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McLoughlin, P., & Meagher, A. (2019). The 1977 “Carter Initiative” on Northern Ireland. *Diplomatic History*, 43(4), 671-698. <https://doi.org/10.1093/dh/dhz023>

Published in:
Diplomatic History

Document Version:
Peer reviewed version

Queen's University Belfast - Research Portal:
[Link to publication record in Queen's University Belfast Research Portal](#)

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The 1977 “Carter Initiative” on Northern Ireland*

P. J. McLoughlin & Alison Meagher

Scholars have extensively documented the vital role of the Clinton administration in the early stages of the Northern Ireland peace process.¹ However, Clinton’s intervention in Northern Ireland was not the first by a U.S. President. That came two decades earlier, with the Carter administration. Carter’s brief foray into Northern Ireland politics was obviously more limited than Clinton’s lengthy engagement, and is also less celebrated. This is understandable given the direct role that Clinton, and more particularly his envoy to Northern Ireland, Senator George Mitchell, played in brokering the 1998 Good Friday Agreement (GFA), which underpins the peaceful settlement that the region still enjoys today. But in some ways Carter’s role can be seen as more significant than, or certainly foundational to, Clinton’s efforts. Carter’s intervention

* We express gratitude to a number of people who provided constructive feedback on and corrections for this article: John Coakley, Paula Douglas, Paul Frazer, Brendan O’Leary, the two anonymous reviewers for *Diplomatic History*, and the editorial team of the journal. Any remaining errors are our own. We also thank Seán Donlon and Michael Lillis for allowing us to interview them for the article.

¹ Some of the best accounts are from well-connected journalists, particularly Conor O’Cleary, *The Greening of the White House: The Inside Story of How America Tried to Bring Peace to Ireland* (Dublin, 1996), and Eamonn Mallie and David McKittrick, *The Fight for Peace: The Secret Story Behind the Irish Peace Process* (London, 1996). Scholarly studies include David Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America: The Politics of Exile, 1798–1998* (Oxford, 2016); James Cooper, *The Politics of Diplomacy: The Politics of Diplomacy U.S. Presidents and the Northern Ireland Conflict, 1967–1998* (Edinburgh, 2017); Adrian Guelke, “The United States, Irish-Americans and the Peace Process,” *International Affairs* 72, no. 3 (1996); Timothy J. Lynch, *Turf War: The Clinton Administration and Northern Ireland* (Aldershot, 2004); Joseph E. Thompson, *American Policy and Northern Ireland: A Saga of Peacebuilding* (London, 2001); and Andrew J. Wilson, *Irish America and the Ulster Conflict, 1968–1995* (Belfast, 1995).

came during the Cold War, which had an indirect effect on Northern Ireland.² Despite significant agitation from Irish America, successive U.S. administrations refused to comment on Northern Ireland, deeming it a purely internal affair – and often a matter of considerable international embarrassment – for the British government, Washington’s key ally in a Cold War context.³

This article explores why the White House changed its attitude and finally issued a formal statement on Northern Ireland in August 1977, the so-called “Carter Initiative.” Even this appellation, used by various commentators on the conflict, might appear overstated.⁴ Carter made only a short and seemingly anodyne speech on the matter: “The United States wholeheartedly supports peaceful means for finding a just solution that involves both parts of the community of Northern Ireland ... as well as the Governments of Great Britain and Ireland ... In the event of such a settlement, the U.S. Government would be prepared to join with others to see how additional job-creating investment could be encouraged, to the benefit of all the people of Northern Ireland.”⁵ Such comments now appear entirely benign, suggesting a basic formula for a solution remarkably similar to that which brought peace to Northern Ireland through the GFA

² See Michael Cox, “Bringing in the ‘International’: The IRA Ceasefire and the End of the Cold War,” *International Affairs* 73, no. 4 (1997).

³ Roger MacGinty, “American Influences on the Northern Ireland Peace Process,” *The Journal of Conflict Studies* 17, no. 2 (1997): 31.

⁴ T. P. Coogan, *The Troubles: Ireland’s Ordeal 1966–1996 and the Search for Peace* (London, 1996), 411; Jack Holland, *The American Connection: U.S. Guns, Money and Influence in Northern Ireland* (Dublin, 1999), 126–27; MacGinty, “American Influences,” 31.

⁵ Jimmy Carter, “Northern Ireland Statement on U.S. Policy”, August 30, 1977, American Presidency Project, accessed August 3, 2017, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=8014>.

two decades later.⁶ Why might declaring support for a solution involving the two communities and both sovereign governments involved in the conflict, and a generous promise of economic aid to help incentivize agreement, be seen as controversial or objectionable? As this article will show, for some parties—not just fringe rejectionists, but key actors like the UK government—Carter’s statement did provoke controversy and objection. By considering the diplomatic intrigues that preceded the Carter Initiative, we explain how the president’s words carried more subtle implications, and much greater political import, than scholars might otherwise read from them.

The article makes use of U.S. and UK archives but also includes Irish government documents, which are somewhat overlooked by other historians in their accounts of the Carter statement. It supplements these documents with interviews of key Dublin officials to give a more rounded explanation of the Carter Initiative, most notably emphasizing the level of cooperation that existed between Irish and Irish-American actors. It thereby shows a transatlantic alliance of constitutional Irish nationalist actors, promoting an agenda far more modest than that traditionally espoused by Irish America, but an agenda which was, for the same reason, harder for its opponents to resist. This, we argue, is key to understanding how Irish nationalism, for the first time ever, was able to breach the so-called “Special Relationship” between Washington and London⁷ and achieve the 1977 Carter statement.

⁶ For an overview of the GFA, see Brendan O’Leary, “The Nature of the British-Irish Agreement,” *New Left Review* 233 (1999).

⁷ For an excellent overview of this subject, see John Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship: Anglo-American Relations from the Cold War to Iraq* (Basingstoke, 2006).

Senator Edward Kennedy, unsurprisingly one of the key Irish-American figures who lobbied for the Carter statement, called it the “most important and constructive initiative ever taken by an American President on the Irish issue.”⁸ Kennedy saw the statement as a political breakthrough – a decisive shift away from the policy of strict non-intervention that the U.S. State Department had previously set in deference to the “Special Relationship” with London. To explain why Kennedy believed that Carter’s words indicated such a shift, this article looks at both the wider political background and the particular developments that led the statement. However, in doing so, the views of the key U.S. government actors involved are given limited attention. For Carter himself, and also the Secretary of State, Cyrus Vance, the initiative was of limited importance in comparison to the many other foreign policy challenges that they faced during their one term of office: problems with the global economy, peace-making efforts in the Middle East and Southern Africa, the Sandinistas’ seizure of power in Nicaragua, the SALT II talks, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the Iran hostage crisis. Alongside such important international developments, it is understandable that Northern Ireland was a low priority, and unsurprising that it merits no specific mention in the memoirs of either Carter or Vance.⁹ Yet the global tumult of the late 1970s makes it even more significant that Carter was prepared to act contrary to the instincts of most State Department officials by issuing a formal statement on Northern Ireland. The initiative mattered little in the broader scheme of U.S. foreign policy, but as Kennedy’s comment suggests, the Irish actors involved felt it held great significance, while their British counterparts viewed it

⁸ Kennedy quoted in “Providing a Leading Voice for Human Rights and Democracy around the Globe”, available at “Senator Edward M. Kennedy, 1932-2009”, http://www.tedkennedy.org/service/item/foreign_policy.html

⁹ Jimmy Carter, *Keeping Faith: Memoirs of a President* (Fayetteville, AR, 1995); Cyrus Vance, *Hard Choices: Critical Years in America's Foreign Policy* (New York, 1983).

with considerable concern. As one contemporary observer suggested: “Compared to other Carter foreign policy initiatives, such as [the] Camp David [Accords], it was on a very small scale. But diplomatic geiger counters in both London and Dublin were measuring a high degree of activity where casual observers could detect none.”¹⁰ We explain both the reasons for London’s opposition, and how Dublin – working with far fewer diplomatic resources, and much less influence than the British Embassy in Washington – was nonetheless able to achieve the Carter statement.

Historians of the Anglo-American “Special Relationship” have long noted its relative weakening by the time of Carter’s election.¹¹ Though most scholars stress its continued importance in the 1970s, they usually suggest that the alliance had become even more asymmetrical because of the UK’s continued economic decline and related military retrenchment.¹² There were, however, more specific reasons for the Carter administration’s tentative shift in policy regarding Northern Ireland that had little to do with British decline or a devaluation in Anglo-American relations. Indeed, as this article demonstrates, at least on the issue of Northern Ireland, the State Department’s default position in the 1970s was still to oppose any action that might be perceived as interference in the domestic affairs of what remained a key U.S. partner.¹³

¹⁰ Holland, *The American Connection*, 128.

¹¹ Thomas K. Robb, *Jimmy Carter and the Anglo-American “Special Relationship”* (Edinburgh, 2017), 11–12.

¹² Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 75–101; David Reynolds, “A ‘Special Relationship’? America, Britain and the International Order since the Second World War,” *International Affairs* 62, no. 1 (1986), 13–16.

¹³ Ronan Fanning, “The Anglo-American Alliance and the Irish Question in the Twentieth Century,” in *European Encounters: Essays in Memory of Albert Lovett*, ed. Judith Devlin and Howard B. Clarke (Dublin, 2003).

