

CONFIDENTIAL

ANNEX B

FROM: HM AMBASSADOR, DUBLIN

Date: 16 June 1993

cc (BLIS):

PS/SofS(L&B)
 PS/Mr Mates (L&B)
 PS/Michael Ancram(L&B)
 PS/Mr Atkins (L&B)
 PS/Lord Arran (L&B)
 PS/PUS (L&B)
 PS/Mr Fell
 Mr Thomas
 Mr Ledlie
 Mr Williams
 Mr Steele
 Mr Deverell
 Mr Bell
 Mr Watkins
 Mr Wood (L&B)
 Mrs Collins
 Mr Cooke
 Mr Brooker
 Mr Leach
 Mr Maccabe
 Mr Quinn
 Mr Maxwell
 Mr Kyle
 Miss Steele
 Mr F Woods
 Mr Dickinson
 Ms Lodge

Mr Archer, RID, FCO - B

PRESIDENT'S VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND, 18-19 JUNE

1. As instructed, I called on the Secretary to the Government late last night and left with him the attached speaking note. Murray was accompanied by Kennedy, who has been making the practical arrangements for the visit.

2. I said that the note had been finalised by the Northern Ireland Secretary personally, and that it meant just what it said. In general, we greatly welcomed the President's visits to Northern Ireland, but the proposed event in West Belfast on 18 June was very misconceived. Quite apart from the political and security damage it

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would entail in Northern Ireland, British Ministers would inevitably be asked if they had approved it or been consulted, and would have to say that they had not. The President's own standing in Northern Ireland and perhaps more widely would be damaged, which should also be of concern to the Irish Government. The dilemma was not of our making and underlined the need for early notice and planning for the President's visits to the North, about which I had spoken to him recently.

3. Murray said that the full guest-list for the West Belfast visit had reached the Government from the President's staff only yesterday. The Taoiseach and the Tanaiste were also very concerned about the West Belfast interlude: however, he implied, they were unwilling or unable to stop the President (I noted that as a constitutional President she was surely subject to advice from the Government). Murray asked whether to cancel the event in question might not cause more trouble than to go ahead: I pointed to the inevitable consequences in the speaking note. Kennedy wondered whether the event might be made acceptable for example by pruning the guest list (though invitations were to go out this morning and were probably unstoppable): in any event, the Irish had reached a clear agreement with the organizers that Gerry Adams (present as a representative of a local cultural society!) would not appear on camera with the President. I said that I did not know whether what Kennedy suggested was feasible, but his words about Adams were naive: and Adams was not the only person concerned to whom exception would be taken.

4. Murray, who took all this calmly, said he would consult the Taoiseach first thing this morning, 16 June. He imagined the Northern Ireland Secretary might raise it at today's summit: indeed, it might be a good thing if he did. I said it seemed inevitable that it would come up.

(Signed)

D E S Blatherwick