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## Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland and the “Special Relationship,” 1971–1981


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### ABSTRACT

In 1971, Senator Edward Kennedy co-sponsored a resolution in Congress calling for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland. The House of Representatives Sub-Committee on Europe held hearings on this resolution in February 1972 in the immediate aftermath of the deaths in Londonderry of “Bloody Sunday.” These hearings represented the first time that several high profile American political figures had spoken out on the developing conflict in Northern Ireland and, whilst the hearings did not lead to a significant change in American policy towards the conflict, the threat of further ones persisted from the Richard Nixon to the Ronald Reagan administrations. This analysis examines the impact of the 1972 Congressional hearings and the threat posed by the possibility of future ones in the wider context of United States policy towards the Northern Ireland conflict until 1981.

The international dimension to the Northern Ireland conflict has been the topic of significant scholarly literature, with much focused on the role of the United States. With a large Irish migrant community, many in the United States took a keen interest in the issue of Northern Ireland as it rose to prominence during the early 1970s. This interest extended to political representatives, themselves often of Irish stock, who began making public statements on the issue of Northern Ireland. One particularly troubling statement, from the perspective of the British government, came from the Democratic Party senator, Edward Kennedy, a member of one of the most prominent Irish-American families in the United States. In October 1971, Kennedy called for the withdrawal of British troops from Northern Ireland as part of a resolution declared in both houses of Congress. The resolution led to hearings in February 1972, a matter of days after “Bloody Sunday,” one of the most controversial events of the conflict that saw the deaths of 13 civil rights protesters at the hands of the British Army.<sup>1</sup> Support networks for militant Irish republican groups, notably the Provisional Irish Republican Army [PIRA], had been developing since the onset of the conflict and, much

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like the introduction of internment without trial in August 1971, “Bloody Sunday” drew increased attention from American politicians.

The role of the American Congress in Northern Ireland from the point of the Kennedy resolution to the beginning of the Ronald Reagan Administration in early 1981 coincided with the escalation of the Irish republican prison protest, a turning point of the conflict. Although the importance of retaining American support was imperative to British foreign representatives, those Americans favouring a more hostile approach to Britain were never able to gain sufficient support to succeed and, indeed, drifted in and out of the issue of Northern Ireland. Moreover, prominent Irish-American politicians used the threat of further Congressional hearings to influence British policy towards Northern Ireland, whilst the British government was committed to keeping such figures onside as far as possible.

Existing literature on both the Northern Ireland conflict and modern Irish–America suggests the importance of Irish–American networks to the Irish republican struggle throughout the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the developing role of the United States government in Northern Ireland.<sup>2</sup> During the early days of the Northern Ireland conflict, members of the American Congress began to discuss the creation of an official policy towards the issue. At the executive level, the Administration of Richard Nixon considered Northern Ireland to be an internal British affair and a policy of non-intervention therefore developed. In March 1969, William Macomber, the State Department assistant secretary for Congressional Relations, wrote to Thomas E. Morgan, chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. He emphasised that if the issue of Northern Ireland came before the United Nations [UN] Security Council or General Assembly, the Power responsible would be “vulnerable to the charge of interfering in the internal affairs of others, a matter specifically excluded by the UN Charter.” The UN had intervened in the Congo, New Guinea, and Yemen during the 1960s, situations scarcely analogous with Northern Ireland. Indeed, Article 2(7) of the UN Charter precluded the organisation from intervening in “matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state.”<sup>3</sup> Macomber continued, “Moreover, were the United States to take the lead in trying to engage the UN in a consideration of the Irish question, our bilateral relations with both the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom could be adversely affected as both governments would be likely to resent what they would regard as interference.”<sup>4</sup>

Media coverage of the conflict grew during winter 1971. A feature in *The New York Times* in December included an interview with a prominent Irish Northern Aid activist, Michael Flannery, who declared his support for armed Irish republicanism: “the more coffins sent back to Britain, the sooner this will be over.”<sup>5</sup> Around this time, two documentaries appeared on American network television: “Terror in Northern Ireland,” aired on the American Broadcasting Company in December 1971, and the National Broadcasting

Company's "Suffer the Little Children" in January 1972.<sup>6</sup> The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office [FCO] ordered a review of films and considered the former to have been "not too bad," although admitting, "we did a lot to help the production team to put this programme together."<sup>7</sup> The latter, however, appeared "much more hostile, we have had a number of telephone calls so far protesting about the way in which it portrayed the work and behaviour of the British Troops."<sup>8</sup> The increased awareness of the situation in Northern Ireland came at a cost for the British, however, with elected representatives in the United States growing increasingly agitated at perceived intransigence on the part of London in finding a solution to the conflict. In October 1971, a resolution co-sponsored by Kennedy and Connecticut Senator Abraham Ribicoff in the Senate and Representative Hugh Carey of New York in the House called for:

withdrawals of all British forces from Northern Ireland, and the institution of law enforcement and criminal justice under local control acceptable to all parties . . . . Resolved; that it is the sense of the House of Representatives of the United States that the discrimination and prejudice and violence against the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland is condemned . . . . Resolved; that it is the sense of the Congress that the United States Government should make it clear to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland that the continuing violence of Northern Ireland, reflecting a longstanding policy of discrimination against the Catholic minority, is a matter of international concern and cannot be allowed to continue, that such violence must be brought under control with the assistance of the United Nations, and that the long-run solution to the problem of Northern Ireland is a free and united Ireland.<sup>9</sup>

Kennedy commented that "Ulster is becoming Britain's Vietnam," a statement that provoked outrage from Britain and one that he later came to regret, although he would still reprise it.<sup>10</sup> This powerful rhetoric found swift and heavy criticism in Britain. Northern Irish Prime Minister Brian Faulkner stated that Kennedy had "shown himself willing to swallow hook, line and sinker the hoary old propaganda that I.R.A. [Irish Republican Army] atrocities are carried out as part of a freedom fight on behalf of the Northern Irish people."<sup>11</sup> British Prime Minister Edward Heath reportedly described the statement as "an ignorant outburst."<sup>12</sup> By way of response, Kennedy aide Carey Parker highlighted that unless Kennedy and Ribicoff had led the resolution, a more extreme version would likely have been tabled in Congress.<sup>13</sup> Various commentators have since stressed the flaw of the Vietnam analogy, even though Kennedy's aim was ostensibly to provide a frame of reference for the American public.<sup>14</sup> Kennedy himself wrote to *The Times* and suggested that the reaction to his statement might be a product of Britain's "guilty conscience over Ulster."<sup>15</sup>