The *leitmotiv* of Carter's foreign policy – his emphasis on human rights – provides another potential explanation for the White House changing its stance on Northern Ireland, particularly as the late 1970s saw both the European Commission on Human Rights and Amnesty International highlighting UK authorities' violations of such rights.¹⁴ While Carter's human rights agenda has been criticized as overly idealistic and undoubtedly less successful than he had hoped for, recent research has shown that it did seriously challenge established practices in the State Department.¹⁵ However, human rights were not the prime movers in the Carter Initiative. In fact, there is evidence that U.S. officials contrived to downplay or overlook reports of human rights violations by the UK authorities in Northern Ireland.¹⁶ Also, Carter's statement made no particular reference to human rights controversies. Instead, Carter's words were actually more political and subtly pressed the case for change in British *constitutional* policy, rather than just security policy in Northern Ireland.

Nonetheless, some scholars argue that Carter's articulation of a foreign policy based on human rights encouraged Irish-American lobby groups to modify their approach in ways that impacted on the internal politics of the Democratic Party, and in turn helped deliver the presidential statement on Northern Ireland. Such accounts also emphasize Carter's reputation as a "political outsider," with limited experience of Washington before his election, leaving him dependent on

¹⁴ Jimmy Carter, "Address at Commencement Exercises at the University of Notre Dame," May 22, 1977, available at "American Presidency Project", <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=7552>; Paul Bew and Gordon Gillespie, *Northern Ireland: A Chronology of the Troubles, 1968–1999* (Dublin, 1999), 127, 130.

¹⁵ David F. Schmitz and Vanessa Walker, "Jimmy Carter and the Foreign Policy of Human Rights: The Development of a Post–Cold War Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 28, no. 1 (2004).

¹⁶ Thompson, *American Policy and Northern Ireland*, 81–2.

such lobbies.¹⁷ Carter was certainly reliant on more established political figures – influential in both the Democratic Party and in Congress more broadly – to deliver his program for government. Leading Democrats, like Kennedy, and even more so Thomas “Tip” O’Neill, the House Speaker, were obviously crucial in this regard. Since both were Irish-Americans, it is easy to see how their ethnic preferences might shape Carter’s stance on Northern Ireland.

Recent research by James Cooper and Luke Devoy, each drawing primarily on U.S. and UK state papers, confirms this interpretation. In particular, they show how Democratic Party politics shaped the troubled end of Carter’s presidency, when the White House faced multiple crises.¹⁸ Yet Carter made his landmark statement on Northern Ireland less than a year into his presidency, when he was still fresh with the energy and optimism that saw him elected. As such, it is difficult to see his initial shift on Northern Ireland as resulting solely from political weakness and a consequent dependence on an Irish lobby within the Democratic Party. Equally, though Kennedy

¹⁷ Douglas Brinkley, “The Rising Stock of Jimmy Carter: The ‘Hands on’ Legacy of Our Thirty-ninth President,” *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 4 (1996), 506; Cooper, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, 74-6, 83; Guelke, “The United States, Irish Americans and the peace process,” 526; Wilson, *Irish America*, 127, 135. Later in Carter’s term, the change in emphasis by more radical elements of the Irish lobby certainly helped to secure a suspension of arms shipments to the Northern Ireland police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), after officers were implicated in human right violations. On this, see H. G. Bennett, *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Police Interrogation Procedures in Northern Ireland* (London, 1979). Nonetheless, we believe that agitation of radical Irish lobbyists on this issue represents a reaction to the more politically constructive developments covered in this article. For detail on the politics of the RUC arms ban, see Andrew Saunders, “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, no. 2 (2014).

¹⁸ Cooper, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, 73-121; Luke Devoy, “The British Response to American Interest in Northern Ireland, 1976–79,” *Irish Studies in International Affairs* 25 (2014): 221–38.

and O'Neill were the main drivers of the initiative, their standing in the Democratic Party does not of itself account for the influence on Northern Ireland politics that they had begun to exert by the late 1970s.

In order to explain fully the Carter Initiative, we argue that previous changes in Irish-American attitudes towards the Northern Ireland conflict must also be considered. Though Kennedy, O'Neill, and other senior Democrats led these changes, they predated Carter's human rights agenda, and went beyond a simple ad hoc adoption of this discourse. Thus, Cooper and Devoy are right to emphasize that domestic and particularly Democratic Party politics helped produce the Carter statement. Both authors, however, fail to show how external influences – specifically political actors from both parts of Ireland – helped instigate shifts within Irish America and sections of the Democratic Party leadership. Accordingly, we look particularly at how Irish government officials, working in collaboration with the leading voice of constitutional nationalism in Northern Ireland, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), sought to modify and specifically to moderate Irish-American views on the Northern Ireland problem in the 1970s.

Traditionally, Irish America, including leading politicians like Kennedy and O'Neill, had articulated highly critical views of British policy in Northern Ireland.¹⁹ Nevertheless, what was seen as diasporic venting had little effect on Washington or London. Though somewhat diminished, the "Special Relationship" was still vital to U.S. interests; the White House would not endorse or advance Irish America's critique. "Typically, when a US president opened their mouth to speak about Northern Ireland, the State Department's words came out, and these were always carefully weighed to ensure that they would not cause any tension ... with the British

¹⁹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 58-61.

Cold War ally.”²⁰ The UK government was therefore insulated from any serious political pressure from the United States. The Irish government and the SDLP, however, began to work with major figures like Kennedy and O’Neill to circumnavigate the “Special Relationship” and eventually to engage the White House in Northern Ireland.

This project involved a conscious effort by Dublin and the SDLP to help moderate Irish-American pronouncements on the conflict, with criticism now aimed primarily at political violence by the Irish Republican Army (IRA).²¹ The UK government could not dismiss such contributions as ethnic vote-seeking by Irish-American politicians. London could only welcome statements that might reduce the flow of financial donations from Irish America to the IRA.²² Consequently, through the course of the 1970s, with the changing tone of their comments on Northern Ireland, politicians like Kennedy and O’Neill became more useful to the British government. This in turn made it harder for the Anglophile State Department to reject their proposals on Northern Ireland. As a result, Irish-American elites gained more influence on White House policy towards the conflict by firstly toning down their criticism of London – a strategy that the SDLP and Dublin clearly steered.

TWO SPECIAL RELATIONSHIPS?

There are strong historical links between Ireland and the United States. Successive waves of emigration from Ireland led to a situation where, in the 1980 U.S. census – that immediately

²⁰ Feargal Cochrane, *Northern Ireland: The Reluctant Peace* (New Haven, 2013), 156.

²¹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 116, 133.

²² Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 248.

following the Carter statement – nearly one in five Americans identified themselves as Irish.²³ However, the circumstances of their forebears' emigration to the United States, particularly the estimated one million who fled the Great Irish Famine of the mid-nineteenth century, created a powerful diaspora nationalism, underpinned by Anglophobia, among large sections of this population. Their conviction that British misrule of Ireland caused events such as the Famine, and thus their "exile" from their homeland,²⁴ meant that many Irish-Americans provided vital financial and organizational support for successive nationalist mobilizations in Ireland. This support culminated in the Irish War of Independence of 1919–1921, which established political autonomy for the greater part of the island.²⁵

By this point, though, the ethnic linkages between the United States and Ireland had been superseded by the emergence of a more important relationship, at least for the White House. The exigencies of World War I eventually led the United States to ally with the country which it, like Ireland, had previously fought for its freedom. Now the United States and the UK fought together in the name of freedom and democracy. Their proclaimed commitment to these ideals was strengthened by the even greater sacrifices of World War II, therein forging the "Special Relationship". By contrast, Dublin was greatly discredited in American eyes for its neutrality during this conflict. The Irish government's stance was primarily a reaction to the continued partition of Ireland. Dublin was adamant that it could not join an alliance with Britain whilst its

²³ Paul Arthur, *Special Relationships: Britain, Ireland and the Northern Ireland Problem* (Belfast, 2000), 136.

²⁴ Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford, 1985), 556.

²⁵ Richard B. Finnegan, "Irish-American Relations," in *Ireland on the World Stage*, ed. William Crotty and David E. Schmitt (London, 2002), 95–6; Wilson, *Irish America*, 3–14.

larger neighbor continued to claim sovereignty over Northern Ireland—Irish nationalists viewing this as an integral part of their national territory.

Irish opposition to any military alliance with the UK continued into the Cold War, with Dublin declining to join NATO, and so again evoking American ire for failing to stand against the new, Soviet threat to democracy. When John F. Kennedy became the first Irish Catholic to win the White House in 1960, his image achieved parity with the Sacred Heart in homesteads across Ireland. Hopes, however, that the new president might seek an end to partition proved to be wishful thinking. Though Kennedy was happy to receive the adulation that came with his famous visit to Ireland in 1963, he was determined not to raise the issue of Northern Ireland.²⁶ In fact, the president only visited Ireland *en route* to London, and curtly refused Irish requests to bring up the subject when he travelled on to meet his British counterpart, Harold Macmillan.²⁷ Cold War politics—the UK’s crucial role in opposing Soviet expansionism, contrasting with Ireland’s conspicuous absence from NATO—obviously trumped any possible Irish influence on the Kennedy White House.

