

by fax

15 August 1996

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W/e

Dear Martin,

REPUBLICAN PARTY PLATFORM: NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Just to complete the correspondence resting with Simon McDonald's letter of 9 August, I should record that the final version of the 1996 Republican Platform, entitled "Restoring American World Leadership", included the following paragraph:

Ireland: We support efforts to establish peace with justice in Northern Ireland through a peace process inclusive of all parties who reject violence. During this difficult period in Irish history, we encourage private U.S. investment in the North, fully consistent with the MacBride principles for fair employment, in order to address the systemic discriminatory practices that still exist, especially against Catholics, in the workplace and elsewhere. We call on all parties to renounce terrorism in the Northern Ireland conflict.

2. The first sentence, with the addition of the last three words, came out fine. But, as predicted, the drafters declined to drop the reference to MacBride. Unfortunately, there is also unhelpful, and inaccurate, language about the continuation of "systemic discriminatory practices" in Northern Ireland.

✓ Dole has made clear that he does not regard this language - or any other part of the Republican Platform - as binding. But the MacBride lobby will be crowing; and it is largely because of the forward position taken by the Republicans that domestic political advisers in the White House are insisting that the President now trumps them on MacBride (I have written separately to David Gibson in DED about this).

W. Westmacott
Peter Westmacott

cc: PS/Michael Ancram, NIO
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