



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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P.A.M.

MacBride  
Campaign

Confidential

Note

Mr. Mansergh  
see the above. We discussed  
the preparation of new "guidelines"  
for the Embassy, Consulates and the  
Consulates in the light of recent  
interviews and developments.  
→ 24/ix.

Martin Mansergh telephoned. He had seen report from Embassy, Washington, regarding reactions to Taoiseach's interview in Irish-America (copy attached for ease of reference). He suggested - in a delicate way - that perhaps implicit in this report was a suggestion that the Washington Embassy had itself some hesitations about the MacBride Principles/Campaign. He was concerned that our diplomatic offices in the U.S. should not provide any basis whatsoever for any claim that the Irish government is discouraging the MacBride campaign.

I said that there could be no grounds for such claim. The Embassy and Consulates are, of course, operating on the basis of the Tanaiste's statement of 7 May and the Taoiseach's interview in Irish America. I felt it was important that when the Embassy reports on reactions, it should be seen as just that - reporting - and not be interpreted as Embassy identification with the views reported. It would obviously not be in any one's interest if the Embassy were to start tailoring its reports to the audience and failed to report views of which we should be aware.

Mansergh said he accepted that fully. He was not suggesting that the Embassy or Consulates are in any way departing from the government line. His telephone call was perhaps redundant. But as I probably knew, the Taoiseach "hit the roof" when any suggestion was made to him that Irish diplomats were undermining the MacBride campaign.

We then moved to a more general discussion on the MacBride Principles. Dr. Mansergh was very pleased with the debate at the BIA. (He mentioned that he had told David Fell that he did not anticipate any further public pronouncements by the Taoiseach on the MacBride Principles). The Irish Government's position as he sees it is clear. We are not actively

campaigning for the MacBride Principles but we have no objection to anyone in the US endorsing the campaign. It is not for us to throw lifelines to those who wish to oppose the Principles or the campaign. The disinvestment argument does not strike him as a very credible one.

I referred to our focus on seeing effective new legislation on the statute books. This seemed to us the best way forward. He had no problem with that emphasis. He added, however, that there should be no room for ambiguity in our approach to the Principles - the Taoiseach has stated quite clearly that they are "acceptable".



Anne Anderson,  
22 September 1987.

c.c. Mr. Gallagher