Nevertheless, Irish America remained an important political constituency. As such, when the Northern Ireland conflict broke out in the late 1960s, Irish nationalists again turned to their American cousins, and found sympathy and support, just as they had in previous eras.²⁸ The images of the early Northern Ireland conflict that televisions beamed into U.S. homes helped

²⁶ Brendan Ó Cathaoir, “Kennedy Told Not to Mention Partition on Irish Visit,” *The Irish Times*, January 1, 1994, 10.

²⁷ Conor O’Cleary, “Reagan in the White House Leaned on Thatcher to Reach Historic Agreement,” *The Irish Times*, November 6, 2015, 14.

²⁸ Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America*, 198-206.

revivify the Anglophobia of many Irish-Americans. Pictures of British army aggression, and particularly the killing of civil rights protesters on “Bloody Sunday” in January 1972, tended to reinforce conceptions of the conflict as merely a renewal of the historic struggle of Irish nationalists against the brutalities of British imperialism. This led to the establishment of the Irish Northern Aid Committee (Noraid), which worked to raise money in ethnically Irish communities right across the North America. Ostensibly, Noraid used this money to provide support to the families of imprisoned members of IRA, but the organization was also strongly implicated in funding the latter’s insurgency.²⁹

Irish efforts to elicit support from the White House, however, remained unsuccessful. For example, in September 1969, Henry Kissinger, National Security Advisor to the Nixon administration, responded to a petition from one Irish-American Congressman in unequivocal terms: “The United Kingdom . . . 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 . . . in the United States.”³⁰ However, not all branches of the U.S. government remained impassive on the Northern Ireland conflict. In October 1971, in response to the escalation of violence in the region, Senator Edward Kennedy issued a congressional resolution calling for a British withdrawal, likening the deteriorating situation to the American experience in Vietnam, an analogy that gained much traction in the media.³¹ Kennedy’s pronouncements on Northern Ireland at this time, while not endorsing violence, arguably only

²⁹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 43.

³⁰ Cited in Andrew Sanders, “Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland and the ‘Special Relationship’, 1971–1981,” *Diplomacy and Statecraft* 27, no. 1 (2016): 124.

³¹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 58–59.

contributed to the conflict: “Although Kennedy did not necessarily wish to promote [Irish] republicanism in the United States, many Irish Americans could not perceive a difference between his statements and the policy positions issued by Noraid.”³² Kennedy’s comments also provoked anger in Britain, with the Prime Minister Edward Heath describing the Senator’s Vietnam analogy as “an ignorant outburst.”³³ However, particularly in the aftermath of the Bloody Sunday killings, when critical rhetoric from Kennedy and other Irish-American politicians reached a fever pitch, the British government became increasingly concerned about the effect that such statements were having on the flow of donations to Noraid.³⁴

A crucial figure in the effort to change this situation was the deputy leader of Northern Ireland’s SDLP, John Hume.³⁵ He believed that figures like Kennedy were genuine in their concern over the conflict but counterproductive in their contributions.³⁶ Thus, shortly after the Bloody Sunday killings, Hume travelled to the United States to meet with Kennedy and other American leaders. After an in-depth briefing on the situation in Northern Ireland, Hume agreed he would keep Kennedy informed of further developments.³⁷ Following this meeting, on a trip to Europe in late 1972, Kennedy invited Hume to meet him at a conference in Bonn.³⁸ Over dinner,

³² Ibid., 60-61.

³³ Quoted in Sanders, “Congressional Hearings on Northern Ireland,” 123.

³⁴ Wilson, *Irish America*, 60.

³⁵ Gerry Fitt was the SDLP leader, though in a largely titular sense. The younger Hume was the driving force of the party from its formation in 1970, operating as its key ideologue and strategist long before he became leader upon Fitt’s resignation in 1979.

³⁶ P. J. McLoughlin, *John Hume and the Revision of Irish Nationalism* (Manchester, 2010), 108.

³⁷ “Irish Problem a Major Issue in U.S.,” *The Derry Journal*, March 24, 1972, 1,

³⁸ James Kelly, “Ted Kennedy calls Hume to Bonn Briefing,” *Irish Independent*, November 22, 1972, 1

Hume sought to persuade Kennedy of the need to avoid any statement on Northern Ireland that the IRA might use to justify its violent campaign. Instead, Hume advocated the constitutional, reformist approach of the SDLP. Kennedy remembers this meeting as a crucial turning point: “Ever since that evening . . . John . . . has had a profound influence on my thinking and on the attitudes of the Congress and the American Government towards the [Northern Ireland] conflict; he has often been called the 101st Senator from Northern Ireland.”³⁹

Though bold, the claim that Kennedy makes for Hume’s influence on subsequent U.S. policy towards Northern Ireland is strongly endorsed by historians.⁴⁰ However, as will be demonstrated, Hume’s influence was mediated by Kennedy and other senior Irish-American politicians and aided by Irish government officials. Nonetheless, there is a clear consensus in the literature, identifying Hume’s conversion of Kennedy in 1972 as the beginning of a broader process to reorient Irish America, to utilize its undoubted but hitherto frustrated power, and to channel it into a viable strategy to advance peace in Northern Ireland.

Hume’s efforts to engage Irish America in a constructive role in Northern Ireland were intensified in the aftermath of the failed Sunningdale Agreement of 1973. The accord, the first to establish a power-sharing settlement between the two communities in Northern Ireland, lasted only five months. A strike led by unionist extremists brought the region to a standstill, forcing the collapse of the bi-communal government. Hume, a minister in this short-lived executive, felt that Sunningdale was destroyed primarily by a “lack of will on the part of the British

³⁹ Edward Kennedy, foreword to *A New Ireland: Peace, Politics and Reconciliation*, by John Hume (Boulder, Colo. 1996), 7.

⁴⁰ Arthur, *Special Relationships*, 139; Cooper, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, 74, 146, 203–4; Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 248–9, 253, 256; Wilson, *Irish America*, 114–15, 131–32, 294.

Government” – in particular, the failure to use the army to remove the loyalist paramilitary roadblocks that enforced the strike.⁴¹ In Hume’s eyes, London had surrendered to a “unionist veto,” and until this veto was confronted, he felt there could be no political progress in the region.⁴²

This view seemed to be vindicated in the years after Sunningdale, which saw an increasing intransigence within Ulster unionism and a seeming drift in British policy. Though ostensibly still committed to a power-sharing solution, London offered no viable strategy for its achievement. Nor did London appear to have any idea of how it could compel unionist politicians to even begin discussing such a settlement with their nationalist counterparts. Instead, British ministers now seemed reconciled to governing Northern Ireland directly from Westminster, whilst the security forces tried to contain the worst of the paramilitary violence. London was merely managing rather than attempting to resolve the conflict.⁴³ Under these conditions, Hume felt there was no prospect of political change. Accordingly, he sought external support to help move the situation forward. Hume realized that he would need international backing to change British policy in a way that would make power sharing possible.⁴⁴ U.S. support would obviously be crucial to this endeavor, and so after Sunningdale Hume renewed contact with Kennedy.

⁴¹ John Hume, “A Case of Exploding Myths once again in Ulster,” *Irish Times*, November 15, 1975, 8; “Loyalist” is term used to describe a more militant form of unionism, and particularly groups that engage in paramilitarism.

⁴² McLoughlin, *John Hume*, 78.

⁴³ Arthur, *Special Relationships*, 164-6

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 138-9.

Kennedy's response to Hume's outreach proved vital. Firstly, in late 1976, he helped Hume to gain a temporary fellowship at the senator's *alma mater*, Harvard University. This, in turn, gave Hume access to a whole network of influential Americans. Key among these were Kennedy's Democratic colleagues, most importantly the soon-to-be House Speaker, Tip O'Neill, but also Senator Daniel Moynihan, and New York governor, Hugh Carey. Together with Kennedy these were the most influential Irish-American politicians of the 1970s, and through their collective actions they became known as the "Four Horsemen." Like Kennedy, some of the Horsemen had previously made statements that gave succor to Irish republicans, but all were now persuaded by Hume that they should pursue a more conciliatory approach.⁴⁵ By this stage, the Irish government, particularly Foreign Minister Garret FitzGerald and two key diplomats, Michael Lillis and Seán Donlon, supported Hume's efforts. Lillis was then Political Counselor to the Irish Embassy in Washington. Donlon, later Irish ambassador to Washington, had already served as a Consul General in Boston, and was now working back in Ireland, liaising between Dublin and actors north of the border, and in particular Hume. FitzGerald, Lillis and Donlon all shared Hume's unfailing commitment to advancing peace in Northern Ireland, and his belief that American support was crucial to this enterprise. Together they played a crucial role in directing the efforts of interested Irish-American politicians such as the Horsemen toward a more constructive, and ultimately more effective, approach to Northern Ireland.

In particular, Hume and Lillis felt that the Horsemen should combine their efforts to increase their influence. They saw the power of the Horsemen speaking with one voice, and by early 1977 had persuaded the four Democratic leaders to issue a joint statement on Northern Ireland in which they would condemn Irish-American support for the IRA. Hume drafted the statement,

⁴⁵ Wilson, *Irish America*, 131–2.

and proposed that it be issued on St. Patrick's Day to maximize publicity. The Horsemen also sent copies to various U.S. media outlets, to the British government, and to the unionist parties in Northern Ireland.⁴⁶ Evidently, it was important not only to communicate this repudiation of republican violence to Irish America, but also to ensure that the gesture be noted in London and Belfast.

