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Visit of British Labour Party Leader, Neil Kinnock, M.P.,
Dublin 12/13 November

Steering Note

Since his election as Party leader in 1983, Mr. Kinnock has sought, with some success, to shed the extreme policies of the hard left and to move the Labour Party back into the mainstream of British politics. The same moderate approach has informed his attitude on issues relating to Northern Ireland. Kinnock is supportive of the Anglo-Irish Agreement and very strong in his condemnation of terrorism. He has stated that, as Labour Party leader, he will not meet with representatives of Sinn Fein, and has condemned the activities of local Labour Councillors in inviting Sinn Fein representatives to town halls in Britain.

The issues raised by Kevin McNamara during his visit to Dublin last week (reports in the brief) provides a general indication of current Labour Party concerns relating to Northern Ireland. The major intervening event - and indeed the reason that Kinnock is making his visit at this time - is the Enniskillen bombing of last Sunday. It is to be expected that the shock and revulsion felt at this atrocity will permeate Kinnock's presentation of views on a number of issues.

Kinnock is a committed rugby fan and he will probably (with his wife) wish to have an informal weekend in Dublin for next year's Welsh match. Politically, he has traditionally been interested in, and helpful on, matters of concern to us. His visit to Enniskillen (and to Dublin to some degree) has to be largely read in a domestic political and publicity context. He will, therefore, inevitably tend to focus on extradition and security co-operation while wishing, at the same time, to be seen to be interested in, and committed to, the wider political agenda - fair employment, Diplock reform, accompaniment of the UDR, etc.

Anglo-Irish Agreement

As indicated above, Kinnock is very supportive of the Agreement. His view, as expressed a couple of months ago in discussions with our London Embassy, is that the British side, and in particular the Prime Minister, has lost interest in the Agreement. He believes that Mrs. Thatcher's reasons for signing the Agreement were almost exclusively security related and to provide some response to international pressure. Given this viewpoint, Kinnock may feel that the Agreement is vulnerable if difficulties on the extradition issue cannot be overcome.

Extradition

During his recent visit, Kevin McNamara showed understanding of the Government's position on extradition. He did caution however that the issues involved would have to be very carefully explained to Kinnock, as Kinnock is "macho" (McNamara's word) on terrorist issues and might not have much sympathy with a decision to defer. If McNamara's sense is correct, then presumably any tendencies in this direction on Kinnock's part will have been strengthened by the events of last weekend.

In the current internal debate in Britain on the draft Criminal Justice Bill which the Government has placed before Parliament, the Labour Party view is that the present British requirement for production of prima facie evidence before extradition should be retained. In his comments on the ECST, Kinnock may reflect this Labour Party emphasis on the importance of a prima facie requirement.

Administration of Justice

The Labour Party's position differs significantly from that of the British Government on a range of issues in this area. The

Labour Party has publicly undertaken to take the following steps when in office

- to repeal in its entirety the Prevention of Terrorism Act;
- to outlaw plastic bullets;
- to end strip-searching in women's prisons in the North;
- to legislate to end Supergrass trials;
- to reform the Diplock courts (initially by introduction of three judges but with a promise to work towards the restoration of jury trials for all offences).

However, Labour in Government tends traditionally to be much less active and "forward" on Irish issues than when in opposition.

Fair Employment

This is a traditional Labour Party concern and there are well-established connections with trade unionists in Northern Ireland. Kinnock has largely left articulation of policy in this area to Kevin McNamara. However he may wish to emphasise his personal concern to see real progress in this area - a concern which we of course entirely share.

Talks about Talks

Kinnock sees the Unionist leaders at Westminster fairly regularly. (He is contemptuous of Molyneaux for the weakness of his leadership and has privately described Paisley as "a pure horror"). On the basis of these contacts, Kinnock may wish to give us his assessment of the likelihood of the current talks leading anywhere.

Anglo-Irish Division

11 November 1987

2947p

Mr. Bassett.
Inbound - but
file

Meeting of the Taoiseach with the British
Labour Party Spokesman, 5 November 1987.

The Taoiseach found Mr McNamara very friendly and very supportive. He fully understood our position on the deferral of extradition. He believes we should press very strongly for all sorts of things in the Anglo-Irish Conference, particularly items that had nothing to do with security, such as fair employment. He believed there should be major legislation to deal with Fair Employment. He was in favour of mixed courts. He believed much more should be made by the government in Britain of the fact that we were spending more per capita on security than the British.

Martin Kenny

6 November, 1987.

Visit by Kevin McNamara, British Labour Party
spokesman on Northern Ireland

Mr. McNamara was in Dublin for a two day visit, in the course of which he met the Taoiseach and the Tanaiste, as well as the leaders of Fine Gael and the Progressive Democrats and representatives from the Labour Party and the Workers Party. The Tanaiste hosted a working lunch on 6 November, which was preceded by a meeting between Mr. McNamara and the Secretary and officials of the Department. The opportunity was availed of to brief Mr. McNamara on the Government's thinking on the range of current issues relating to Northern Ireland and affecting Anglo-Irish relations. Among the points made by Mr. McNamara in the course of the lunch and the meeting which preceded it were

- Peter Barry had emphasised to him that the list currently being circulated by the British side setting out progress in the context of the Anglo-Irish Agreement relates almost exclusively to measures in place since before December 1986. Deferral of the coming into effect of the Extradition Act to December 1987 was intended to encourage further progress on the implementation of the Agreement in the interval. However, there was little or nothing to show that was new since December 1986.
- He thought there would be a predictable outcry in certain quarters of Westminster and the British media if the Irish Government did not go ahead with extradition on 1 December. However, he seemed to feel that the Westminster reaction would be containable and emphasised the importance of good groundwork by our London Embassy.
- He felt it important that the issues involved in the extradition debate should be very carefully explained to Neil Kinnock as Kinnock tended to be "macho" on terrorism issues and might not have much sympathy with a decision to defer.

- He emphasised that his own view - as a Labour Party member and civil rights activist - was that any extradition arrangements introduced should be accompanied by a requirement for prima facie evidence.
- On the Birmingham Six case, his understanding was that the Appeal Court decision was unlikely to be forthcoming before January. There was still a possibility of a December decision by the court but this appears unlikely.
- He sees the Maguire case as a particularly convincing one and has been impressed with Mrs. Maguire's apparent sincerity.
- He seemed to suggest that, in a scenario where the Extradition Act was deferred, the search over the coming months for an acceptable quid pro quo for its implementation should be broadened beyond administration of justice/security issues and include - for example - employment equality legislation.
- He emphasised his conviction that new fair employment legislation should take the form of a Bill rather than an Order, even though adoption of a Bill would take longer. He laid emphasis on quality rather than speed in the drafting of new legislation. He hopes for a White Paper early next year and the submission of legislation early in the 1988/89 parliamentary session.
- He felt reasonably optimistic that King might introduce a worthwhile fair employment bill. He said that King would go no higher in the Cabinet and this is his one chance to leave a legislative legacy.
- He asked that we research our files to see if we have any photographs of unionist leaders and particularly unionist Council members parading in the company of uniformed

paramilitaries. Such photographs would probably date from the months immediately after the signature of the Anglo-Irish Agreement. He would intend to use any such material in the debate on the Declaration of non-Support for Proscribed Organisations.

Anne Anderson

Anne Anderson

9 November 1987

c.c. PSM

PSS

Ambassador London

Mr. Gallagher

Counsellors A-I

Mr. Bassett

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