

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES**

**IRELAND**



**Reference Code:** 2010/53/914  
**Creation Date(s):** [January 1980]  
**Extent and medium:** 1 page  
**Creator(s):** Department of the Taoiseach  
**Access Conditions:** Open  
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- FOLLOWING TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH TAOISEACH (YOUR C403)  
1. MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS TO SPEAKER ON 14 DECEMBER AND HAVE SINCE MADE THEM ALSO TO CAREY AND MOYNIHAN. HOPE TO MAKE THEM TO KENNEDY LATER THIS WEEK - HE IS OUT OF WASHINGTON CAMPAIGNING MOST OF THE TIME.
2. THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE U.S. BY OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVES AND ANY CLAIM BY ANYONE ELSE TO SPEAK FOR THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. THE TAOISEACH DID NOT KNOW THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS, HAD NEVER MET THEM AND HAD HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM. SHOULD THE BIG FOUR FIND IS HELPFUL, THEY COULD ESTABLISH TELEPHONE CONTACT WITH HIM AT ANY STAGE.
3. THE BASIS OF THE TAOISEACH'S APPROACH TO THE ANGLO-IRISH SITUATION WAS SET OUT IN HIS SPEECH TO THE DAIL ON 13 DECEMBER. THE RELEVANT EXTRACT WAS GIVEN TO THE SPEAKER WHO WAS ALSO INFORMED OF THE TAOISEACH'S VIEW THAT (A) HE HOPED FOR A CONTINUATION OF THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WHICH PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS HAD HAD (B) THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY OF A SETTLEMENT OF THE NI SITUATION IN A UK CONTEXT ONLY (C) NI WAS OBVIOUSLY A DRAIN ON BRITISH FINANCIAL RESOURCES (D) THE FESTERING SITUATION IN NI WAS A POISONOUS ELEMENT IN ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS AND POSSIBLY ALSO IN ANGLO-IRISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS (E) THE LONGER THE SITUATION WAS ALLOWED TO FESTER THE MORE POISONOUS AN ELEMENT IT WOULD BECOME (F) AS FAR AS THE 1977 U.S. POLICY STATEMENT WAS CONCERNED, WE SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT PRESS FOR ANY OFFICIAL U.S. COMMITMENT TO INVEST IN NI IN ADVANCE OF THE CREATION THERE OF ACCEPTABLE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. AT THE LEVEL OF PRIVATE U.S. INVESTMENT IN NI, WE SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, DO ANYTHING TO DISCOURAGE IT.
4. THE SPEAKER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE INDICATION OF OUR CURRENT VIEWS AND SAID THAT HE WOULD BE TALKING TO THE WHITE HOUSE ABOUT THE VISIT OF THE BRITISH PM. HE ASKED IF IT WAS INTENDED TO MAKE ANY PUBLIC STATEMENT ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TO THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS OR CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI AND I INDICATED THAT IT WAS TOO EARLY TO EXPECT DETAILED DEVELOPMENTS OF THAT NATURE. ONE OF THE SPEAKER'S AIDES TALKED AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT THE EFFORTS THEY ARE CURRENTLY MAKING TO ENSURE THAT THE CAUCUS AND BIAGGI ARE NOT GIVEN ANY PROMINENCE ON IRISH AFFAIRS AND HE DESCRIBED THE STEPS THEY HAD TAKEN, FOR EXAMPLE, TO PREVENT THE PRESIDENT SENDING A MESSAGE TO THE CAUCUS TESTIMONIAL DINNER IN NEW YORK ON 7 DECEMBER. BIAGGI HAD ASKED FOR SUCH A MESSAGE AND DESPITE NEGATIVE ADVICE FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL, THE WHITE HOUSE CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS OFFICE WAS ON THE POINT OF ISSUING A MESSAGE. ONLY A THREAT BY THE SPEAKER TO SPEAK PERSONALLY TO THE PRESIDENT ABOUT THE MATTER ENSURED THAT A MESSAGE DID NOT ISSUE.
5. MY ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT POSITION OF THE BIG FOUR IS THAT THEY APPRECIATE THE PRIVATE ASSURANCES GIVEN BUT THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO WATCH THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND IF THERE IS INDICATION OF THE CAUCUS OR BIAGGI EXPLOITING RECENT CHANGES IN DUBLIN TO THEIR DISADVANTAGE IN LOCAL U.S. TERMS WE MAY BE FACED WITH REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC CLARIFICATION OF OUR POSITION.

6. COPY OF THIS MESSAGE SENT FOR INFORMATION TO THE AMBASSADOR LONDON.

END OF MESSAGE