The statement carried significant risks. As Andrew J. Wilson explains: "Irish-American republican groups have always been active in the Democratic Party, trade unions, and police and fire departments. The temptation for politicians not to tangle with these groups was considerable."⁴⁷ For the same reason, though, British government officials recognized the effect that the Horsemen's unity could have on such groups and welcomed Kennedy's shift from his earlier pronouncements: "a few words in public from Senator Kennedy on the evils of fund raising . . . carry far more weight with the Boston Irish . . . than any similar statement from British . . . politicians, who are inevitably regarded as prejudiced."⁴⁸ This admission suggests an additional motive for the Horsemen's efforts. Not only were they trying to counter support for the IRA in the United States; by doing this, they were also seeking to change British attitudes toward Irish America, and even influence UK policy on Northern Ireland in the longer term. By publicly condemning the IRA, the Horsemen could enhance their credibility in London, and in

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 130.

⁴⁸ British Foreign and Commonwealth Office paper, "Speaking Notes, IRA Fund-raising in the USA," cited in Andrew Sanders, "Senator Edward Kennedy and the Ulster Troubles: Irish and Irish-American Politics, 1965-2009," *Historical Journal of Massachusetts* 39, no. 1/2 (2011): 222.

turn their political traction in the White House.⁴⁹ As Devoy notes, “Kennedy and his friends saw their new line as a gesture to be returned in kind. To convince constituents of their moderate stance they wanted British assistance in showing that it yielded results.”⁵⁰

The indirect role of the Irish government in the Horsemen’s joint statement was apparent with the arrival of FitzGerald in Washington on the day of its release. Suggesting the level of coordination between the Horsemen and the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), FitzGerald first met with Speaker O’Neill before proceeding to talks at the White House. There FitzGerald sought President Carter’s endorsement of the very public effort being made to reduce American fund-raising for the IRA. While such an endorsement was never likely to be withheld, in the press conference that followed, FitzGerald was nonetheless eager to trumpet the president’s approval.⁵¹ Again, it would appear that moderate Irish nationalist actors were keen to be seen, particularly by the British, to be aiding the effort to combat the IRA . However, during Carter’s meeting with FitzGerald, the president had made clear that the White House would not take any political stance on the conflict. As a preparatory memo from Cyrus Vance to the president had bluntly stated, “your purpose in this brief meeting will be to . . . reaffirm long-standing U.S. government policy of non-involvement in Northern Ireland.”⁵² Whatever the weakening in the “Special Relationship” that scholars have noted by the time of Carter’s

⁴⁹ Arthur, *Special Relationships*, 139.

⁵⁰ Devoy, “The British Response to American Interest in Northern Ireland,” 226.

⁵¹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 132.

⁵² Memorandum, Vance to Carter, “Call by Irish Foreign Minister and Ambassador,” March 14, 1977, “Ireland” folder, box 21, National Security Affairs Staff File, Jimmy Carter Library (hereafter JCL).

Presidency, the unwillingness of the U.S. government to comment on internal UK affairs clearly endured. Cold War priorities still prevailed.

TOWARDS A PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT

Despite the White House's clear restatement of its opposition to involvement in Northern Ireland, the Dublin government and its allies in Irish America were beginning to think of ways that Washington could help break the region's political stalemate. The DFA's efforts to counter Irish republicanism in the United States—and to ensure that the British government was taking note—showed that Dublin was hopeful that political movement would follow from this.

Immediately after their St. Patrick's Day speech, the Horsemen began to discuss with Hume his ideas for an even more ambitious project that would involve the president making a formal statement on Northern Ireland.⁵³

This ambition obviously flew in the face of the State Department's traditional stance, freshly reemphasized in Vance's advice to Carter during FitzGerald's recent visit to Washington. In addition, the new president had personally experienced the dangers of commenting on Northern Ireland during his campaign the previous year. In the closing stages of the election, Carter, a southern Baptist, had been trying to increase his support amongst Irish and other Catholics. This led to an event in Pittsburgh organized by Fr Seán McManus, a native of Northern Ireland and an outspoken supporter of the IRA. Both the British and Irish governments had sought to dissuade Carter from attending the event. However, the involvement of important Irish-American organizations convinced him of the need to address the meeting. McManus opened proceedings

⁵³ Mary Holland, "Carter, Kennedy and Ireland: The Inside Story," *Magill*, October, 1977, 3.

with a predictable tirade against British policy. Carter, exhausted by weeks of campaigning, overlooked McManus's controversial comments and endorsed the priest's views.⁵⁴ More importantly, Carter was widely reported to have said: "It is a mistake for the United States government to stand idly by on the struggle of the Irish for peace and a united Ireland."⁵⁵

Although this partisan comment received little attention in the United States, it generated uproar on the other side of the Atlantic.⁵⁶ The British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) was particularly concerned, not simply regarding Carter's reference to "a united Ireland," but by the suggestion that "the United States should no longer stand idle on the Northern Ireland problem." In a briefing paper to the Prime Minister, James Callaghan, one senior FCO advisor stressed that: "The remarks are clearly unwelcome to us . . . if he [Carter] really means to look for some way of intervening in the Northern Ireland problem if he is elected President, this would signal for us a significant change of American policy . . . The United States government have hitherto been only too pleased to keep out of it . . . This policy has matched our own very well."⁵⁷

Before Carter's election, however, the FCO confidently concluded that the realities of power would stop him from changing the U.S. policy of non-intervention: "it seems unlikely that we have anything to fear from President Carter . . . the constraints of the office of the President are likely to prevent him from making any further controversial remarks on Northern Ireland." A

⁵⁴ Wilson, *Irish America*, 100, 128.

⁵⁵ Jim Farrelly and James Kelly, "North: Carter Tries to Wriggle Out," *Irish Independent*, October 29, 1976, 1.

⁵⁶ Wilson, *Irish America*, 128.

⁵⁷ The UK National Archives, Kew: Public Record Office (hereafter TNA: PRO): Northern Ireland Office files (hereafter NIO), CJ4/1835, J. Hartland-Swann to James Callaghan, Background Note, October 28, 1976.

certain self-satisfaction was apparent in the assumption that London's intimate relationship with Washington would allow it to redirect any new president on the issue of Northern Ireland, with the FCO advocating, "when the time is ripe . . . a word with a friendly ear in the White House . . . to keep Mr Carter on the rails."⁵⁸ The FCO's condescension betrays the confidence that it continued to have in the "Special Relationship," and the privileged access that British officials still enjoyed in Washington. However, the FCO's assumptions appeared to be well-founded when, during Carter's first months in office, the new president's attitude toward Northern Ireland fell in line with that of his predecessors: "Carter's administration thus continued the traditional policy of cautious impartiality on the Ulster question."⁵⁹

Nonetheless, it is interesting to note the anxiety that the Pittsburgh *faux pas* during Carter's election campaign had created even in Dublin. Less complacent than the FCO, the DFA was concerned that Carter's comments would undermine the work that it had begun with the Horsemen to counter militant nationalist sympathies in Irish America. Dublin immediately began a recovery operation, with Michael Lillis phoning Jody Powell, a chief aide in the Carter campaign and subsequently White House Press Secretary. "I don't think Jody even knew where Ireland was," Lillis recalled, "[b]ut I had to threaten him as menacingly as I possibly could [to issue a clarification]."⁶⁰ To ensure an appropriate retraction, Lillis wrote a statement that was forwarded to Powell and swiftly issued by Carter. This clearly affirmed that: "Governor Carter has never advocated violence as a solution to the tragic problems of Northern Ireland. He has . . . expressed his concern for the just and peaceful resolution of these problems through negotiation

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 129.

⁶⁰ Lillis, interview with authors, Dublin, January 24, 2015.

which involves the two communities of Northern Ireland.”⁶¹ It is evident from this rapid clarification that the DFA was very much alive to the threat that the Pittsburgh incident posed to its more moderate and long game strategy.

The Four Horsemen initiated this strategy with their joint St. Patrick’s Day speech, just two months after Carter assumed office. The Horsemen’s condemnation of republican violence was well-received in the media on both sides of the Atlantic. As a result, Lillis and Hume felt able to begin sketching out ideas of how they might now work with the Horsemen to engage the new president.⁶² Kennedy and O’Neill were particularly important in this endeavor, with Kennedy providing the cachet and media appeal of arguably the most famous Irish-American family ever and O’Neill the political gravitas and influence of being House Speaker. Carter was dependent on O’Neill to help facilitate the passage of his legislative program, and Lillis remembers that: “he [O’Neill] was prepared to put quite a bit of his own power at risk [to advance the statement idea] . . . he made it a condition for certain things to be delivered on the domestic agenda and Carter would go along with this . . . we were absolutely blessed [to have O’Neill involved with the initiative]—it was like winning the lottery several times over.”⁶³

Thus O’Neill made the first formal move to achieve a presidential statement on Northern Ireland by arranging a meeting with Cyrus Vance in June. In a draft of the meeting’s agenda, the Horsemen proposed a presidential statement encompassing three specific elements: “1. Appeal for end to violence and end to U.S. support for violence. 2. Support for negotiated political

⁶¹ Statement in response to reports of a recent meeting between Governor Carter and Irish-American leaders, October 28 1976, 2006/44/491, The National Archives of Ireland (hereafter NAI).

⁶² Wilson, *Irish America*, 133-5.