The Kennedy-led resolution eventually produced Congressional hearings in February 1972 and, from the British perspective, the timing could scarcely

have been worse. The intervening period had seen events in Northern Ireland escalate rapidly, beginning with the publication of the Compton Report on 16 November 1971. This report into allegations of security force brutality during the introduction of internment without trial denied that torture had occurred; it used instead the expression “ill treatment.”<sup>16</sup> The American Embassy in Dublin reported Irish anger at Compton’s findings, a telegram noting that an “Official described [the] Compton report as ‘complete white-wash’ and said that the evidence of torture ‘however delicately described by English gentlemen, was irrefutable’.”<sup>17</sup> A later telegram noted that the Irish government might seek “short-term measures of confrontation with [the] British, such as [an] appeal to [the] European human rights commission on brutality/tortures issue.”<sup>18</sup> On 17 December, a further, more benign Senate Resolution on Northern Ireland followed as the United States offered its assistance in the peaceful resolution of the problems in Northern Ireland.<sup>19</sup>

For his part, Kennedy maintained a consistently strong line on Northern Ireland, particularly evident when he met with Charles Haughey, a member of *Dail Eireann*, the Irish parliament, during the latter’s trip to the United States in December. Haughey reported that Kennedy was “very anxious that some form of United Nations intervention should take place in Northern Ireland.” Replying that placing British troops under UN control could be a first step, a suggestion with which Kennedy agreed, Haughey asked that Kennedy attempt to convince Nixon to raise the issue of Northern Ireland during talks with Heath. He also asked about including a peaceful solution to the conflict and the reunification of Ireland in the Democratic Party platform for the 1972 election.<sup>20</sup> A telegram from the Dublin Embassy to the State Department noted, “in press reports, it is difficult separate Haughey’s opinions from Kennedy’s,” but significantly, that “Senator [Kennedy] is opposed to violence.”<sup>21</sup>

Henry Kissinger, Nixon’s national security advisor, had effectively ruled out UN intervention two years previously in response to a letter from John Murphy, Representative for New York’s 16<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. “The United Kingdom,” he said, “certainly would react to official United States intervention in those problems in the same way as we would react to foreign intervention in our efforts to resolve problems of civil rights and equality of opportunity in the United States.”<sup>22</sup> Nonetheless, such calls intensified by the end of January 1972, one coming from Democratic Senator Hubert H. Humphrey. He wrote to Dermot Foley, the chairman of the American Committee for Ulster Justice, and stated “I plead with the British Government to turn back from any policy of more force ... I ... respectfully urge the British Government to release those prisoners interned on August 9, 1971.”<sup>23</sup>

International coverage of the events of Sunday, 30 January 1972 in Londonderry inevitably brought the topic of Northern Ireland to the attention of a much larger audience. The marchers protesting against internment

without trial came under fire from soldiers from the British army. The foreign secretary, Alec Douglas-Home, advised the British government's representatives in the United States to tread carefully in their public statements. "In the Prime Minister's view there is a risk that if you get into detailed discussion about the shootings, your remarks might be distorted and used to argue that the tribunal's hearing were being prejudiced." The hearings referred to the newly established Widgery Tribunal to investigate the crisis.<sup>24</sup> It was further emphasised that "it is best to let sleeping dogs lie and not gratuitously to provoke controversy on Irish issues."<sup>25</sup> The British already faced "a steady stream of Irish-American propaganda" and concern existed that:

there is now a danger of the propaganda battle going the wrong way, despite the relative steadiness of public opinion here hitherto. The pressure on members of the congress to identify themselves with the Irish-American cause and on the administration to intervene in some way is growing and pressure could emerge to revive the proposal for a boycott of British goods.<sup>26</sup>

The British view about how "Bloody Sunday" was covered in the United States was summarised in the same internal memorandum. It varied from "overtly hostile (chiefly certain papers in New York City) to moderately sympathetic ... [and] while HMG have not been exempted from criticism and there is unease that the army might not have displayed their customary restraint at Londonderry, there is a disposition among editors to recognize that the IRA were by no means blameless." The same analysis noted that newspapers in Boston were surprisingly sympathetic.<sup>27</sup> There was, however, concern at the prospect of Congressional hearings and, in particular, the problem that:

Radio and television coverage has been extensive and producers have been prepared to put almost anyone on their programmes: thus a number of extremists, including Father Daly, have had considerable scope ... Television pictures of violence in Northern Ireland have been received via Satellite and widely used. The combination of violence on film and an unfavourable commentary has had a big impact on public opinion (and has sometimes suggested that the IRA are a respectable organization fighting for civil rights). In general radio and television comment has taken a far more critical line than the newspapers.<sup>28</sup>

The Irish minister for External Affairs, Dr Patrick Hillery, was visiting New York in late January 1972 to address the UN. The timing of this visit was significant with Hillery present in the United States to offer immediate comment on "Bloody Sunday." Pressing the case that international intervention in Northern Ireland could be legitimate, he argued that Northern Ireland was not an internal British affair: "the territory is disputed ... . The British have repeatedly tried to bring it into our territory, with border crossings, incursions across the frontier, shooting across the frontier and the

construction of an internment camp in full view of the Irish Republic as a provocation to Irish opinion,” an accusation about which the British were particularly angry.<sup>29</sup> The British ambassador at Washington, the Earl of Cromer, considered that “a course which the United States Government could most usefully pursue . . . would be to remind Dr Hillery of the duty every Government has of ensuring that law and order prevails within its own country.” One “could also tell Dr Hillery when you see him that your Government is not prepared to condemn HMG on the basis of obviously partisan and contradictory allegations then we should be most grateful.”<sup>30</sup>

Nonetheless, Hillery called on the secretary of state, William Rogers, “to see this as a problem for the U.S. and not just for the Dublin Government.”<sup>31</sup> Anglo-Irish tension was already high after protesters burnt the British Embassy in Dublin to the ground on 2 February and London perceived the Irish response as inadequate. Douglas-Home commented that speeches such as Hillery’s “could do most serious and lasting damage to [the] relationships between our two countries.”<sup>32</sup> Hillery’s comments had come at such an inopportune moment that plans were shelved for Taoiseach Jack Lynch to visit the United States.<sup>33</sup> Further, Hillery’s visit had prompted Rogers to state publicly that the United States was “not in a position to intervene” on Northern Ireland.<sup>34</sup> Rogers added, “I don’t myself see that there is anything that we could do to be useful.”<sup>35</sup>

