

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



Reference Code:	2006/133/671
Creation Date(s):	[March 1976]
Extent and medium:	1 page
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Access Conditions:	Open
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THE HONORABLE GARRET FITZGERALD
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF IRELAND

MY DEAR MR. MINISTER:

I WANTED YOU TO KNOW THAT I HAVE RECEIVED YOUR LETTER OF MARCH 22ND WHICH YOU INDICATED HAD BEEN ADDRESSED AS WELL TO OTHER CANDIDATES IN OUR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION.

LET ME FIRST SAY THAT I RECALL WITH PLEASURE OUR MEETING IN MY OFFICE LAST OCTOBER AND REGRET THAT MY OWN CROWDED SCHEDULE IN THE CAMPAIGN PRECLUDED MY SEEING YOU AND YOUR PRIME MINISTER DURING YOUR RECENT VISIT TO THIS COUNTRY.

I ALSO WANT TO BE SURE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND MY OWN POSITION ON THE SITUATION IN IRELAND WHICH IS STATED IN SOME DETAIL IN THE TWO PAPERS ENCLOSED IN THIS LETTER -- A STATEMENT OF MINE OF JANUARY 1976 AND MY ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS POSED TO ME IN FEBRUARY 1976.

AS YOU WILL NOTE, I FAVOR A POLICY OF PEACEFUL RECONCILIATION IN IRELAND. WITHOUT A RENEWED EFFORT AT IRISH RECONCILIATION EVENTS COULD WELL PASS A POINT OF NO RETURN--WITH THE MOST DIRE CONSEQUENCES FOR ALL OF IRELAND, AND THE MOST PROFOUND ANGUISH FOR ALL OF US WHO SYMPATHIZE WITH THE PLIGHT OF THE IRISH PEOPLE. HENCE, I SAID THAT, IF ALL THE PARTIES INVOLVED WERE WILLING TO MEET, IT WOULD THEN BE APPROPRIATE TO HAVE SUCH MEETINGS IN THE UNITED STATES, PROVIDED THAT ALL AGREED THAT IT WAS DESIRABLE. I SAID FURTHER THAT IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT DECLARED ITS FUTURE INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO NORTHERN IRELAND, IT COULD BE HELPFUL IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A SETTLEMENT BY THE PARTIES CONCERNED. MY POSITION, MORE FULLY SPELLED OUT IN THE ENCLOSED MATERIAL, DOES NOT ENDORSE THE AIMS OR THE PROGRAMS OF ANY PARTY TO THE CONFLICT.

C183
PAGE 3

AS YOU KNOW, I HAVE TIME AND AGAIN CONDEMNED TERRORISM, AND I HAVE CONSISTENTLY AFFIRMED MY BELIEF IN DUE PROCESS OF LAW. MY RECORD ON THIS IS ABSOLUTELY EXPLICIT, AND YOU WILL RECALL THAT I EMPHASIZED THIS POSITION DURING OUR CONVERSATION LAST OCTOBER. THEREFORE, I AM OF COURSE OPPOSED TO CONTRIBUTIONS BY AMERICAN CITIZENS --OR ANYONE ELSE -- GOING INTO TERRORISTIC ACTIVITIES, INCLUDING THE PURCHASE OR USE OF WEAPONS.

MY STRONG DESIRE AND PROFOUND HOPE IS FOR A PEACEFUL AND HUMANE RESOLUTION OF IRELAND'S POLITICAL CONFLICT. I APPRECIATE YOUR KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ME AND WILL WELCOME YOUR PERSONAL COMMENTS AND RESPONSE TO THIS LETTER.

LOOKING FORWARD TO AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY FOR US TO MEET AGAIN, I AM, WITH BEST REGARDS,

SINCERELY YOURS,

HENRY M. JACKSON, U.S.S.

ENCLOSURES