⁶³ Lillis, interview with authors.

solution involving both communities . . . 3. U.S. will provide aid if a settlement is reached by the parties.”⁶⁴ Undoubtedly, the Horsemen had given these three basic proposals, and their order of ranking, much consideration. The first proposal clearly built on the Horsemen’s St. Patrick’s Day speech, providing an obvious and immediate contribution to conflict resolution. Like the Horsemen’s joint statement, leading with an appeal to end U.S. support for violence gave the initiative the moral high ground, with an apolitical emphasis that would make it harder for the British government to reject. This approach clearly distanced the proposed statement from traditional Irish-American commentaries on the conflict, which either omitted reference to or were ambiguous on the issue of republican violence.⁶⁵ The Horsemen’s proposal therefore preempted accusations of partisanship, or of political self-interest in pandering to hardline Irish-American activists. The second suggestion that the Horsemen made for a potential Presidential statement, advocating a “negotiated political solution involving both communities”, suggested a mediator’s position, since such a solution would require unionist and nationalist engagement. While apparently detached, it effectively endorsed the SDLP’s position, as any settlement requiring both a unionist and nationalist input would involve some form of power-sharing. The third and final suggestion that the Horsemen made to Vance, of U.S. financial aid to underpin such a settlement, again showed the influence of the SDLP – Hume had suggested that such a promise would incentivize all parties to negotiate.⁶⁶ In addition, Lillis partly drafted the briefing

⁶⁴ Agenda for Meeting with Secretary Vance, no date, Eleanor Kelly Files, Box 5, File: “Ireland”, Thomas P. O’Neill Papers (hereafter TPOP), Boston College, Burns Library (hereafter BCBL),

⁶⁵ Wilson, *Irish America*, 60, 131.

⁶⁶ Mary Holland, “Carter, Kennedy and Ireland: The Inside Story,” *Magill*, October, 1977, 3.

notes that O'Neill used in the Vance meeting.⁶⁷ The Irish government was effectively pitching the idea of Carter making a statement on Northern Ireland via the Horsemen rather than directly through its own embassy. Working through the Horsemen provided Irish officials with political cover that, as will be shown, proved useful in Dublin's dealings with London.

BRITISH OPPOSITION

In positing "a negotiated political solution involving both communities," the statement that the Horsemen wanted Carter to make would, in effect, endorse London's previously declared policy on Northern Ireland. To understand why the British government would oppose a presidential statement to this end, we remind the reader of the aforementioned political inertia in Northern Ireland in the late 1970s. Essentially, the British government wondered where to go after failing to achieve a power-sharing arrangement in the 1973 Sunningdale Agreement. The mobilization of unionist extremists in opposition to this settlement had led to concerns amongst the British military that it would end up fighting a war on two fronts in Northern Ireland. Already engaged in a serious struggle with the IRA, British army commanders were loath to do anything that might provoke attacks from loyalist paramilitaries. In fact, military advice to this effect seems to have had a significant bearing on the government's decision not to act against anti-Sunningdale strikers, and instead to allow the agreement's collapse.⁶⁸ As the Northern Ireland Secretary, Merlyn Rees, later recalled: "It is one thing to fight the IRA and quite another to fight a whole

⁶⁷ Telex for Seán Donlon from Michael Lillis re: Vance Meeting, June 9 1977, 2007/111/1973, DFA, NAI.

⁶⁸ Michael Cunningham, *British Government Policy in Northern Ireland, 1969-89: Its Nature and Execution* (Manchester, 1991), 91.

community.”⁶⁹ Rees, and indeed most British policy-makers, were clearly haunted by such fears in the post-Sunningdale period.

London’s lack of conviction had knock-on effects for Ulster unionism. Emboldened by the overthrow of the Sunningdale settlement, even moderate unionists now showed no willingness to enter serious negotiations with the SDLP.⁷⁰ In fact, many unionists appeared increasingly contented with direct rule from Westminster, which served their main political objective: maintenance of the Union. As a result, though still ostensibly committed to the idea of a local political settlement, the British government’s Northern Ireland Office (NIO) clearly had no idea how to oblige the unionist majority community to consider concessions to the nationalist minority.⁷¹ Any real notion of resurrecting a power-sharing agreement was effectively abandoned, as British officials decided that compelling unionist politicians to compromise with the SDLP could only be destabilizing. The best that could be done was simply to strengthen security measures to contain paramilitary violence and maintain a semblance of political normality.⁷²

London also opposed the Horsemen’s proposal on the basis that the U.S. president, or any foreign leader, making a formal announcement on Northern Ireland could also be seen an implicit critique – an indictment of British inaction and the UK government’s failure to pursue

⁶⁹ Merlyn Rees, *Northern Ireland: A Personal Perspective* (London, 1985), 90.

⁷⁰ P. J. McLoughlin, “‘Dublin is Just a Sunningdale Away’? The SDLP and the Failure of Northern Ireland’s Sunningdale Experiment,” *Twentieth Century British History* 20, 1 (2009), 96.

⁷¹ Colin Coulter, “Direct Rule and the Unionist Middle Classes,” in *Unionism in Modern Ireland*, eds. Richard English and Graham Walker (Dublin, 1996).

⁷² Arthur, *Special Relationships*, 167-8.

its stated policy. This is why Irish officials adopted a cautious and somewhat misleading approach to the Carter statement. When discussing the statement with their British counterparts, Irish diplomats presented the idea as essentially the Horsemen's initiative. They did not endorse the initiative, but would imply that they thought best to allow it in order prevent more militant strands of Irish America from dominating the U.S. debate. Strictly speaking, it was true that the initiative was not Dublin's; it originated with Hume and had been developed by the Horsemen and their aides.⁷³ Nonetheless, archival and other records show that Irish officials actively engaged with, promoted, and quietly helped steer the process leading toward the eventual Carter statement.⁷⁴

One part of this far-sighted game began shortly after the Horsemen's St. Patrick's Day statement of March 1977 when Seán Donlon met with John Hickman, an envoy at the British Embassy in Dublin. Donlon made Hickman aware that further activities by the Horsemen were in the pipeline, with Hickman reporting back to the FCO that: "Edward Kennedy and Tip O'Neill both felt the need for some initiative to be taken over the Irish problem to balance the forthright statement against violence which they had made on St. Patrick's Day ... The idea was that the [U.S.] administration should sponsor a fact-finding mission of senior Democrats to London and Dublin within the next few months in order to demonstrate U.S. concern to Irish Americans." The mission appeared to be the Horsemen's own idea, which they subsequently replaced with Hume's proposal of a presidential statement. However, Donlon recognized that the mission

⁷³ Wilson, *Irish America*, 135.

⁷⁴ The following section draws more on British files, the Irish records being far less-detailed – this reflecting the resources of a much smaller, and in the 1970s far less affluent, state. For the same reason, material from interviews with Irish officials is used to confirm interpretations of events here.

option was a more problematic proposition for the British government.⁷⁵ Accordingly, when Dublin later admitted knowledge of the proposed Carter statement, Donlon effectively presented it as a lesser of two evils. Referring back to the Horsemen's mooted mission to Ireland, Donlon suggested that "rather than simply oppose the [mission] idea, it would be better to divert pressure by this powerful combination [of the Horsemen] in a different direction," perhaps toward a White House statement on Northern Ireland. Even then, Donlon sought to distance Dublin from this proposed alternative, telling Hickman, "the Irish do not wish to involve themselves in any detailed discussion about the precise drafting of any such statement."⁷⁶ In fact, over in Washington, Lillis was already very much involved in the initiative, albeit working behind the cover of the Horsemen.

Donlon later defended this duplicitous approach: "Our tactic was that we are going to deal with the Americans to get this statement delivered. Meanwhile, let us just keep the Brits quiet . . . We did not want them to feel that it was so vital to us . . . that was a deliberate tactic because it was tough enough to get . . . the White House on board without at the same time having a sideshow where Dublin and London were in a big fight."⁷⁷ Thus, in his dealings with UK officials in Washington, Lillis replicated the line Donlon used with the British Embassy in Dublin. At the same time that he was working with the Horsemen's aides to prepare briefing notes for their June meeting with Vance, Lillis told British representatives that "the Irish embassy want to take a

⁷⁵ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Letter from Hickman to Philip Mallet re: U.S. Interest in Northern Ireland, March 29, 1977.

⁷⁶ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Telegram from Hickman to David Owen re: U.S. Interest in Northern Ireland, June 1, 1977.

⁷⁷ Donlon, interview with authors, Dublin, July 5, 2016.

back seat in this matter.” British Ambassador Peter Ramsbotham, therefore, reported back to London that he saw no reason “to suppose that Vance or Carter will make an unhelpful statement,” and suggested, “there would be an advantage in discussing the matter with the State Department.”⁷⁸ Clearly, Lillis’s and Donlon’s feigned disinterest was encouraging some senior British officials to engage with the initiative.

British Foreign Secretary David Owen was not so easily fooled. He strongly disagreed with Ramsbotham’s advice and emphasized this to the Washington Ambassador: “we should still prefer you not, repeat not, to take the initiative in raising the question of a U.S. Government statement . . . with the State Department.” Unlike Ramsbotham, Owen believed that any statement from the White House, irrespective of content, would set an unwelcome precedent: “to make a political statement at all assumes some desire on the part of the U.S. Government to play a role in Northern Ireland, and at present we see no special occasion for this.”⁷⁹ Owen was anticipating exactly what Dublin hoped for and London feared: an opening to increased pressure from the White House to find a political solution in Northern Ireland.