The Kennedy-Ribicoff inspired hearings took place on 28 and 29 February, heard by the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe. Chaired by Benjamin Rosenthal, a Democrat representative from Queens in New York City, and led by Kennedy, they attracted prominent politicians such as Congressional representatives Leo Ryan, Herman Badillo, and Bella Abzug. Roughly 300 people attended, including politicians and diplomats who had travelled from Ireland, emphasising the importance of the American position on Northern Ireland to Lynch’s government.<sup>36</sup> Concerned at the prospect of Congress supporting the idea of UN intervention, the FCO ordered reports on the hearings.<sup>37</sup> Reviewing the record produced a palpable sense of relief that Kennedy’s call for intervention had “attracted a good deal of adverse editorial comment and was highly unpopular with the press and general public opinion.”<sup>38</sup>

In a note added to the briefings file ahead of the hearings, Rogers placed emphasis on one form that American intervention in Northern Ireland could take:

[I]f I were a private citizen, I would be asking leading members of the Irish-American community for the funds to pay for a comprehensive survey of industrial investment prospects in the most depressed areas of Northern Ireland. When I had the results in hand, I would then go to American firms which are already planning to make investments in the European Community area. I would point out that Britain and Ireland are both expected to enter the Community soon, and I



would do my best to persuade them to include Northern Ireland's economically depressed areas among the sites for their planned future investment. I would do this in the knowledge that no one could take exception to this effort, and in the confident expectation that this might be one of the most important contributions that Americans could possibly make to the long-term welfare of the people of the North.<sup>39</sup>

The hearings themselves were highlighted by Kennedy's address where he declared "Bloody Sunday" to have been an act of "terrible death and destruction," a product of "Britain's inability to deal fairly and justly with the people of Ireland." He continued: "a new chapter of violence and terror is being written in this history of Ireland . . . written in the blood of a new generation of Irish men and woman and children." He suggested that an American naval communications station near Londonderry might provide a rationale for some form of international intervention. Also criticising the "repressive policy of internment . . . the soaring daily toll of bloodshed, bullets, and bombing in Ulster is a continuing awful reminder of how wrong that policy was," he claimed, "internment has brought British justice to her knees."<sup>40</sup> Republican representative Peter Frelinghuysen of New Jersey rebuked Kennedy: "what you are proposing is nothing less than the dismemberment of our closest ally . . . you are reaching for an instant panacea for a problem that has been going on for centuries."<sup>41</sup> The British, for their part, described Kennedy's speech as "demagogic."<sup>42</sup>

Michigan Representative James O'Hara followed Kennedy; he also referred to internment without trial, arguing, "these internments are barbarous acts, reminiscent of the worst features of totalitarianism, and totally at odds with the posture of a country that professes to be part of the Free World." O'Hara described Ireland as being "brutally colonized by the systematic and deliberate discrimination in housing, employment, political representation and educational opportunities . . . . The government of Northern Ireland has been either unwilling or unable to resolve the problem in peaceful fashion," considering the Northern Irish parliament to be "simply an instrument of colonial suppression."<sup>43</sup> New York Congressman Jonathan Bingham said that "even before Bloody Sunday in Derry, it was clear that British policies in Northern Ireland—policies based on official discrimination, internment and attempted repression by armed force—were doomed to fail, indeed were only making matters worse." He continued to compare "Bloody Sunday" to the 1961 Sharpeville killing of 67 protesters in South Africa and the Algerian civil war, contending, "the British must recognize that it is their policies which lead to such acts."<sup>44</sup>

On the second day of hearings, Martin Hillenbrand, the assistant secretary of state for European Affairs, spoke on behalf of the Nixon Administration: "we cannot go off promiscuously condemning governments and their policies unless we have solutions to offer that realistically can relieve the



situation.”<sup>45</sup> He continued, “the unification of Ireland can be a solution to the Irish crisis if the people to be unified agree that it is the solution. At present, they do not agree”; and the process of conciliation and compromise “could also be retarded by sweeping declarations by outsiders as to how the peoples concerned should arrange their destinies, for sweeping declarations tend to sharpen old divisions instead of blurring them.”<sup>46</sup> Whilst Frelinghuysen again argued that “Britain is being made the whipping boy here and we’re not getting their side of the story,” the British reacted favourably to Hillenbrand’s comments.<sup>47</sup>

In assessing the sub-committee hearings, the British were relatively satisfied with their conclusions. One analysis suggested that many of those present spoke primarily in the interests of self-promotion, suggesting that Ryan, Badillo, and Abzug “understood even less about the situation in Ireland than anybody else who had testified and that they were making statements for their own political purposes in total ignorance of the facts.”<sup>48</sup> The lack of publicity given to either Bingham or O’Hara merited the comment, “the latter went on so long as to bore the few members of the sub-committee present.”<sup>49</sup>

Predictably, Kennedy’s statements received more in-depth scrutiny. But the British were encouraged by the fact that “His suggestion that the US should intervene in some way in Ireland attracted a good deal of adverse editorial comment and was highly unpopular with the press and general public opinion (except in some Irish-American strongholds in Boston, New York and other small pockets elsewhere in the United States).”<sup>50</sup> In a comment to *The New York Times*, Heath noted,

there is much misunderstanding of the situation there [Northern Ireland] even in some of the highest quarters in the United States, though not I hasten to add, the President. It seems not to be understood that the great majority of people in Northern Ireland are Protestants, that Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom and that the majority wish to stay in the United Kingdom.<sup>51</sup>

To what extent this misunderstanding extended to the State Department was unclear but, at the time, it advised against travel to Northern Ireland “except for strong and urgent reasons.” With around 1,500 American citizens in Northern Ireland at the time, the State Department also noted, “with the indiscriminate nature of the violence in the last few months there is no way that travellers’ safety can be assured, and with our small staff (presently two officers) at Belfast we cannot offer protection to American citizens.”<sup>52</sup>

The presence of Irish attendees at the hearings caused some unrest within Ireland, with the government there angry at having been “placed in embarrassing political position by published statements made by Irish political figures returning from U.S. Congressional hearings.” Hillery, in particular, was aggrieved that “it is being assumed [in Ireland] that I asked for nothing

whatever with the implication that if I had asked for something short of intervention the US would have given it.”<sup>53</sup> He had, however asked that the Americans “advise” the British to change their policy towards Northern Ireland, an approach resisted by Rogers.<sup>54</sup> This request prompted some backtracking on the part of the Irish government, with the Irish ambassador at Washington, William Warnock, emphasising to Hillenbrand that Dublin “had made no attempt [to] influence [the] course of recent hearings and he had no intention of ‘lobbying’ in US for GOI [Government of Ireland] point of view.”<sup>55</sup> The State Department seemed keen to drop the issue quickly, suggesting that any misunderstandings were on a semantic basis.<sup>56</sup>

