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IRISH GOVERNMENT'S SUPPORT FOR MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES

You spoke to Mr Lillis this morning about the article in today's 'Independent' (copy attached) which reported that the Irish Government had decided to support the MacBride Principles and that this had been communicated to Irish Diplomats in the USA.

2. Mr Lillis has confirmed that no instructions have been given to Irish diplomats on this matter and that a statement to that effect is being issued by the DFA.
3. It is likely that the DFA statement will be carried on the BBC 'Talk Back' programme at lunch time today. DED will I believe issue a statement reiterating our opposition to the MacBride principles and referring to Mr Hume's recent pronouncement in Boston.
4. Informally, Mr Lillis reminded me however that support for MacBride is a Fianna Fail policy. The denial by the DFA may therefore only be a respite.

PRINCIPAL SECRETARIAT

27 March 1987

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11/3

Mr Wilson, DED M

cc: Mr Eurns
Mr Fell, DED M
Mr McAllister, IDB M
Mr Chesterton
Mr Elliott M
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Mr Spence M ✓
Mr Gowdy, IDB M
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Mr Dewberry, FCO
Mr Shienwald, HM Embassy
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Mr Snoxall, BIS, New York



IRISH ATTITUDES ON MACBRIDE

You may not have seen the article in today's "Independent" reporting support by the current Irish Government for the MacBride Principles. The article is attached. To the extent that it is true (and I am investigating as urgently what, if anything, lies behind it), it is unhelpful and will make our task in persuading the Irish to join us in fighting MacBride that much more difficult.

2. As well as "taking note", I should be grateful if copy recipients could let me know as soon as possible what collateral there may be for the Independent article.

P. N. Bell

P N BELL
at March 1987

PS: Since dictating this letter, I learn from the Secretariat that the Irish have denied making any formal statement on the subject of MacBride, though they point out that Fianna Fail's sympathies more naturally perhaps incline in their direction than did those of the previous administration.

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