When the State Department contacted the UK Embassy about the proposed statement the following week, British officials strictly adhered to Owen’s advice: they were ready to give the idea a distinctly cool response. The State Department’s Richard Vine was equally keen to convey a lack of any particular enthusiasm for the proposal from his government, thus making for an interesting exchange, as the two sides discussed an idea that neither wished the other to feel it was happy about. Vine was eager to emphasize to the British that Vance had remained “stand-

⁷⁸ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Telex from Ramsbotham to David Owen re: United States/Northern Ireland, June 3, 1977.

⁷⁹ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Telex from Owen to Ramsbotham re: United States/Northern Ireland, June 8, 1977.

offish” in his meeting with the Horsemen, and had made no commitments to them. He also assured the British that “it was open to us to reply that any form of American action, however anodyne, would be unhelpful.”⁸⁰ The latent power of the “Special Relationship” and consequent deference of the State Department to British opinion on this sensitive issue was palpable.

Vine effectively provided an open invitation for the UK Embassy to strangle the Carter Initiative at birth. Yet the machinations of Donlon and Lillis had successfully planted seeds of doubt in British minds, with many officials fearing that outright rejection of a statement might lead the Horsemen to take a stronger line. Ramsbotham stressed, “if we do not meet O’Neill and Kennedy some way along this road, they will increase their pressure on us.”⁸¹ The NIO concurred: “if Kennedy does not get his way on this matter he will probably either revert to the idea of a fact-finding mission or will seek some other initiative which is likely to be more injurious to our interests than a statement from the United States Government whose terms we have had an opportunity to influence.”⁸² Clearly, the British were buying into the “lesser of two evils” argument that the Irish side had been surreptitiously promoting. UK records show that British officials remained wholly unaware of the pro-active role that their Irish counterparts were playing in developments across the Atlantic. In fact, the NIO stressed the need to maintain close relations with Dublin and to make clear the UK government’s desire “that any possible new initiatives would be discussed between ourselves before we bring in outsiders.”⁸³ Irish diplomats

⁸⁰ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Telex from Ramsbotham to Owen re: U.S./Northern Ireland, June 13, 1977.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Memo from David Janes FAO Secretary of State and Permanent Under-Secretary, FCO, June 15, 1977.

⁸³ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1842, Letter from Phillip Mallet to Sir Anthony Duff, June 22, 1977.

were, of course, already quite determined and well-advanced in their efforts to “bring in outsiders.” But with British officials oblivious to this fact, for once Dublin enjoyed a distinct advantage in its dealings in Washington, where normally the “Special Relationship” provided London with a winning hand.

Dublin also had some good fortune with Peter Jay’s appointment as UK Ambassador to Washington in July 1977, as the new office-holder could not have been better connected to power in London. Explaining Jay’s appointment in a personal letter to Cyrus Vance, David Owen revealed: “Jay has been for 10 years a friend of mine, he basically shares my instincts and my attitudes. He is Jim Callaghan’s son-in-law and is trusted and respected by the Prime Minister.”⁸⁴ However, Jay also had remarkably close connections with leading Irish politicians. Jay had a family holiday home in West Cork, where Garret FitzGerald also spent vacations. Though FitzGerald had just left the DFA following a change of government in Dublin, the new Irish Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, was a native of Cork, and so he, FitzGerald, and Jay regularly crossed paths during their summers in the late 1970s.⁸⁵ Accordingly, Donlon felt that the new Ambassador had “a good understanding of the mood in Ireland both North and South.”⁸⁶ Lillis went further, suggesting that Jay “was much more subtle [than his predecessor], much more intelligent.” Lillis believed that Jay realized what he and Donlon were trying to achieve in moderating Irish-American opinion on Northern Ireland, and acknowledged that the Carter Initiative was both a positive and inevitable outcome of that: “He could see that you have to live

⁸⁴ TNA: PRO: FCO, 73/920, Letter from Owen to Vance, May 2, 1977.

⁸⁵ Donlon, interview with authors.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

with a version of this thing [the proposed statement] ... It is the new game, it is going to go on.”⁸⁷

Historians agree with these assessments of Jay. Joseph E. Thompson suggested that Jay’s arrival in Washington proved a turning point in the negotiation of the Carter statement: “He quickly and correctly grasped the concept of a presidential statement regarding Northern Ireland as a question of internal Democratic Party politics.”⁸⁸ Wilson concurs: “Jay was very impressed with the statements of the Four Horsemen and recognized their significance in countering IRA supporters in America. He realized the four politicians had put themselves out on a limb and that the British could assist them by making some concessions.”⁸⁹ Jay’s personal links with both his Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister also meant that he could afford to propose a bolder line on the Carter Initiative. This was evident in a message Jay sent to Owen shortly after his arrival in Washington: “it is greatly to our advantage if the four politicians [the Horsemen] stick to their currently helpful line ... we should assist them to go on helping us by disseminating in the Irish-American communities here a better understanding of the true situation and issues in Northern Ireland.”⁹⁰ Jay therefore argued the need to engage positively with the Carter Initiative, suggesting, “there may ... be advantage in putting our views to the statement before too long.”⁹¹

⁸⁷ Lillis, interview with authors.

⁸⁸ Thompson, *American Policy and Northern Ireland*, 76.

⁸⁹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 136.

⁹⁰ TNA: PRO: FCO, CJ4/1842, Telex from Jay to Owen re: U.S. Statement on Northern Ireland, July 25, 1977.

⁹¹ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1843, Telex from Jay to Owen, re. United States Initiative on Northern Ireland, July 26, 1977.

Jay's advice was at direct odds with Owen's initial stance. The new ambassador was clearly arguing that the FCO should acquiesce in the Carter Initiative. His predecessor, Ramsbotham, had taken a similar line. Ramsbotham, however, did so without the persuasive political reasoning Jay provided here, or the trust that Jay clearly enjoyed as a friend of the Foreign Secretary. This trust helps explain Owen's response, in which he essentially yielded to Jay's advice. Instead of stonewalling the initiative, the FCO would subsequently seek to steer the proposed statement in a direction more appreciative of British and unionist sensitivities.⁹² London thus moved from a policy of outright resistance to one of cautious engagement with the Carter Initiative.

The next month thus saw a series of drafts and suggested amendments of the prospective statement exchanged by the British Embassy in Washington, the State Department, and the Horsemen. Dublin continued to keep a low profile, and exercised its influence primarily through the Horsemen, knowing that both the U.S. government and now even British officials were keen to keep this group of influential Irish-American elites onside. The end result was a compromise between the various parties and their different interests, with the Horsemen continuing to push for a version of the statement that reflected the views of Dublin and the SDLP, British officials seeking to dilute this, and the State Department trying to strike a balance between the two. For example, the final text endorsed the principle of power-sharing between the two communities in Northern Ireland, but Owen insisted that this be offset by a clear statement that the U.S. government would not seek to enforce such an outcome. Specifically, Owen suggested that Carter declare that he had "no intention of telling the parties how this [power-sharing] might be achieved," a line which was duly added.⁹³ Similarly, the FCO took umbrage at a proposed

⁹² TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1843, Telex from Owen to Jay re: U.S. Statement on Northern Ireland, July 28, 1977.

⁹³ Ibid.; Jimmy Carter, "Northern Ireland Statement on U.S. Policy."

reference to discrimination in Northern Ireland. British officials felt that this suggested that the UK government was responsible for the informal practices that still continued in many Protestant-dominated fields of employment. Accordingly, London proposed a last-minute amendment endorsing a future solution that “guarantees freedom from discrimination,” a phrase which avoided any embarrassing allusion to the present reality of many Catholics in Northern Ireland.⁹⁴

In these and other respects, the British input to the Carter statement blunted some of the Horsemen’s original aims. However, without the British input, it is unlikely that the State Department would have allowed it to proceed. In the context of the “Special Relationship,” London’s acquiescence was a *sine qua non* for the initiative to progress. As such, Irish officials played an astute game: doing just enough to encourage engagement but not so much as to invite outright obstruction from London. The final wording of the statement, made by Carter on August 30 1977, still reflected the core ambition of Hume and Lillis when they first began working on the idea with the Horsemen—albeit now expressed in tones more acceptable to the British and unionists. Jack Holland, a Belfast native who subsequently worked as a journalist in Irish America, accurately summarized: “the Irish had successfully controlled the content of the statement ... so that it had all the elements of their broad strategy in America. IRA sympathizers had been soundly condemned, the British had been given notice that American aid would be forthcoming only if there was a peaceful settlement ... [and there was] a veiled reference to power-sharing, which the Irish could thus say had received the seal of approval of the highest

⁹⁴ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1843, Telex from Owen to Jay re: Presidential Statement, August 30, 1977.

levels in Washington. Undoubtedly, the key paragraph was that promising aid ‘in the event of such a settlement,’ suggesting as it did that the current inertia was not welcome.”⁹⁵

Holland is right that this subtle indictment of British policy in Northern Ireland was the most important element of the statement. It was also the part that provoked the fiercest resistance from British officials. Northern Ireland Secretary Roy Mason asserted that he “could not allow any threat or promise which was conditional upon both sections of the Northern Ireland community coming to agreement,” while the FCO agreed that this was “simply too high a price to pay.”⁹⁶ Nonetheless, political circumstance eventually obliged Mason to allow this promise, and forced the FCO to pay this price. The Horsemen, and Kennedy in particular, refused to compromise on the idea, first proposed by Hume in their earliest discussions of the initiative, that the promise of U.S. investment was explicitly linked to political progress in Northern Ireland.⁹⁷ The final text showed that Kennedy had won on this point. Carter’s words offered a positive incentive for the British government and unionists to work toward an agreement with Irish nationalists, but incorporated a coded critique of the political status quo.

The Irish Embassy in Washington knew it had achieved a significant victory. Confirmation that Carter was proceeding with the statement led one of Tip O’Neill’s aides to pay Irish officials a considerable compliment: “The Irish diplomatic mission is second only to that of the Israelis.”⁹⁸ O’Neill, Kennedy, and others involved in the initiative then joined a party that the Irish Embassy

⁹⁵ Holland, *The American Connection*, 128-129.

⁹⁶ Devoy, “The British Response to American Interest in Northern Ireland,” 227.

⁹⁷ TNA: PRO: NIO, CJ4/1843, Extract of note from meeting between Mr. Ford and Messrs. Hume and Donlon at Bunbeg. July 24, 1977.

⁹⁸ Quoted in Holland, *The American Connection*, 129.

threw to celebrate the breakthrough. Lillis, only in his early thirties, but nonetheless a senior member of Ireland's small staff in the U.S. capital, recalled his elation at realizing that his team had effectively out-maneuvered the British Embassy, which was supported by 1,000 personnel and infinitely superior finance, resources, and influence: "I was a lucky kid, in the middle of this power maelstrom and we were beating the British in Washington ... you cannot imagine what it felt like!"⁹⁹

THE CARTER STATEMENT AND ITS LEGACY

Numerous leaks led to considerable speculation and hyperbole in the British and Irish media before Carter issued his statement. Consequently, the relative blandness of Carter's statement left many in Ireland disappointed, and more in the UK indifferent.¹⁰⁰ Yet those who had pushed for the statement understood the subtle significance of Carter's words. As Hume asserted in *Foreign Affairs* shortly after, a formal White House announcement had made the Northern Ireland conflict "a legitimate and serious issue in the Atlantic relationship between London and Washington."¹⁰¹

As a key instigator of the Carter Initiative, Hume was bound to argue this, yet scholars generally concur with his assessment.¹⁰² John Dumbrell, a leading authority on the Carter

⁹⁹ Lillis, interview with authors.

¹⁰⁰ Holland, "Jimmy Carter, Edward Kennedy and Ireland."

¹⁰¹ John Hume, "The Irish question: a British problem," *Foreign Affairs: An American Quarterly Review* 58, no. 2 (1979), 312.

¹⁰² Brundage, *Irish Nationalists in America*, 205; Arthur, *Special Relationships*, 139-40, 141; Devoy, "The British Response to American Interest in Northern Ireland," 227-8; Finnegan, "Irish-American Relations," 101; Guelke, "The United States," 529; Thompson, *American Policy*, 78.

administration, suggests the statement “did, in effect, establish a legitimating precedent for US Presidential involvement in Northern Ireland affairs . . . [this] in direct opposition to the British Foreign Office . . . and therein lay its chief significance. This point was missed by those who complained about Carter’s vagueness.”¹⁰³ Ronan Fanning agreed with Dumbrell’s emphasis on London’s reception of the initiative: “What Carter’s statement said was less significant than what it symbolized. None understood its significance better than the British.”¹⁰⁴ Feargal Cochrane amplifies this argument: “While it contained little of any real substance . . . [the statement’s] importance was that it was made at all.” For Cochrane, the Carter Initiative was the first real moment in the internationalization of the Northern Ireland problem: “For all its banality, this statement gave Northern Ireland a diplomatic identity that belied the region’s status as an integral part of the United Kingdom . . . it was a tacit signal that, while Northern Ireland might well be British, it was different from the rest of the United Kingdom.”¹⁰⁵ The Carter Initiative represented a genuine watershed. It effectively overturned British assertions that Northern Ireland was a wholly internal matter and broke the non-interventionist precedent set by the Anglophile State Department in deference to a leading ally.

The Carter statement did not, however, bring any immediate change in Northern Ireland. This obviously disappointed the Horsemen, who had hoped that a presidential declaration would, within a matter of months, oblige London to launch a new effort encouraging unionists to negotiate a power-sharing settlement. For two reasons, this did not happen within months, or for some years. Firstly, by the spring of 1977, successive by-election defeats left the incumbent

¹⁰³ John Dumbrell, *The Carter Presidency: A Re-Evaluation* (Manchester, 1995), 132, 134

¹⁰⁴ Fanning, “The Anglo-American Alliance and the Irish Question,” 208.

¹⁰⁵ Cochrane, *Northern Ireland*, 157.

Labour Party ruling as a minority government at Westminster, and subsequently courting Unionist MPs in an effort to win their support in order to maintain power. The Horsemen, Hume, and Dublin were all shocked to see political proposals emanating from the NIO after the Carter statement that were clearly influenced by the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). The Conservative opposition was likewise promoting reforms championed by the UUP, suggesting that both of the main British parties were anticipating the forthcoming election to return another hung parliament, where Unionists would hold the balance of power.¹⁰⁶ Secondly, though the new Tory leader Margaret Thatcher surprised most commentators by securing a clear majority in the 1979 election, the Conservatives had, like Labour, yet to accept the reality that the British government would actively need to oblige unionists to share power in Northern Ireland. As a result, shortly after Thatcher's election, with no sign that her government was about to make a move on Northern Ireland, Tip O'Neill lost his patience and finally snapped. After a UK government inquiry confirmed allegations of prisoner abuse in Northern Ireland, O'Neill backed a motion instigated by more militant sections of the Irish-American lobby that obliged the State Department to suspend sales of U.S. manufactured arms to the local police force, the Royal Ulster Constabulary.¹⁰⁷ Thatcher angrily described the suspension as an "absurd situation."¹⁰⁸

By the end of the 1970s, it seemed that the project of conscious moderation that Hume and the DFA had steered the Horsemen toward, and the idea that this project would modify London's Northern Ireland policy, had been roundly defeated. Furthermore, events in the region

¹⁰⁶ Bew and Gillespie, *Northern Ireland*, 125, 128 129.

¹⁰⁷ Bennett, *Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Police Interrogation Procedures in Northern Ireland*; Wilson, *Irish America*, 159-60.

¹⁰⁸ Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years* (New York, 1993), 58.

during the early 1980s, principally the republican hunger strikes of 1980–1981, rekindled the fenian flame in Irish America. Irish-American donations to Noraid more than doubled during this period, undermining the Horsemen’s foremost objective since 1977.¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, Thatcher had found an ideological soulmate in Ronald Reagan, who had occupied the White House since 1981. Reagan refused to condemn her hard-line stance on the hunger strikes, or respond to pleas from Dublin and the Horsemen to use his influence to deescalate the situation Northern Ireland.

Nonetheless, despite Noraid’s revival and Thatcher’s intransigence, the Horsemen’s political project continued to expand. Many more Irish-American politicians began to add their names to what had become an annual St. Patrick’s Day statement by the Horsemen, which still condemned support for paramilitaries, but was increasingly critical of London’s political inaction. Moreover, the launch of the Friends of Ireland on St. Patrick’s Day of 1981 greatly enhanced the power of this moderate movement. Again, Dublin had a hand in this initiative, with Donlon, now Irish Ambassador to Washington, helping to establish the group to extend the work of the Horsemen and include senior U.S. Republicans.¹¹⁰ The Friends of Ireland continued with the same basic approach that the Horsemen had used in seeking the Carter statement: in public, they articulated an essentially moderate position on Northern Ireland; in private, they lobbied both the UK and U.S. governments at every available opportunity; and as a result of both endeavors, they enjoyed increasing political influence. With O’Neill still House Speaker, and with bi-partisan backing for their efforts, the Horsemen found they could sway even a Republican administration, albeit not as overtly as they had Carter’s. Although Reagan refused to question Thatcher publicly, behind

¹⁰⁹ Wilson, *Irish America*, 195.

¹¹⁰ Donlon, interview with authors.

closed doors he put increasing pressure on her to work with Dublin.¹¹¹ Again, these efforts were coordinated with the Irish government, led from 1981 by an early advocate of the Horsemen, former foreign minister Garret FitzGerald. FitzGerald also exploited the close relationship that Donlon, during his time as U.S. Ambassador, had established with William Clark, a former national security advisor in the White House and a long-time friend and confidant of Reagan's. FitzGerald's detailed memoirs record how he and Donlon orchestrated interventions from Clarke and the Friends of Ireland, which together helped enlist crucial support from Reagan in Dublin's negotiations with London for a new agreement on Northern Ireland.¹¹² Thatcher herself would later acknowledge, "It was the pressure from the Americans that made me sign that Agreement."¹¹³

In the Anglo-Irish Agreement (AIA) of November 1985, the British government formally recommitted, in an internationally binding accord, lodged with the UN, to the aim of power-sharing between the two communities in Northern Ireland, a central objective of the Carter Initiative. More immediately, and arguably more importantly, in the absence of a regional settlement, the AIA gave Dublin a limited but formal role in policy formulation in Northern Ireland. For the first time since partition in 1920–1921, Dublin now had a political voice in affairs north of the Irish border. As part of the arrangement, the Irish government appointed a team of civil servants to Belfast, led by Michael Lillis—alongside Hume, the chief instigator of the Carter statement, and again along with Hume, arguably the key player in the redirection of Irish-American power into the diplomatic channels that culminated in the AIA. Through this

¹¹¹ Finnegan, "Irish-American Relations," 103.