Soon after the sub-committee hearings, Kennedy wrote to Nixon in an attempt to engage him on the issue of Northern Ireland: the hearings “focused new attention on the inexorable tragedy now unfolding in that land, and have brought home to people in this country a new awareness of the horror of the violence taking place.” He continued to encourage the Administration to do more than simply adopt “a passive official role that publicly declines to use our good offices unless the Irish and British Governments actually request us to do so.” Kennedy cited the precedent of Walter Page, the American ambassador at London during the First World War, asked by President Woodrow Wilson to request that the British prime minister, David Lloyd George, to take steps to settle the Irish question.<sup>57</sup>

In response, a Nixon lobbyist, William Timmons, contacted Kennedy to explain exchanges Nixon had with British leaders. Most notably, at a meeting with Heath in Bermuda in December 1971, the president “told Mr. Heath of the concern of the American people over this tragic situation and assured [the] Prime Minister of our support for efforts to put Northern Ireland on the road to peace with justice.”<sup>58</sup> Nonetheless, the delicate nature of the issue for all concerned was evident. The White House chief of staff, General Alexander Haig, informed Timmons that any presidential reply to Kennedy’s letter should not include quotes from or refer to statements made by Hillery or Lynch. He stressed, “This is a very sensitive issue with the Irish leaders.”<sup>59</sup>

Whilst Kennedy’s comments were perhaps unwelcome from the perspective of the British and American governments, his increasingly prominent position on Northern Ireland brought him into contact with leading Irish nationalist figures, most notably John Hume, a founding member of the Social Democratic and Labour Party [SDLP]. Observing these events from his post in Dublin, where he had returned after serving as consul general in Boston, Sean Donlon noted with interest the evolution of Kennedy from the point of his 1972 meeting with Hume:

Kennedy asked the Irish Embassy in Washington to set up a meeting for him with John Hume the next time he, Kennedy, was in Europe. The following March, that

would be March '72, Kennedy was going to a NATO gathering in Bonn, so we arranged for John Hume to travel to Bonn and to meet Ted Kennedy. That was, in my view, the crucial meeting which brought Kennedy on to what I would call an informed interest in Ireland. From then on Carey Parker kept in touch with people, Kennedy was kept briefed. If you look at statements after March of '73 you would find Kennedy very close to what I would call the Dublin hymn sheet, or the John Hume hymn sheet, whereas the statements made before March '73 were pretty emotive and not particularly constructive.<sup>60</sup>

Kennedy publicly praised Heath for introducing direct rule from London in the aftermath of “Bloody Sunday,” but would later emphasise that:

My understanding of the situation in Northern Ireland really began to evolve after I met John Hume, a brilliant young member of Parliament from Northern Ireland. We had met briefly in 1972, after I cosponsored a resolution with Abe Ribicoff calling for the withdrawal of the British troops from Northern Ireland and establishing a united Ireland. But it was really in late 1972 that John began the great education of Edward Kennedy about Northern Ireland and established the seeds that grew into a wonderful relationship.<sup>61</sup>

The two men first met in Bonn, the capital of West Germany, and Hume's ability to express his case convincingly for constitutional reform as the most effective manner of resolving the conflict was highly influential on Kennedy's attitude to Irish issues from then on. Hume helped convince Kennedy that rather than simply exposing British intransigence on Irish unity, his previous stances on Northern Ireland had served to legitimise those who supported the nationalist cause through violence. As *The Boston Globe* noted, “having lost two brothers to assassination, Kennedy became outspoken against IRA violence, even as he criticized British policies he said drove young Catholics to join the IRA.”<sup>62</sup> This was the crux of the SDLP's international programme: attempting to feed on those who opposed British policy in Northern Ireland and harness it through a more constitutional, politicised protest agenda.

British representatives in the United States had some experience in dealing with the Anglophobic propaganda that came with the Congressional hearings on Northern Ireland. When the newly elected Mid-Ulster MP and civil rights activist, Bernadette Devlin, had visited the United States in 1969, Ulster unionists immediately planned a trip to the United States with a view to “counter the Catholic propaganda campaign.”<sup>63</sup> W. Stratton Mills, Unionist MP for Belfast North, went with a view to providing a Unionist perspective to the American audience or, in the words of the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], “to discredit” Devlin; upon arrival in New York, Mills labelled Devlin as “Castro in a miniskirt.”<sup>64</sup> She commented, “they've probably been sitting around for six weeks trying to think up a cute phrase about me, and that must be it.”<sup>65</sup> Around the same time, Wayne Fisher, the consul general in Ireland's London Embassy, wrote to Bryce Harlow, a counsellor to Nixon, describing her as a “self-styled Joan of Arc.” He questioned how

effective the Mills visit would be in comparison, but emphasised that Devlin's "remarks should be taken with a grain of salt, Bryce. There are real grievances, but she has some fuzzy approaches to them."<sup>66</sup>

Mills appeared on a televised debate with Devlin, the idea being that public debates might offer British representatives an opportunity to express their case in a satisfactory manner: "on a general point of tactics I found that I could normally almost make my own terms if I was to go on TV or engage in debate."<sup>67</sup> The British Embassy at Dublin, relocated temporarily, noted that "we are very mindful of the US angle in publicity, but it would be wrong to suggest that there are any ploys which are both readily available and of obvious relevance to the US political scene."<sup>68</sup> The Embassy at Washington DC, meanwhile, was concerned at the prospect of losing the propaganda battle:

Even before "Bloody Sunday" the steady drip of Irish American propaganda was beginning to have some effect . . . . The danger is growing that the Democratic platform will include a plank on Ireland, that the Republican Administration will come under almost irresistible pressure to make some gesture to please the Irish Americans . . . . The time has come to step up the supply of interviews, and probably also to increase the number of appearances on the US media of British and Northern Ireland ministers.<sup>69</sup>

Another idea involved the creation of a British lobby that could write to newspapers, telephone radio and television shows, and influence their supporters when most useful to the British cause:

This exercise, which can be quite informal, will have to be conducted with great discretion . . . . It would be appropriate to give such trustees unclassified material . . . particular care should be exercised over the lobbying of Congressmen . . . . But if this were in any way linked with us it could be interpreted as an interference in US domestic affairs so we should be careful to put nothing in writing to members of the public about this.<sup>70</sup>

