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~~Miss Keston~~
Mr. Drayton Q/R
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5th June 1977

On Wednesday, 25th May, Mr. Hume came to lunch with Kate Polowatzky, Foreign Editor of Associated Press (recently promoted to Assistant General Manager), Joe O'Hara, Editor of America Magazine and Lucinda Franks, a frequent contributor to News and other journals. Again, Mr. Hume won the admiration of these individuals and inspired them with a fresher angle on Northern Ireland events. Polowatzky made the point that newspaper editors throughout the U.S. were now seeking more analytical articles on foreign news. Hume said he

CONFIDENTIAL apply this rule to the reporting of Irish news (a contact in NY had already reported to us the issuing of such a letter). This would probably mean that wire services will try

Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin 2.

For attention of Information Section

Re: Visit of John Hume to the United States - Media Aspects

On the occasion of Mr. Hume's recent visit to the U.S. to address the Annual Dinner of the Ireland Fund, the opportunity was availed of to introduce him to a number of important media contacts in New York. In my experience since I arrived in the U.S. last September, one of the most frequent misconceptions incurred is that the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland has no effective representatives or "defenders" other than the IRA. This is often the result of an unsophisticated understanding of Northern Ireland politics but also stems from frequent inability of journalists to explain the breakdown of political loyalties and parties in Northern Ireland. The Minister's emphasis on the irrelevance of violence (except in a negative sense in the Northern Ireland situation) has helped to focus attention on constitutional politics but I have still noticed a reluctance to write about the political parties which do exist. Part of the SDLP's problem stems quite simply from its name, because in the U.S., Social, democratic and labour are the slogans of the left wing radicalism. Equally unsatisfactory is the description of the "mainly Catholic" party which itself has been rejected by Mr. Paddy Devlin. However, Mr. Hume, has succeeded during his visits to the U.S. in bringing the SDLP more to the forefront and his recent appearance in public on the same platform as Senator Kennedy was a tremendous success in public relations terms. I attach for ease of reference the reports in the three major New York papers of that event and also the report in the Tablet newspaper.

On Thursday, 19th May, I brought Mr. Hume to lunch with Bob Semple, Foreign Editor of the New York Times. They had met each other previously at a Derry peace march last autumn but had not had time to speak seriously. Semple was extremely impressed by Mr. Hume's philosophy and politics and said he would instruct his London Bureau to write a feature on Mr. Hume and the SDLP. It is likely that Roy Reed will have this assignment as he has written very competently on his previous assignments in Ireland.

6th June 1977

On Wednesday, 25th May, Mr. Hume came to lunch with Nate Polowestzky, Foreign Editor of Associated Press (recently promoted to Assistant General Manager), Joe O'Hare, Editor of America Magazine and Lucinda Franks, a frequent contributor to the New York Times and other journals. Again, Mr. Hume won the admiration of these individuals and inspired them with a fresher understanding of Northern Ireland events. Polowestzky made the point that newspaper editors throughout the U.S. were now seeking more analytical articles on foreign news. Generally and he intended to apply this rule to the reporting of Irish news (a contact in A?P. had already reported to me the issuing of such a letter). This would probably mean that wire services will try and cutback on the everyday reporting on "news" events but we would hopefully have more detailed and almost by extension more favourable articles about the Northern Ireland situation. Mr. Hume also took the opportunity to confirm to Joe O'Hare (as I had done earlier) Lester Wolff's generally unhelpful approach regarding the Northern Ireland situation. You will recall that in a recent editorial, America Magazine quoted Wolff regarding human rights in Northern Ireland.

On June 3, I had lunch with Walter Logan, Foreign Editor of UPI, and he confirmed to me that his journalists are seeking to write more comprehensive articles on the Irish situation in an effort to offset the frustration of readers who are blinded by constant superficial reporting of violence. In our conversation, Don O'Higgins' position as UPI stringer in Dublin was raised but Logan seems to have quite some regard for his writing; largely based on two articles last year about children in Northern Ireland and the women's peace movement.

On Saturday, May 21, at the dinner given for the SDLP representatives by Governor Carey, Mr. Hume spoke with Michael O'Neill, editor of the Daily News (daily circulation of which is incidentally 2,058,020). I had already spoken with O'Neill and complimented him on recent editorials which have proved extremely helpful to us. They are written by Tom Ricke, who used to be a speech writer for Governor Carey. (Copies of the editorials are attached). O'Neill offered Mr. Hume the right of reply regarding Pete Hamill's controversial attack on Governor Carey's speech in Dublin but Kevin Cahill had already replied the following day, and in any case a right of reply is not taken that seriously in the U.S. media. I would hope then that O'Neill will agree to assign someone to write a feature on the SDLP instead. At a party given on May 25 by the Deputy Consul General for Mr. Hume, the latter also spoke with Jimmy Breslin who is an influential columnist whose Daily News column is syndicated around the U.S. Breslin has come around in recent months to condemn the politics of violence but reacted nevertheless unfavourably, perhaps for personality reasons, to Carey's Dublin speech. Following a long conversation with Mr. Hume, he agreed to publish figures and statistics regarding Northern Ireland violence if they were sent to him by Mr. Hume.

6th June 1977

The interview by Denis Horgan in the Washington Star of 31st May (copy enclosed) was also very helpful and it has been circulated widely. In conclusion the series of contacts made during the visit should have a significant impact in undermining the advocates in the U.S. of the politics of violence in Northern Ireland.

Foreign Affairs

Ted Smyth

Information Section

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Press & Information Officer, The United States - Media Aspects

Encs. ... of Mr. Hume's recent visit to the U.S. to address the ... of the Ireland Fund, the opportunity was availed of to ... to a number of important media contacts in New York. ... since I arrived in the U.S. last September, one of ... misconceptions incurred is that the Catholic minority ... has no effective representatives or "defenders" ... is often the result of an unsophisticated ... of Northern Ireland politics but also stems from ... of journalists to explain the breakdown of ... and parties in Northern Ireland. The Minister's ... on the irrelevance of violence (except in a negative sense ... Northern Ireland situation) has helped to focus attention on ... but I have still noticed a reluctance to state ... which do exist. Part of the ... problem stems quite simply from its name, because in the ... and labour are the slogans of the left wing ... is the description of the ... party which itself has been rejected by Mr. Paddy ... Mr. Hume, has succeeded during his visits to the ... the SDLP more to the forefront and his recent ... as the same platform as Senator Feeney was a ... in public relations terms. I attach for each of ... the three major New York aspects of the ... in the Tablet newspaper.

On Monday 28th May, I brought Mr. Hume to lunch with ... Foreign Editor of the New York Times. They had met each other ... peace march last autumn but had not yet ... to speak ... Sample was extremely impressed by Mr. Hume's ... and politics and said he would instruct his ... to write a feature on Mr. Hume and the SDLP. It is ... still have this assignment as he has ... his previous assignments to Ireland.