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BÉAL FEIRSTE

BELFAST

1 June, 1993

*Fit on Political
developments file*

Mr. Sean O hUiginn
Assistant Secretary
Anglo-Irish Division
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin 2

Dear Assistant Secretary

Marcus Dodd's farewell Reception

Marcus Dodds finally left the Secretariat at the end of last week. You are already familiar with at least some of the farewells which marked his passing! His own farewell took place on Thursday last, 27 May, in his Downpatrick home. The event was well attended by members of the bureaucracy, the arts and personal friends of Marcus. It also included, interestingly, both Roy and Hazel Bradford, as well as Brum Henderson, a well known figure in (Liberal) unionist circles. I had an opportunity to speak with all three, including, a fairly lengthy exchange with Hazel Bradford.

Hazel Bradford

Her chief preoccupation of the moment was not so much the local election results as the damage done to Party Headquarters in Glengall Street by the recent car bomb. She put a brave face on about the local election results, commenting that the UUP vote had held up well, thus vindicating its approach with regard to talks. She was looking forward to the party meeting on 31 May. During our conversation she revealed herself to be surprisingly naive with regard to developments and politics in the South despite her claim to "know well" the situation, having been educated there by nuns! Speaking of the nationalist minority in Northern Ireland, she advanced the theory (heard sometimes up here) that, since hundreds of thousands of Irish people lived happily in England, under British rule, she could not see why the nationalist population here were not equally happy to live under British rule. On the Talks, she asserted that what we were seeking was joint authority over Northern Ireland, something which the Unionists could never agree to. When I asked her why and how she proposed satisfying the legitimate aspiration of the nationalist minority to have their Irish identity given recognition, she appeared simply nonplussed and

not to have thought out a position to any depth. She also gave voice to the view that the Unionist community here is in a greater state of unease that at any time since the early 1970s.

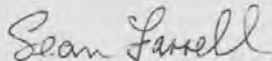
Roy Bradford

I had a much briefer discussion with Roy Bradford who echoed his wife's comments on insecurity and indeed developed the theme. He claimed that the current uncertainty and disaffection among Unionists was generating increased support for loyalist paramilitaries, citing one acquaintance who was willing "to give a cheque if asked", as well as more worrying tales of recruitment by paramilitaries in areas of North Down. Bradford also expressed an interest in doing a profile of the Tanaiste for the Belfast Telegraph, commenting that he had done one recently in respect of Brian Lenihan.

Brum Henderson

I had a discussion also with Brum Henderson, a liberal unionist who is on the Board of Cooperation North. His family formerly owned the News Letter. He provided me with an interesting footnote to one of the decisions in the 1960s which helped ignite the Civil Rights movement and which was of interest to me in a personal sense as one of the first graduates of the NUU. He was a member of the Lockwood Commission which, in the 1960s recommended that the new University for Northern Ireland be established in Coleraine rather than Derry or any other suggested site. He recalled that this decision had been taken in the teeth of opposition from the Unionists in Derry and that part of the thinking had been to route it away from Magee, which was seen as too much under the influence of the Presbyterian Church! He spoke warmly and enthusiastically of his work in Cooperation North and expressed the hope that it was achieving something significant (presumably, though he did not mention it, as a subtle hint that they would welcome continued or increased support from us).

Yours sincerely



Sean Farrell