In 1975, New York Democratic Congressman Lester Wolff re-introduced the idea of Congressional hearings.<sup>71</sup> In October, he held "unofficial pre-hearings" with the "ostensible purpose . . . to gather evidence for formal hearings to be held some time later," though these never materialised. The British noted that the pre-hearings, chaired by six New York congressmen, "gave plenty of opportunity for pro-Republican activists such as Fr Sean McManus of the Irish National Caucus and Mr McLoughlin of the Joint Action Committee for Irish Political Prisoners to sound off about 'institutionalised violence', the synonymy of Long Kesh with Dachau, the "depraved behaviour" of the Army and the like." The "pre-hearings" were criticised by both British and Irish governments, though Wolff succeeded in having their transcript printed in the record of the House of Representatives on 4 December 1975.<sup>72</sup>

Other issues pertinent to Northern Ireland were the subject of Congressional hearings in early 1976 when the Senate Sub-Committee on Internal Security held hearings on the issue of IRA fundraising, with the FCO concerned as to the quality of the hearings, particularly the opportunity to undermine groups such as Irish Northern Aid on a Congressional level.<sup>73</sup> During his campaign for election to a New York Senate seat, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, the former United States UN ambassador, also raised the prospect of hearings as something he would like to occur. For the British:

Pressure for hearings appears to be based partly on electoral self-interest—Wolff has many Irish-Americans in his constituency—and partly, in spite of our best efforts to disabuse them of the idea, on an unshakeable belief that human rights continue to be violated in Northern Ireland. If the hearings were to take place, we could therefore expect our critics to use them to rake over the ashes of problems which we have long since done everything we can to resolve. A St Patrick's Day debate, promoted by Congressman Wolff, gave a foretaste of the malicious and misinformed speeches which we can expect from new Congressional hearings.<sup>74</sup>

Congressman Mario Biaggi, a Democrat from New York, cited alleged human rights violations by the British army, though British intelligence suggested that the House "International Relations Committee remains determined not to become involved in Northern Ireland, regarding this as an internal matter for the UK, and has resisted pressure from the Irish National Caucus to hold hearings." It was, however, cautious about the possibility of this continuing as long as concern existed within the United States over human rights violations in Northern Ireland.<sup>75</sup>

Early 1975 saw re-organisation of the House Foreign Affairs Committee sub-committees, with the geographical divisions replaced by those created on a functional basis. The British noted that "Congressman Lester Wolff (D. New York) has succeeded in getting the chairmanship of the Sub-committee on Future Research and he will probably use it as a vehicle for hearings on Northern Ireland." They also noted that the International Operations, International Political and Military Affairs and the Security and Scientific Affairs Sub-committee, chaired by Clement Zablocki, was also a possible source of resistance over British policy towards Northern Ireland.<sup>76</sup> The re-organisation did bring some pressure for hearings on Northern Ireland, although the Speaker of the House, Thomas P. O'Neill, ruled against hearings in May 1978.<sup>77</sup> In June, O'Neill spoke to Lynch, then leader of Fianna Fail in the Irish opposition, to say that he was privately opposed to hearings. He did warn that the continued lack of a political initiative in Northern Ireland would increase the likelihood of Congressional hearings taking place after the mid-term elections in November 1978, although O'Neill's warning might have devolved from a desire to see political initiatives take place in Northern Ireland rather than the likelihood of hearings actually occurring.<sup>78</sup> The British were acutely aware that:

Speaker O'Neill's attitude is crucial. Both he and Zablocki, present Chairman of the House International Relations Committee, have hitherto been firmly opposed to hearings on Northern Ireland. Mr O'Neill confirmed his opposition to the idea at a meeting with Mr Lynch in Washington on 29 May. He is nevertheless very sensitive to increasing political pressure from the INC in his own constituency as well from other Members subject to similar pressures, and it may be very difficult for him to continue his resistance if, say, there were no "political initiative" after an Autumn general election. In this case our Embassy in Washington consider there would be a real prospect of congressional hearings taking place around next February.<sup>79</sup>

A new figure in the Congress emerged at this time in the form of New York Congressman Stephen Solarz, who joined the International Relations Committee upon his election to New York's 13<sup>th</sup> district in 1974. In July 1978, he visited the Northern Ireland Office [NIO] in London, explaining that "having examined a number of hopeless situations, he thought it time he familiarised himself with the hopeless situation in Northern Ireland."<sup>80</sup> In addition to visiting Ireland, Solarz was in Britain to attend the Ditchley Conference on Southern Africa, planning also to meet with Gerry Fitt, the SDLP leader, Jim Molyneux, a senior Unionist leader, and Airey Neave, the British Conservative Party shadow Northern Ireland secretary. The NIO considered that:

Congressman Solarz's goodwill could be particularly useful to us in the context of Congressional hearings on Northern Ireland, since he is both an important member of the House International Relations Committee and a member of its Sub-Committee on Europe, the most likely forum for Congressional hearings if they ever take place. He is reported to have no preconceptions about Irish issues and to respond best to full and frank discussion of problems. The Secretary of State may be interested that the Congressman recently had a lengthy interview with Fidel Castro<sup>81</sup>

Reflecting on the meeting in a memorandum for the British Embassy in Washington, the NIO considered that Solarz "lived up to his advance billing as a shrewd and very well prepared observer of the scene. The striking thing was that not only had he read up the background to the Northern Ireland situation, he also had obviously found time to think through the positions adopted by the various parties and HMG and so was able to ask penetrating and highly relevant questions." It also emphasised that Solarz had considered the possibility of direct American governmental investment in Northern Ireland.<sup>82</sup>

In early 1979, Wolff told Irish Northern Aid supporters that he "would win control of the 'human rights' sub-committee," promising hearings on Northern Ireland shortly thereafter.<sup>83</sup> The NIO therefore considered that human rights in Northern Ireland might be the focus of those hearings. Ultimately, Wolff lost his seat in the 1980 House elections. The threat of



Congressional hearings was a card that O'Neill continued to play in his dealings with the British into 1979. During a meeting with O'Neill's counsel, Kirk O'Donnell, the new British ambassador, Peter Jay, was advised that the speaker was increasingly troubled by "the lack of any apparent action on the amnesty report since the appointment of the Bennett enquiry: and ... the Maze protest."<sup>84</sup> The British response failed to appease him:

We reiterated that the Bennett Enquiry was independent, that it was proceeding with its task quickly, and that its report would be published. He understood our case, but said this was no help in dealing with political realities in the House ... . O'Donnell also appreciated that the unpleasant conditions in the Maze were self-inflicted, and that the IRA protest attracted little sympathy in Britain or Ireland. But it was becoming an emotive issue here. John Hume had told O'Neill that steps could be taken to defuse the Maze protest, without compromising on the question of political status. If O'Neill went to Belfast, he would come under strong pressure to seek to visit the Maze.<sup>85</sup>

