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Mr Hogan

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Note:

The Taoiseach today met the Cardinal-Archbishop of Armagh, Dr. Ó Fiaich, and the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Ryan, who had asked to see him to discuss the visit to Ireland by His Holiness Pope John Paul II from the 29th September to the 1st October, 1979. I was in attendance.

The following points emerged in the course of the discussion:-

- (1) The visit will not be a State visit in any formal sense. This was made quite clear by the Pope himself when he spoke some time ago to the Cardinal and other members of the Irish Hierarchy about the possibility of a visit to Ireland. The reply to the Hierarchy's letter of invitation referred to the event as a "pastoral visit" and the official statement issued in Rome on Saturday last referred to it as a "pastoral tour". His Holiness will come, therefore, as a spiritual leader and not as a Head of State. A State Reception, which usually forms part of the programme for a visiting Head of State, would not be appropriate.
- (2) The time of arrival and departure are not yet known. The place of arrival will almost certainly be Dublin Airport but the departure could be from Dublin, Cork or Shannon.
- (3) His Holiness will stay overnight in the Apostolic Nunciature - at least on the first night and, possibly, also on the second night.

(4) The State's involvement will include

- (a) the ceremonial at the airport on the arrival of His Holiness - where, presumably the Pope will be met by the President, members of the Government etc - and on his departure.

Dr. Ryan commented that His Holiness may prefer not to have military honours rendered to him. They will have this clarified. The Cardinal mentioned that a Guard of Honour was provided when the Pope visited Poland).

- (b) Attendance by the President and the Government at the principal religious ceremony in Dublin and the attendance of some members at the ceremonies in other areas.

- (c) transport and security.

The Taoiseach referred to the possibility that a suitable helicopter might have to be hired for the occasion to transport the Pope to the various places to be visited by him. The Cardinal commented that security problems would be lessened if a helicopter were to be used - particularly if Armagh or any other Northern venue were to be included in the Pope's itinerary. He said that a machine capable of carrying 15/16 persons would probably be suitable as that sized helicopter was used on the occasion of the Pope's visit to Poland. The Taoiseach suggested that an open-roofed car will probably be needed for the Popes journeys in Dublin and other centres. The Cardinal said that he hopes to have more details of transport requirements after the meeting of the Bishops' Conference to be held on the following day. They will consider, also, the need to arrange an alternative system of transport should weather conditions preclude the use of a helicopter.

The Taoiseach referred to a newspaper report of an

offer by Aer Lingus to place one of their aircraft at the Pope's disposal for his journey to Ireland. Dr. Ryan said that he had been approached about this by the Chief Executive of Aer Lingus (Mr. David Kennedy) but that it is not known whether the offer will be taken by the Vatican for all or any legs of the journey Rome-Dublin-New York. He may use the Italian airline, Alitalia, for the outward trip and the same airline or an American one for the return journey.

- (5) It is not known yet what places, in addition to Dublin, will be included in the Pope's itinerary. The Hierarchy's letter of invitation referred only to Knock. Other possible areas for inclusion in the programme are Cork, Galway, Limerick and, possibly, Armagh and/or Drogheda.

With reference to the possible inclusion of Armagh (or other centre(s) in Northern Ireland), the Cardinal said that, when questioned on the matter at his press conference on Saturday last, he had replied that "no place in Ireland is excluded" from consideration. The impression which he and Dr. Ryan had gained on a recent visit to Rome was that the Secretariat of State were advising His Holiness to confine his visit to the twenty-six counties.

The Archbishop of Dublin commented that Ireland was one of the few places in the world where the Pope was positively hated but it would be a very great disappointment to the Catholics in the North if he failed to go there.

The Taoiseach said that his recommendation would be that the North should be included. Its omission would highlight the existence of the border and would be regarded as a victory by Paisley.

Cardinal Ó Flaich said that he had been informed by the Rev. William Arlow that the Irish Council of Churches are meeting on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week, when it is hoped to get a strong statement condemning Paisley's attitude and welcoming the Papal visit to Ireland. The Council would not advise that a visit by the Pope to the North should be omitted because of Paisley's reaction.

