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VISIT OF CARDINAL O'CONNOR AND MAYOR KOCH

SUMMARY NOTE

1. The background to this private visit lies in a commitment made by the Cardinal earlier this year to lead a pilgrimage to Knock to pray for peace and reconciliation. Cardinal O' Connor announced his intention to lead a peace pilgrimage to Ireland in his St. Patrick's Day message in St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York. The Mayor then volunteered to accompany the Cardinal and has since been at pains to stress he is merely following the Cardinal's initiative.
2. It was originally thought that up to 2,000 people would travel but it is now estimated that the numbers on the pilgrimage will be less than five hundred. It is felt that the failure to secure more pilgrims results from the announcement of the pilgrimage too late for many who had already planned their summer holidays.
3. Koch has been elected 3 times as Mayor of New York and has indicated that he would like to stand again. He is thought to have alienated a section of the New York Democratic Party by his sharp exchanges with Jesse Jackson during the Democratic primary in New York and his support for Al Gore rather than Governor Dukakis. Nevertheless, his electoral base in New York remains strong, and he is highly regarded amongst Irish-Americans.
4. The topics that the Mayor and the Cardinal are likely to raise in any discussions would appear to be Immigration, Fair Employment, the MacBride Principles and Joe Doherty. The Mayor issued a statement before his departure on 18 July (first to Amsterdam where he is fulfilling a longstanding invitation from the Mayor of Amsterdam) concerning the issue of fair employment in Northern Ireland (copy on the brief). The statement indicated the Mayor was encouraged by the British proposals for new fair employment legislation and would be watching to see how their implementation would develop.

Anglo-Irish Section,
Department of Foreign Affairs,
20 July 1988.

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MAYOR EDWARD I. KOCH

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

He was elected on November 8, 1977, Mayor, winning 50 percent of the vote in a four-way race.

He was inaugurated as the 105th Mayor of New York on Sunday, January 1, 1978.

On November 3, 1981, Mr. Koch won re-election as Mayor with 75 percent of the vote. On February 22, 1982, he announced that he would run for Governor of the State of New York.

In the event he was defeated by Mario Cuomo in the 1982 Gubernatorial election.

In November 1985 he ran for a third term as Mayor and was comfortably re-elected.

His popularity continues to run high despite the recent scandals which have involved senior City officials including the Borough Presidents of the Bronx and Queens and the Commissioner for Cultural Affairs, Bess Myerson, who was personally close to him.

He suffered a mild stroke in late 1987 but has made a full recovery and has recently indicated his intention to run for yet another term as Mayor in 1989.

He is generally highly thought of in the Irish American community and has a consistent record of concern for issues of interest to that community including Northern Ireland. He has an interest in the fair employment issue and has expressed his approval of the MacBride Principles.

He has also expressed his sympathy for the situation of the new Irish immigrants and his policy as Mayor has been as humane as possible towards the plight of all illegal immigrants.

He has a warm personal friendship with Cardinal O'Connor despite public differences between them on issues such as abortion. It was announced some time ago that they plan to co-author a book called "His Honour and His Eminence" which would set out their respective views on issues of Church and State.

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THE CITY OF NEW YORK

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

EDWARD I. KOCH

Tel. 566-5090

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For Release:
pr-fairSTATEMENT BY MAYOR EDWARD I. KOCH

The enormous complexities of the situation in Northern Ireland are daunting to all of us who wish to see an end to the troubles there. There is little one can easily presume to contribute from abroad, apart from the prayers for peace and reconciliation that are central to the pilgrimage that I have joined.

However, I believe it is incumbent upon those of us who follow events in Ireland to support initiatives that might make some useful contribution toward relieving tensions. For this reason, I was encouraged by the conclusions reached in the British government's White Paper on Fair Employment in Northern Ireland.

I have long followed with great interest the difficulties of the employment situation in Northern Ireland, especially the troubling difference in unemployment rates for Catholics and Protestants. With unemployment for Catholics two and a half times unemployment for Protestants, it is clear that religious discrimination continues to play a role in hiring practices in Northern Ireland.

That discrimination is indeed a problem was confirmed in a report last year by the British government's Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights. After examining a range of factors that could account for joblessness, the report concluded that "a

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man's religion is consistently shown to be a major determinant of his chance of being unemployed."

The British government's white paper outlines a series of legislative proposals that, if enacted into law and enforced, have the potential to reduce discrimination against Catholics. Most importantly, the legislation would create a Fair Employment Commission that would monitor hiring practices of individual firms and enforce orders to correct both direct and indirect discriminatory practices.

Anyone who has followed this issue in New York knows that I am adamantly opposed to a quota system. However, by combining the tough enforcement of anti-discrimination laws with an affirmative action program aimed at reaching out to groups under-represented in the workforce, we have proven that opportunities can be created for newcomers without imposing an invidious burden on those already fully integrated into the job market.

Obviously, there will be specific differences in the application of such an approach in Northern Ireland. The bottom line must be substantial progress toward the removal of religious discrimination from the workplace. I am encouraged by the British proposals and will be watching hopefully to see that they are vigorously applied. Relieving this problem can help move all the people of Northern Ireland toward reconciliation.

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JOE DOHERTY: LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

1. Doherty was convicted in Belfast in 1981 of the murder of a British Army captain and sentenced to life imprisonment. While in custody he broke out of Crumlin Road jail and arrived in the US in 1982. He was arrested in New York in 1983 on the grounds of illegal entry.
2. Since Doherty's arrest in 1983, the British authorities have sought his extradition to the United Kingdom. The request for extradition was denied by a New York Court in 1984 on the basis that Doherty's offence fell within the political offences exception to the US/UK Extradition Treaty. (The Treaty has subsequently been amended to remove the political offence exception). There were two appeals by the US Government against this decision, both of which failed.
3. In 1986 Doherty sought and was granted voluntary deportation to Ireland. The Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS) objected to deportation to Ireland as prejudicial to the interests of the United States as it might interfere with US international efforts to combat terrorism. This objection was overruled by an immigration judge and the INS appealed to the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA). The appeal was dismissed on 11 March 1987. The INS then asked the US Attorney General to review the BIA decision.
4. The decision of the US Attorney General, Mr. Ed Meese, was announced in June. The main part of his judgement is that "I disapprove the BIA's decision and conclude that it would be prejudicial to the interests of the United States for (Doherty) to be deported to Ireland and that he should be deported instead to the United Kingdom".
5. The net result of the Attorney General's judgement is that Doherty will remain in prison in the US, and a new round of legal proceedings will begin with a hearing by the BIA, possibly to be followed by appeals to the US Courts. The

British authorities, while no doubt pleased with the Attorney General's finding against deportation to Ireland, must undoubtedly be seriously disappointed that the judgement will not lead to an immediate return of Doherty to the UK. The case now seems set to drag on indefinitely.

Anglo-Irish Section
Department of Foreign Affairs
20 July 1988

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