Jay added, "O'Donnell confirmed that Congressional Hearings would become inevitable without some movement on these questions."<sup>86</sup> Jay also noted that his Irish counterpart, Sean Donlon, had expressed concern about O'Neill's ability to prevent hearings on developments at the Maze Prison; "Donlan clearly regarded this as bad news for the Irish Government as well as for ourselves," though he added that the Irish government would have nothing to do with them.<sup>87</sup> This had been the consistent position of the Irish for some time.<sup>88</sup>

In summer 1979, the threat of Congressional hearings once again emerged after it emerged that to the Royal Ulster Constabulary [RUC] was buying American manufactured guns in bulk. The RUC had been under increased scrutiny after the publication of the Bennett Report, and stories in the *New York Daily News* and *Boston Globe* in May drew O'Neill's attention to an upcoming shipment of 3,000 revolvers and 500 rifles from Sturm Ruger of Connecticut to Viking Arms Limited, the RUC arms supply intermediary. O'Neill released a statement the same day "recommending that the Department not authorize such shipments in the future."<sup>89</sup> A blockade duly came into effect, despite increased IRA activity over the summer months, notably on 27 August when they killed Lord Louis Mountbatten and 18 British soldiers in two separate attacks. The impression of the British Embassy in Washington was that those seeking hearings would "judge it prudent to let time for the shock of the Mountbatten murder to subside," adding "no-one expected the pressure for hearings to go away." Once again, the British judged O'Neill's views to be of paramount importance and, as reported a few months previously, he remained opposed to the idea of hearings.<sup>90</sup>

Meanwhile, Kennedy's aide, Parker, also raised the issue of the RUC gun embargo, telling the British that if the suspension was lifted then hearings



became inevitable.<sup>91</sup> Other members of Congress echoed his views, and the British Embassy advised the FCO,

Speaker O'Neill would, of course, be incensed; and although his anger would probably be directed more at what he would regard as the incompetence and duplicity of the State Department than at us, he would be bound to take a very hard public position on the guns and would probably feel less willing and less able to be helpful on other matters such as Congressional hearings on Northern Ireland. Congressman Biaggi and the INC would be handed a ready-made propaganda theme which they could be counted on to exploit to the full; and NORAIID and the gunrunners could expect an upsurge in contributions.<sup>92</sup>

Nicholas Henderson, installed as ambassador to the United States by the new British Conservative prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, after her 1979 General Election triumph, wrote to Humphrey Atkins, the secretary of state for Northern Ireland, advising him that:

If the [RUC gun embargo] came to a vote in the House it is an open question which way it would go. What is not in question is that there would be a row, in which we would risk alienating O'Neill and other responsible Irish American political leaders, whose continued opposition to Irish American support for the PIRA and their front organisations and to Congressional hearings on Northern Ireland is something we should not lightly put at risk; and that in propaganda terms, the major beneficiaries would most likely be the PIRA and their American surrogates.<sup>93</sup>

The election of Ronald Reagan to the White House in November 1980 brought one of Thatcher's closest allies to power in Washington. The British were hopeful that Reagan would help resolve the issue of the RUC gun embargo but quickly dropped the matter when discovering that the Police Authority of Northern Ireland had continued to purchase American-manufactured handguns from their arms dealer despite the blockade.<sup>94</sup> The British considered it wise to let the issue drop with the possibility of aggravating O'Neill, the most vocal opponent of selling weapons to the RUC, too risky. Weeks after Reagan took office, O'Neill along with Kennedy and other prominent Irish-American politicians established the Congressional Friends of Ireland.<sup>95</sup> Reagan endorsed the group, although it continued to exert pressure on him in an attempt to influence Thatcher on Northern Irish matters.<sup>96</sup>

Little doubt exists, therefore, that throughout the 1970s, as the United States struggled to adopt a policy towards the rising Northern Ireland conflict that would satisfy their close diplomatic ties with the Britain and Irish republic, as well as the large and increasingly vocal Irish-American population, the persistence of the threat of Congressional hearings posed problems for all three governments. The prominent platform afforded to the one set of hearings that did take place, those in February 1972, was in part a product of the events taking place in Northern Ireland at that time and, in another, a

lack of a sophisticated understanding of the Northern Ireland conflict on the part of American politicians. A more effective British control of Northern Irish security combined with a revised military strategy on the part of the IRA saw the pace of the conflict slowed somewhat over the remainder of the decade, although never losing its vicious edge. American political figures reacted accordingly, with a minority vocal in their calls for intervention developing their stance on the issue. This process reduced calls for Congressional hearings on Northern Ireland, although O'Neill continued to raise their prospect as a threat to the British government in the event of a lack of political progress. Despite Kennedy's intervention, the fact that subsequent hearings never took place despite a political logjam that lasted even past the signing of the 1985 Anglo-Irish Agreement suggests that these were little more than threats; and O'Neill, much like the British and Irish governments, had no real interest in a further series of Congressional hearings on Northern Ireland taking place.

## Notes

1. A fourteenth victim, John Johnston, died four months later from his injuries.
2. Adrian Guelke "The United States, Irish Americans and the Northern Ireland Peace Process," *International Affairs*, 72/3 (1996), 521–36; John Dumbrell "The United States and the Northern Irish Conflict 1969–94: From Indifference to Intervention," *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 6 (1995), 107–25; idem., "Was There a Clinton Doctrine? President Clinton's foreign policy reconsidered," *Diplomacy and Statecraft*, 13/2 (2002), 43–56; Paul Arthur "Diasporan Intervention in International Affairs: Irish America as a Case Study," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, ½(1991), 143–62; Richard English, *Armed Struggle: A History of the IRA* (London, 2003), 117; Reginald Byron, *Irish America* (Oxford, 1999), 257–58; Andrew Wilson, *Irish America and the Ulster Conflict 1968–1995* (Belfast, 1995); Lawrence McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America* (Washington, 1976); Michael Doorley, *Irish-American Diaspora Nationalism: The Friends of Irish Freedom* (Dublin, 2005). "Statement on International Peace Keeping Forces in Northern Ireland, in North America and the Northern Ireland Problem" FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office Archives, The National Archives, Kew] 82/487.
3. Charter of the United Nations: Chapter I: Purposes and Principles, <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>.
4. Macomber to Morgan, 19 March 1969, RG [Department of State, Central Foreign Policy Files 1967–1969, Political and Defense, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, MD] 59 POL 29 IRAQ to POL 15 IRE Box 2222.
5. *New York Times* (2 December 1971). Irish Northern Aid formed in late 1969 at the behest of leading IRA members and went on to raise money and purchase weapons for the IRA; see Wilson, *Irish America*, 42–43.
6. "Terror in Northern Ireland," American Broadcasting Company (20 December 1971); "Suffer the Little Children," National Broadcasting Company (11 January 1972).
7. British Embassy [Washington, DC] letter in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/100.