They realise now that they had permitted themselves to be unduly influenced by Paisley's attitude to other visits to the North by prominent churchmen.

The Archbishop of Dublin said that they were not aware whether the Vatican had been in touch with the British Government on the question of the possible visit by the Pope to Northern Ireland. He was surprised to read a newspaper report of a reply by the British Prime Minister's Office to the effect that this would be a matter for the Northern Ireland Office. The Taoiseach said that he would ask the Ambassador in London to find out if the British Government had been approached and what their attitude is.

The Cardinal said that if a visit to the North is ruled out, the Pope may go to Drogheda (in the Archdiocese of Armagh) to visit the Shrine of St. Oliver Plunkett, in whom he has a special interest as he was in Rome for the canonisation ceremony.

- (6) The tentative programme which will be presented to the Bishops' Conference will be on the following lines:-
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1st Day: Dublin

The main ceremony will be Mass in the Phoenix Park, which could be arranged for the forenoon if the Pope arrives early in the day. Otherwise it will be arranged for the afternoon (around 3.30 p.m. or 4 p.m.). This will probably be followed by meetings with various groups including members of the Government and other public representatives and their spouses, the Polish community in Ireland, various groups of religious (including nuns), leaders of other Christian Churches etc.

These meetings might be arranged for a venue such as the Dominican Convent in Cabra which is very near the Nunciature.

Provision must be made for a drive around some areas of the city and the visit to the North (if it is to be included) is also likely to be arranged for the first day.

2nd Day: The West

It is hoped to provide an opportunity for His Holiness to meet young people by arranging a National Youth Mass in Galway, which will be intended for young people in the 16-25 age group rather than school children. The Pope will then proceed to Knock for the ceremonies at the Shrine there and will probably return to Dublin to stay overnight at the Nunciature.

3rd Day: The South

Visits to Cork and Limerick are contemplated before the departure of His Holiness from Shannon for New York. Páirc Uí Chaoimh and Cork Airport were mentioned as possible venues for the principal ceremony in the South.

No mention was made of a visit to Maynooth which had featured in earlier speculations about a Papal visit.

- (7) Catholic lay organisations may be called upon to assist the Gardai (? and the Army) in crowd control. Such bodies operated very successfully during the visit to Poland. In Poland also, all vehicular traffic was prohibited within a 5 or 10 mile radius of places visited by the Pope. The Taoiseach commented that this would probably be advisable in Dublin also and would be

essential in other areas such as Knock.

- (8) The Archbishop of Dublin will be the channel for contacts between this Department (and other State agencies) and the Hierarchy on matters concerning the visit. Dr. Ryan said that it would be useful if Army Garda representatives could be nominated to act on the committees being set up by the Hierarchy. The Taoiseach said that he will clear this with the Ministers concerned (Defence and Justice).

It was arranged that this Department would ask the Chairman of the Commissioners of Public Works to get in touch with the Archbishop about the use of the Phoenix Park and would get the Department of Posts and Telegraphs to arrange a contact for Archbishop's House with a view to eliminating delays in telephone communications between them and the Cardinal's residence in Armagh.

- (9) The need for a satisfactory system of amplification was stressed by the Taoiseach. Dr. Ryan said that they are very much alive to the importance of this and are already in touch with sources from which they hope to get help in the matter. The need for a suitable altar in the Phoenix Park was adverted to by the Cardinal but he did not indicate whether they would be seeking help from the State in this matter.

- (10) The Taoiseach suggested that Peace and Reconciliation

would be very appropriate as a theme for the Pope's major speech.

The discussions which began at 3.p.m. ended at about 4.15 p.m. Before leaving, the Cardinal thanked the Taoiseach for the statement which he had issued on Saturday last welcoming the decision of His Holiness to visit Ireland.

H. J. DOWD

23.7.1979.