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FOR BERNARD DAVENPORT ANGLO IRISH SECTION FROM COLLINS
(c.c. Martin Burke, Washington, DC)

May 15, 1986

MEDIA ASPECTS OF VISIT OF NORTHERN IRELAND SECRETARY OF STATE
TO NEW YORK

In the course of the Northern Ireland Secretary of State's visit to New York he had contact with several newspapers including, in particular, the New York Times, New York Daily News, Newsday, Newsweek and Irish America Magazine. In the latter case, an interview with King will feature in the next edition.

In King's contacts with the media here, the two key points of emphasis were the MacBride Principles and the Anglo-American Treaty on extradition. There seems to have been an almost complete absence of any major references to U.S. aid to Northern Ireland.

On the MacBride Principles contacts at the New York Times informed me that they found his arguments "extremely persuasive". King said that the effects of these Principles (which have been passed by the New York State Senate) would be "calamitous" and would turn off American investors in Northern Ireland. The Times was struck by just how concerned King was about these Principles. King said that several potential U.S. investors in Northern Ireland were at this moment "hesitating" because of these Principles. Three of the Principles raised serious legal questions in the context of the law as it stands in Northern Ireland.

On the issue of the U.S. Extradition Agreement with Britain, the Times felt that King put forward some very cogent points in support of the Treaty being ratified. As in other locations, he insisted that ratification of the Agreement was a measure of Anglo-American determination to deal with terrorism and referred repeatedly to the commitments made at the summit in Tokyo. The Times originally supported the Treaty when it was signed last year but had been having second thoughts on it in the meantime. There was a body of opinion at the newspaper which felt that the Agreement represented an unwelcome precedent in the laws in the U.S. The effect of King's visit to the Times yesterday seems clearly to have been an overcoming of whatever internal hesitations there may have been at that newspaper. In the coming days the Times can be expected to editorialise fully and positively about the Treaty as well as the MacBride

Principles, of which they are likely to be critical.

In his meeting with the Times, King also referred to the constructive work being undertaken by the Conference. On the Diplock Courts and other important issues in Northern Ireland he was hopeful of some coming together of minds between the two Governments. Specifically he said that there was ongoing discussion in the Conference about the Diplock Courts, supergrass trials and the security apparatus in Northern Ireland. He referred to problems about the establishment of a three-judge system in Northern Ireland for terrorist offences and in particular problems relating to declaratory judgements which made for differences between the courts in Ireland and the courts in the U.K. He did insist that these were "technical" problems which were "being worked on" and were not matters of principle. He argued that the perception of the system of justice in Northern Ireland in particular is worse than the system itself, saying that a lot of the practices that were a feature of the past were not now being used in Northern Ireland. King said that things in Northern Ireland had changed positively both in the areas of administration of justice and job discrimination.

The New York Times found his presentation on Anglo-Irish relations in the context of the Agreement and the Conference to be "heartening". In general the overall effect of his visit seems to have been good and he created a favourable impression.

In his meeting with the New York Times he made no reference to U.S. aid to Northern Ireland.

In his meeting with Newsday, which was in an interview format, King again focussed on the dual priorities of extradition and the MacBride Principles. There follows the text of an article by interviewer Jim Mulvaney, which focusses mainly on the extradition issue. Mulvaney told me he was taken aback by what he felt was King's imperious attitude, saying that King lectured him for the best part of half an hour and ignored most of his questions. In his meetin with Mulvaney he refused to go into any details about the workings of the Conference, was "violently" against the MacBride Principles, lobbied strenuously on behalf of extradition and suggested that in the areas of job opportunity and employment in Northern Ireland the FEA had "plenty of staff". He was generally dismissive of problems in that quarter. In a specific example he said that Shorts at one stage used to have only 6% of its apprentices from the Catholic community and that this figure had now risen to about 26%. In a passing reference to U.S. aid to Northern Ireland, King simply recorded that he thought that the aid would occur. On relations between the Irish and British Governments, he said that there was "complete agreement".