¹¹² FitzGerald, *All in a Life*, 527.

¹¹³ Quoted in Alistair McAlpine, *Once a Jolly Bagman: Memoirs* (London, 1997), 272.

accord, Irish officials gained the ear of the London government, and so an increasing influence over British policy in Northern Ireland.¹¹⁴ And it was exactly this influence, detested by unionists, that eventually led the main unionist parties to begin negotiations with the SDLP on a local power-sharing settlement – a means for them to curb Dublin’s role in Northern Ireland.¹¹⁵

Irish-America’s influence regarding Northern Ireland also grew during this period. Powerfully emphasizing the extent to which the Irish and now even the British government was giving the Horsemen privileged and advance notice of political developments in the region, on the very day that the AIA was signed, O’Neill was in the Oval Office alongside Reagan to give a joint press conference welcoming the accord. Even more notable was the announcement by Reagan and O’Neill that the U.S. government would be providing financial backing for the AIA, with Reagan explicitly linking this to the commitment given by Carter eight years earlier.¹¹⁶ Originating with Hume, the idea of Washington offering a financial dividend for political progress in Northern Ireland had been strongly opposed by London during the negotiation of the Carter statement. The Horsemen, however, were adamant that such an explicit incentive had to be included, and subsequently lobbied hard for Reagan to deliver on his predecessor’s promise.¹¹⁷ Again, this clearly showed the links between the breakthrough of the Carter Initiative

¹¹⁴ Jennifer Todd, “Institutional Change and Conflict Regulation: The Anglo-Irish Agreement (1985) and the Mechanisms of Change in Northern Ireland,” *West European Politics* 34, no. 4 (2011).

¹¹⁵ Feargal Cochrane, *Unionist Politics and the Politics of Unionism since the Anglo-Irish Agreement* (Cork, 1997).

¹¹⁶ Reagan, “Statement on the United Kingdom-Ireland Agreement Concerning Northern Ireland,” November 15, 1985, in the American Presidency Project, accessed August 31 2016, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=38072>.

¹¹⁷ Mark Durkan “Shaping the Peace,” in *John Hume: Irish Peacemaker*, eds. Seán Farren and Denis Haughey (Padstow: 2015), 125.

and the AIA, and with much of the political progress that subsequently followed in Northern Ireland. In the aftermath of the Cold War the “Special Relationship” became less precious, meaning Clinton could afford to be far bolder than either Carter or Reagan in his interventions.¹¹⁸ But Clinton was clearly building on a platform constructed initially by the endeavors of the Horsemen. Furthermore, before arguably Clinton’s most vital and undoubtedly his most controversial contribution to the Northern Ireland peace process – his granting of a U.S. visa to the Sinn Féin leader, Gerry Adams, in January 1994 – he had first sought approval from Ted Kennedy.¹¹⁹ Kennedy had first sought the assent of Hume, and it is perhaps fitting that the two men had met and discussed the matter at the funeral of Tip O’Neill, who had died earlier that month.¹²⁰ Thus, even as he was being laid to rest, O’Neill was bringing together actors and promoting decisions that that would help advance peace in Northern Ireland.¹²¹ By granting a visa to Adams, Clinton offered tacit of the Sinn Féin leader’s political efforts, thus increasing Adams’ authority over hardliners in the republican movement, and helping him make the case for an IRA ceasefire. When a cessation followed six months later, political commentators thus cited Clinton’s decision as a significant contributing factor.¹²²

¹¹⁸ Cox, “Bringing in the ‘International’”; Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 253-66.

¹¹⁹ E. Mallie and D. McKittrick, *Endgame in Ireland* (London, 2001), 179; Clinton recalled that the UK Prime Minister, John Major, refused to take his calls for many days after the visa decision. Bill Clinton, *My Life* (London, 2005), 580.

¹²⁰ Ted Kennedy, *A Memoir: True Compass* (London, 2009), 462

¹²¹ Little wonder that Garret FitzGerald wrote an obituary for O’Neill entitled “The most Helpful Ally Ireland Has ever had in Washington,” *The Irish Times*, January 8, 1994, 12.

¹²² Cox, “Bringing in the ‘International’,” 687.

All of this, however, began with the initial breakthrough of the Carter statement in 1977. Though a vicious cycle of conflict continued for nearly two more decades, and political progress in this period was by no means linear, there is a connection between Carter's statement and the comprehensive peace settlement announced in Belfast in 1998. Lillis, also involved in the negotiation of the AIA, and some of the earliest discussions that eventually delivered an IRA ceasefire, cites Carter's speech as a prerequisite to these later developments: "it got the Northern Ireland issue on the agenda of the U.S. government and it was part of its foreign policy from then on. That was never reversed and I think it has been vital to the peace process and to what went before it, the Anglo-Irish Agreement, etc."¹²³ Donlon, the other key Irish diplomat involved in the Carter Initiative, also saw it as both a historical breakthrough and the basis for future peace efforts: "[G]oing right back to Charles Stewart Parnell, successive generations of Irish nationalist leaders had sought to put pressure on the Americans to put pressure on the Brits. We knew that it did not work ... So, that was the objective of [our] policy [in the 1970s] and it did take some time for people ... [but] by 1976, '77, '78 they certainly had moved to accept the DFA's subtle position ... [and] Carter's statement in 1977 marks the beginning of a huge breakthrough on which we then subsequently were able to build."¹²⁴

The "subtle position" involved an effective recalibration of Irish nationalists' strategy in the United States, with a conscious effort to moderate the stance of leading Irish-Americans. This obviously helped advance peace in Northern Ireland in an immediate and direct way: by discouraging the flow of U.S. dollars to the IRA. However, in turn, and over time, the Horsemen's consistent condemnation of republican violence also helped them to gain political

¹²³ Lillis, interview with authors.

¹²⁴ Donlon, interview with authors.

purchase in London, or at least made it harder for British policy-makers and their allies in the State Department to resist the Horsemen's diplomatic endeavors. Moreover, by achieving, for the first time ever, a formal presidential statement on the Northern Ireland problem, the Horsemen demonstrated the logic and the value of their moderation. This encouraged other Irish-American politicians to follow suit—hence the increasing number of names, Republican as well as Democrat, appended to the Horsemen's St. Patrick's Day statements from the late 1970s, and joining the Friends of Ireland in the early 1980s.

The Friends of Ireland also used public moderation as a means to private political influence in order to ease the path towards the AIA in 1985. In this, they provided the template for any Irish-American lobby thereafter that sought to sway opinion in the White House rather than just the social clubs of the Bronx and South Boston. The success of this strategy of moderation as a means to influence would become most apparent during the Clinton years, but owed its genesis to the Carter administration. In this earlier period, Cold War concerns meant that Irish-American lobbyists had to contend with a very different set of attitudes towards the UK among Washington policy-makers. In the 1970s, the UK still formed a vital part of U.S. security interests, particularly in Europe.¹²⁵ This is what makes the Horsemen's initial achievement in the Carter statement the real mold-breaker. As Cochrane suggests: "The temperate and moderate stance of the Four Horsemen made them vital partners for London, Dublin and Washington in the management of the [Northern Ireland] conflict ... [and b]y the late 1970s a process had begun that led to major US involvement in the 1990s. It would have been difficult, if not impossible for

¹²⁵ Reynolds, "A 'Special Relationship'?", 15.

Clinton to have picked up the ball and run with it, if President Carter had not started it rolling in 1977.”¹²⁶

What this article has demonstrated is the reason why Carter started the ball rolling on Northern Ireland. This began with the “temperate and moderate stance of the Four Horsemen” that Cochrane notes – a stance which Hume and Irish government officials had consciously encouraged them to adopt. By condemning unequivocally those supporting violence in Northern Ireland, the Horsemen helped reduce donations to Noraid, but also changed the views of the British government towards Irish America. While still not welcoming the Irish diaspora’s perceived “interference,” London found it difficult to reject the more moderate aims of the Horsemen, and particularly their help in combating the IRA.¹²⁷ At the same time, British officials were unaware of Dublin’s role in driving this strategy. Both factors led London to acquiesce in the process leading to the Carter statement, accepting that resistance could be more injurious to its interests. This served to neutralize the effective veto that the “Special Relationship” had previously given the British over any American involvement in Northern Ireland. British acquiescence in the Carter Initiative in turn allowed the State Department to give way to the Horsemen’s demands, where any previous such proposal had not even reached the Oval Office.¹²⁸ This explains how, long before the more sustained engagement of the Clinton administration, and before the collapse of the Soviet Union, a transatlantic alliance of constitutional Irish nationalist actors was able to navigate the wider politics of the Cold War, and

¹²⁶ Cochrane, *Northern Ireland*, 157-58.

¹²⁷ Dumbrell, *A Special Relationship*, 248.

¹²⁸ Cooper, *The Politics of Diplomacy*, 21.

engage the support of world's most powerful government in an effort to build peace in Northern Ireland.