8. *Ibid.*
9. Memorandum, "Analysis of Pending Legislation Dealing with the Situation in Northern Ireland," 14 February 1972, in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/101.
10. *Time* (1 November 1971); *Boston Globe* (28 August 2009) on comparing Bloody Sunday to My Lai. Cf. *Wilson Irish America*, 64.
11. *Time* (1 November 1971).
12. *Christian Science Monitor* (28 August 2009).
13. Cape [British Embassy, Washington, DC] memorandum to Haugh [private secretary to Lord Widgery], 18 January 1973, in "Attitude of Citizens of USA Towards Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/238.
14. English, *Armed Struggle*, 122–24; *Guardian* (28 January 2009); K. Ward, "Ulster Terrorism: The US Network News Coverage of Northern Ireland, 1968–1979," in Y. Alexander and A. O'Day, eds., *Terrorism in Ireland* (London, 1984), 202–07.
15. *Times* (25 October 1971).
16. *Report of the enquiry into allegations against the security forces of physical brutality in Northern Ireland arising out of events on the 9th August, 1971* (London, 1971).
17. Amembassy [Dublin] telegram to Secretary of State, "GOI Probably to take Torture Allegations to Strasbourg," 19 November 1971, RG 59 Numerical Files, 1970–73 Political and Defense POL 7 IRE – POL 23 IRE Box 2383.
18. Amembassy [Dublin] telegram to Secretary of State, "The New Goal: Irish Unity," 30 November 1971, *Ibid.*
19. Senate Resolution 221: "To extend the good offices of the US in resolving the Northern Ireland crisis," 17 December 1971; Nixon [Nixon Presidential Library and Museum, Yorba Linda, CA] White House Central Files, Subject Files, Countries, CO160 United Kingdom.
20. *Irish Times* (20 December 1971).
21. Amembassy [Dublin] telegram to Secretary of State, "Haughey's report on talks with Senator Kennedy," 20 December 1971, RG 59 Subject Numerical Files, 1970–73 Political and Defense POL7 IRE – POL23 IRE Box 2383.
22. Kissinger to Murphy, 29 September 1969, Nixon White House Central Files, Subject Files, Countries, CO160 United Kingdom.
23. Humphrey to Foley, 20 December 1971, in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America Towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/100.
24. Douglas-Home memorandum to the American ambassador, 4 February 1972, in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/100. For the Widgery Report, highly controversial for failing to criticise the troops who killed protesters on Bloody Sunday, see <http://www.cain.ulst.ac.uk/hmso/widgery.htm>.
25. Internal memorandum, 31 January 1972, in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America Towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/100.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. Policy Department internal memorandum, 14 February 1972, in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland," FCO 87/101.
29. "Dr Hillery Press Conference response," 3 February 1972, in "Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern

Ireland,” FCO 87/100. The Irish Constitution of 1937 staked Ireland’s claim to all 32 counties of the island, including the six that make up Northern Ireland. The clauses that made this claim were removed after the Good Friday Agreement of 1998; see Constitution of Ireland, Irish Statute Book: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/en/constitution/>.

30. “Speaking note,” 3 February 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/101.
31. Amembassy [Dublin] telegram to Secretary of State, 2 February 1972, RG 59 Subject Numerical Files, 1970–73 Political and Defense POL7 IRE – POL23 IRE Box 2383.
32. Douglas-Home, “British Embassy Dublin,” House of Commons Debates, *Hansard* (3 February 1972), Volume 830, cc 692–6: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1972/feb/03/british-embassy-dublin>.
33. Colson [White House special counsel] memorandum for Strachan [aide, White House chief of staff], 18 February 1972, Nixon Presidential Materials, National Security Council Files, Country Files, Europe, Box 694.
34. *New York Times* (4 February 1972).
35. Internal memorandum, 6 February 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/101.
36. *New York Times* (29 February 1972).
37. Memorandum “Analysis of Pending Legislation Dealing with the Situation in Northern Ireland,” 4 February 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/101.
38. Unclassified memorandum, 17 March 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/102. Also see *New York Times* (3 February 1972); *Washington Post* (4 February 1972).
39. *Ibid.*
40. “Hearings on Northern Ireland, Testimony of Senator Edward Kennedy, House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs, Sub-committee on Europe,” 28 February 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America Towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/102. Northern Ireland introduced internment without trial on 9 August 1971 in an attempt to limit Irish republican paramilitary activity. It was roundly criticised for its ineffectiveness thanks largely to an out-of-date arrest list. Later, allegations about brutal treatment of internees emerged. See M.J. McCleery, *Operation Demetrius and its Aftermath: A New History of the use of Internment without Trial in Northern Ireland 1971–75* (Manchester, 2015).
41. *New York Times* (29 February 1972).
42. “Telegram on Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland,” 1 March 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/102.
43. “Testimony of Representative James G. O’Hara before the Sub-committee on Europe, House Committee on Foreign Affairs on H Res. 745 – Calling for Peace in Northern Ireland,” nd, *Ibid.*
44. “Remarks of Congressman Jonathan B. Bingham before the Sub-committee on Europe, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington D.C.,” 29 February 1972, *Ibid.*
45. *New York Times* (1 March 1972).
46. “Statement on the Northern Ireland Situation by Martin J. Hillenbrand, Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs,” 29 February 1972, in “Attitude of

- Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/102.
47. Internal memorandum, 3 March 1972, Ibid.; *New York Times* (1 March 1972).
  48. “Memo on Sub-Committee Hearings,” 6 March 1972, in “Attitude of Government and citizens of the United States of America towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/102.
  49. “Telegram on Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland,” 2 March 1972, Ibid.
  50. “Unclassified Memo,” 17 March 1972, Ibid.
  51. *New York Times* (6 March 1972).
  52. “Hearings Working File Feb 1972, Questions and Answers,” RG 59 Bureau of European Affairs, Office of Northern European Affairs, Records Relating to Ireland, 1963–1975, Aviation Negotiations to FT-13 Foreign Trade: Duties, Tariffs, Surcharges 1969, Box 3.
  53. Amembassy [Dublin] telegram to Secretary of State, 6 March 1972, RG 59 Subject Numerical Files, 1970–73 Political and Defense POL7 IRE – POL23 IRE Box 2383.
  54. Department of State telegram 7 March 1972, Ibid.
  55. Department of State telegram, 8 March 1972, Ibid.
  56. Department of State telegram, 9 March 1972 “Hillery-Rogers Feb 3 meeting and Hillenbrand’s testimony,” both Ibid.
  57. Kennedy to Nixon, 14 March 1972, Nixon White House Central Files, Subject Files, Countries, CO160 United Kingdom. Other representatives pressuring Nixon to act included Congressman Michael Harrington from Massachusetts, who sat on the House Armed Services Committee; see Harrington to Nixon, 15 March 1972, Ibid. In 1918, the German Spring Offensive prompted the British to introduce conscription to Ireland.
  58. Timmons to Kennedy, 20 March 1972, Nixon White House Central Files, Subject Files, Countries, CO160 United Kingdom.
  59. Haig memorandum for Timmons, 20 March 1972, Ibid.
  60. Sean Donlon, interview with author, 24 February 2012. Kennedy would call for the release of the so-called “Fort Worth Five” accused of gunrunning for the IRA in August 1972.
  61. *New York Times* (25 March 1972); Edward Kennedy, *True Compass* (NY, 2009), 355.
  62. *Boston Globe* (28 August 2009).
  63. *Washington Post* (27 August 1969).
  64. Hoover [director, FBI] memorandum, 5 January 1970, Durkan [Frank Durkan Papers, Archives of Irish America, Tamiment Library, New York University, New York] Box 8; also *New York Times* (30 August 1969). Robin Bailie, the Northern Irish MP for Newtonabbey, accompanied Mills on the trip.
  65. *Washington Post* (31 August 1969).
  66. Fisher to Harlow, 29 August 1969, Nixon White House Central Files, Subject Files, Countries, CO160 United Kingdom.
  67. Policy Department internal memorandum, nd, “Attitude of Government and Citizens of the United States of America Towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/101.
  68. “Note on a Letter from British Embassy Dublin to Ireland Department FCO,” nd, “Attitude of Government and Citizens of the United States of America Towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/100.
  69. British Embassy [Washington] to FCO, 19 February 1972, “Attitude of Government and Citizens of the United States of America Towards Political Situation in Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/102.
  70. British Embassy [Washington] to all Consulate-Generals, 8 March 1972, Ibid.

71. Memo "Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," nd, FCO 87/575 IRA Fundraising in the USA.
72. Memorandum, "Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," 4 May 1977; "Views of Senator Edward Kennedy etc., proposed USA fact finding mission, correspondence in Possible United States of America involvement," NI [Northern Ireland Office Archives, The National Archives, Kew] CJ 4/1842.
73. Hodge [FCO Republic of Ireland Department] to Davidson [British Embassy, Washington, DC], 5 March 1976, FCO 87/577, IRA Fundraising in the USA.
74. Memorandum, "Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland" 4/5/1977, "Views of Senator Edward Kennedy etc, proposed USA fact finding mission, correspondence in Possible United States of America involvement," NI CJ 4/1842.
75. Ibid. Biaggi remained consistent in his position on Northern Ireland throughout his Congressional career thanks to his role in the formation of the Ad-Hoc Congressional Sub-committee on Northern Ireland, which maintains a hostile position towards British rule in Ireland. He resigned his seat in Congress shortly before jailed on corruption charges in 1988. Also significant from this period was President Jimmy Carter's 30 August 1977 statement supporting a peaceful resolution to the situation in Northern Ireland. See "Statement by President Carter 30 August 1977, The US Ban on the sale of arms for the Royal Ulster Constabulary," FCO 87/1219.
76. Howarth letter, 11 February 1975, "The United States Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," FCO 87/778.
77. Davidson to McCrory [FCO], 16 May 1978, Ibid.
78. Jay [British ambassador, Washington, DC] to Cubbon [Northern Ireland Office] 6 June 1978, Ibid.
79. Ibid.
80. Solarz was the first American politician to visit North Korea after the end of the Korean War, meeting with Kim Il-Sung in July 1980; see *New York Times* (19 July 1980). "Note of a meeting with Congressman Stephen Solarz at NIO Great George Street on Wednesday 5 July 1978," "The United States Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," FCO 87/778. He was considered a moderate voice on Northern Ireland, though his personal papers do not suggest a significant interest in the topic when compared to his role in American relations with the Philippines or India. He returned to New York in 1978 to stand for re-election in the 1978 House of Representatives elections, which he won with 81 percent of the vote.
81. "Congressman Stephen Solarz," 3 July 1978, "The United States Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," FCO 87/778.
82. Neilson to Davidson, 10 July 1978, Ibid.
83. Davidson to Jarrold [FCO], 22 January 1979, "US Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," FCO 87/914.
84. Jay telegram to FCO, 15 December 1978, "The United States Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," FCO 87/779. The Bennett enquiry's work is the *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Police Interrogation Procedures in Northern Ireland* (London, 1979) published in March 1979 after a highly critical Amnesty International report. It did not assess allegations of assault but did attempt to identify measures that would ensure conducting interrogations appropriately. See also A. Mulachy, *Policing Northern Ireland: Conflict, legitimacy and reform* (Cullompton, 2006), 60–62.
85. Jay telegram to FCO 15 December 1978, "The United States Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland," FCO 87/779.
86. Ibid.
87. Ibid.



88. Davidson to Free-Gore [FCO], 6 October 1978 Ibid.
89. “Statement by Speaker Thomas P. O’Neill, Jr on State Department Authorization of Shipment of US Manufactured Arms to Northern Ireland Police,” 31 May 1979, O’Neill [Thomas P. O’Neill Papers, John J. Burns Library, Boston College, Boston, MA] Congressional Archives, Series II: Staff Files, Subseries A: Kirk O’Donnell Files, Sub-subseries 24/11 Ireland–US Gun Sales to RUC, 1979–1980. Also see A. Sanders, “The role of Northern Ireland in modern Anglo–American relations: The US Department of State and the Royal Ulster Constabulary, 1979,” *Journal of Transatlantic Studies*, 12/2 (2014), 163–81.
90. Washington telegram to FCO, 21 September 1979, and “Letter from DC Thomas,” 27 June 1979, “US Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland,” FCO 87/914.
91. Ibid.
92. Washington telegram to FCO, 24 August 1979, “Weapons used by security forces in N. Ireland,” FCO 87/958; Thomas to Newington, 16 June 1980, “The US Ban on the sale of arms to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC),” FCO 87/1048.
93. Henderson to Atkins, 23 January 1981, “The US Ban on the sale of arms for the Royal Ulster Constabulary,” FCO 87/1219.
94. Sanders, “Northern Ireland.”
95. See Wilson, *Irish America*, 180.
96. The Anglo–Irish Agreement of 1985 a notable example of American influence pushing Thatcher on Northern Ireland.

### Notes on contributor

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