In his meeting with the New York Daily News, King was also uncompromising in his attitude towards the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Most of his interlocutors, both at the News and elsewhere, were impressed at his determination and commitment to the Agreement. He told the Daily News that there was a lot of activity being conducted by the Conference, most of which for the next five years would be quite "boring and routine". He seemed to suggest that this "boring and routine" phase was an essential period to get matters sorted out. The Daily News said that King seemed to be "comfortable" with the Unionist attitude towards the Agreement and that Unionist division weakened their threat to the Agreement. He said he didn't see in the foreseeable future that three judge courts were going to work. The problem was not "ideological" but related to the mechanisms of the court system. In his general demeanour King was described by the Daily News as "quite deft but formal". He repeated that there would be no dramatic breakthroughs - "that is not what the process is all about". When asked how long it would take for breakthroughs to occur, he spoke in terms of 3/5 years. On the extradition issue he came on very strong and spoke of it being an extension of the Tokyo commitment. He said that if it was not signed, it would be a repudiation of that commitment. The Daily News described his references to Dublin as being "amiable".

To our knowledge King was not accepted for any major U.S. television appearances. Efforts were made by the British to secure spots for him on the TV network morning programmes but seemed to have been received with little enthusiasm.

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Thur. 15th May 1986, NEWSDAY, P. NY 13

Britain Hopes to Cash Its Libya IOU

By Jim Mulvaney

Thomas King, British secretary of state for Northern Ireland, came to the United States this week to attempt to debunk the claim "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter."

Hoping to cash in on American gratitude for England's cooperation in the U.S. air raid on Libya, King tried to persuade the U.S. Senate to ratify an extradition treaty that would make it easier to send IRA fugitives back to the United Kingdom.

The treaty, worked out and initialed last year by President Ronald Reagan and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, is currently tied up in the Senate Foreign Relations committee by a strange coalition of Democrats and arch-conservative Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.). The new treaty proposes eliminating the political exemption under which fugitives can avoid extradition by claiming they are revolutionaries rather than criminals.

"The extradition treaty is an important element in the fight against terrorism. That it would not be ratified is inconceivable at home," King said in an interview in New York yesterday, repeating what he told Senate leaders Monday and Tuesday.

"This is not a treaty against terrorism," said James Lucier, a Helms aide who said he thinks the chances for Senate ratification are slim. "For 200 years there has been a tradition that insurgents acting against an established government are not terrorists. . . In Northern Ireland you have a recognized insurgency force that has

been operating for more than 80 years. If we say all insurgents are terrorists what do we say about the contras?"

Helms, who holds the swing vote in the committee, opposes the treaty because it might open the way for extradition of Nicaraguan, Afghan or other rebels whose cause he supports.

The new treaty was sparked by three cases in which federal judges refused to sign extradition orders for IRA fugitives on the grounds that killing soldiers on "active service" is an act of legitimate revolution rather than criminal murder.

Since the U.S. strike against Libya, which involved F-111 bombers based in England and deployed with Thatch-

er's permission, the British government has been beefing up its anti-IRA publicity campaign, releasing intelligence reports detailing Libyan arms shipments to the IRA and visits by Belfast guerrilla leaders to Tripoli.

"Denying the IRA and other groups safe haven would be a solid deterrent against international terrorism," King said during an interview in his hotel suite in Manhattan yesterday.

Senate opposition to the treaty is due, at least in part, to an unprecedented lobbying campaign by the Irish National Caucus, a Washington based group that represents a number of Irish-American groups, all of which favor a united Ireland and most of

which back the IRA. The Rev. Sean McManus, who heads the group, said he has sent out more than 5 million pieces of literature asking people to write to their senators.

Democrats on the committee have drafted alternatives, which would deny political exemption for attacks against civilians. "I would like to see senators argue, on the floor of the Senate, in televised debate, that killing policemen or soldiers is okay," said Mark Helmke, an aide to committee chairman Richard Lugar (R-Indiana), explaining that he thinks the alternative proposal is also doomed.

The Irish government has refused to be drawn into the debate.