in all of Ireland. Monsignor Marron felt that it was now up to the Government to take the initiative.

(4) - The Monsignor said that the Pope would visit the U.I. this year and mentioned the 4th September ^(sic) as the date (see Appendix 1). He is against the idea of the Holy Father combining a visit to the U.I. with one to Ireland because such an arrangement would take from the importance of the latter visit. It would also make it difficult for Aer Lingus to be involved (Alitalia fly the Pope from Italy).


6th June, 1979

APPENDIX 1

The following report appears in today's (3th June, 1979) edition of the newspaper LA REPUBBLICA:-

John Paul II planning a visit to the United Nations.

In all probability Pope John Paul II will go to New York to address the U.N. General Assembly the 34th Session of which will start in the autumn.

This was announced in the course of a press conference given by the authoritative commentator Rev. Andrew Greeley who claimed to have learned from Vatican sources that it was practically certain that the Pope will be in New York in October.

Pope Paul VI was the first Pope to address the General Assembly of the U.N. in October, 1965 and was also the first Pope to visit the Western hemisphere. On that occasion Paul VI said mass in the open in the Yankee Stadium.