



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Call on Cardinal Daly

1. I called on Cardinal Daly in Armagh on 1 April, 1992. We had an initial exchange of views on the prospects for the round-table talks, which covered familiar ground. He was sceptical of Paisley's readiness for real dialogue.

2. We discussed also the reported interest in Sinn Fein circles about a cessation of violence. The Cardinal said that an approach had been made to him about two years ago. He had signalled this to Mr. Brooke, who had dispatched John Blelloch to meet the Cardinal and to draw up the "pros and cons" - heavily weighted on the side of the "cons" by Blelloch, the Cardinal thought. He was aware of more recent developments in this area. He assumed that Adams, McGuinness and Morrison were anxious to get away from the campaign of violence, which they saw was going nowhere, but the position of other elements among the Provos was less clear. He thought a full cessation of violence was on offer in return for "meaningful" negotiations with the British, but the difficulty was to decode "meaningful" which, at one extreme, might mean delivering all the Provisionals' traditional demands. The Provisionals were looking for a result which would retrospectively justify their campaign, and that was difficult to achieve.

3. While he felt it was right to cautiously explore the options for peace, he had and would have no direct contact with paramilitaries as a matter of principle. It was important to maintain a clear distinction between the political and religious. The paramilitaries hoped to bring the four churches to the point where they would agree a document which could then be exploited to pressurise the British. He felt the Church should not let itself be used in this way.

He felt the four churches would have difficulty in agreeing to any joint position on a peace formula, in particular the Presbyterians.

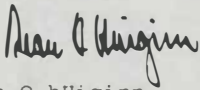
4. The Cardinal repeated his concern about security force harassment of young nationalists. The security forces were unmistakably part of the problem. He recalled the heavy handed police presence at the funerals of the four shot at Clonoe. Local opinion had been strongly hostile to the Provisionals, not least because of the foolhardiness of the attack on Coalisland barracks, but the policing of the funerals had turned this around - at least until the Provisionals confronted Canon McEntaggart, which angered local people. He recalled many representations he had made to the British on the political effect of their security policies.

5. He spoke in very strong terms on the recent incident of strip searching of female prisoners in Maghaberry. He said the authorities did not take account of how traumatic this could be for the women, particularly where there was a background of child abuse or rape. He urged us to take the matter up with the British and said he was very certain that the incident had not in any way been "set up" by the Provos. He also came out strongly in favour of some practical form of segregation in Crumlin Road. He was dismissive of the argument that segregation increased the control of paramilitaries over prisoners - tensions among the paramilitaries in these closed situations often had the opposite effect.

6. He said that negotiation with the Northern Department of Education on Catholic schools was progressing very satisfactorily. The financial side had been more or less sorted out. The question of control had not yet been settled, but he seemed to anticipate no problem when

discussions resumed after the election.

7. He spoke very approvingly of the work of the International Fund for Ireland and of the Chairman, John B. McGuckian. He stressed the importance of finding a suitable replacement, but had no candidate to suggest.



Seán O hUiginn

7 April, 1992