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EMBASSY OF IRELAND

2234 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

CONFIDENTIAL

11 May 1992

M. Keenan
1/5/92

PSS
Mr Nally
Counsellor A1
Mr Kelleher re par 6.
[Signature]
1/5/92

Dear Assistant Secretary

1. On the occasion of his recent visit to Washington, I hosted a small reception for Godfrey Brown, the former Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. Towards the end of the reception, I also took the opportunity to have a private word with Dr Brown about his recent meetings with the leadership of the UDA, and with Gerry Adams and Tom Hartley of Sinn Féin.
2. The above meetings, according to Dr Brown, arose from the sense of depression and hopelessness that pervaded the North after the Teebane tragedy. He and his close friend, Jack Weir (who was at the original talks with Sinn Fein and the IRA in Feakle in the 1970's), agonised over what might be done and finally decided to seek a meeting with Sinn Féin. They felt however that to be even-handed, and to ensure some "cover" in their own community, they should meet the UDA leadership first.
3. Dr Brown said that the UDA personnel he met - whom he is convinced were the leadership - were young and not particularly articulate. They conveyed a clear sense, however, that they were firmly in control of their organisation. Overall, the discussion did not develop much

beyond a reiteration of the (known) UDA position that, if the IRA were to announce a ceasefire, the UDA would declare a cessation of violence. The discussion ended, at Dr Weir's suggestion, in a joint prayer for peace.

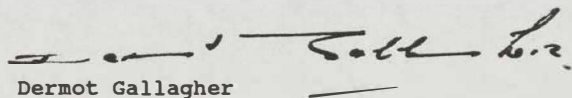
3. Adams and Hartley, on the other hand, were impressive, thoughtful and articulate, albeit within fairly predictable parameters. Dr Brown had a sense from their responses that they accepted that the IRA campaign was unwinnable in military terms but, at the same time, could only be called off in circumstances where they were not seen to be reneging on the last twenty years. Adams also expressed considerable concern about the effect of the troubles on disadvantaged communities and his worry about young people being inevitably involved in the conflict - in this regard, he worried out loud about what the future might hold for his own son.
4. Brown and Weir intend holding a further meeting with the Sinn Féin leaders, after which they hope to have a clearer sense of the possibility for movement. He added, however, that a major question continued to be the capacity of Adams and Hartley to deliver the "hard men", even if they wished to do so.

Other aspects

5. In his response to my welcoming remarks, Dr Brown said that it was his first time in an Irish Embassy and that he felt "very much at home". He also paid a generous tribute to the efforts of the Government on, inter alia, security cooperation, and also to their lobbying in Europe in support of Northern concerns on issues such as agriculture.

6. Finally, I might mention that Dr Brown expressed a willingness to brief the Department privately on any further meetings he might have with Sinn Féin and the UDA.]

Yours sincerely



Dermot Gallagher
Ambassador

Seán Ó hUiginn Esq.
Assistant Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs