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Secretary,

Ann-Neligan
M. discuss
W. H. XI

1. When the Deputy Secretary and I met Mr. Hume in Derry on 9 November he discussed with us the question of information visits by Northern Ireland politicians to America to address the Friends of Ireland and other influential Irish American audiences on the Northern Ireland problem. Mr. Hume obviously had the S.D.L.P. principally in mind. Referring to the excellent contacts which he had built up through many visits to the U.S.A., collaborating with the Embassy in this, he said that colleagues of his should also be regularly engaged in this work. First hand information was essential if Americans were to be weaned from their allegiance to Noraid.

2. The problem was finance. The S.D.L.P. had very limited resources and they recognised that they could not properly seek funding from us. Might not the possibility of setting up a benevolent fund be considered, along the lines of the existing Ireland Fund and American-Irish Foundation? Mr. Hume thought that considerable numbers of Americans some of them wealthy would be interested in contributing constructively to some cause which would help resolve the Northern Ireland problem and this was one outlet for their generosity which might produce very fruitful results.

3. We said we would consider the idea actively. We would no doubt prefer to institute such a fund, if that is at all practical, on a basis that would include representatives of other shades of opinion besides the S.D.L.P. in the information visits to the U.S.A. I would be glad to know your views.

D.M. Neligan

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13/11/1981