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Reference Code: 2021/95/43

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Donegal Mr. McCarthy (27)
Go see please. This meeting took place on Friday last. JH 26/10

Meeting with Rev. John Dunlop

1. I had a meeting at his request with the Rev. John Dunlop on 22nd October.
2. He was concerned about the Hume-Adams process, probing me for information as to what it involved and expressing concern that it might mean "rewarding" the Provisional IRA for the campaign of violence.
3. I reassured him that the principles of consent and not negotiating with terrorists were constants of Government policy, as had been made clear repeatedly by the Taoiseach and Tanaiste. Subject to basic principles such as these, if the Republican movement wanted to move definitively away from violence and into the political process, it made sense to encourage and enable them to do so, if a way out could be found which did not compromise the basic principles of either Government which could be sold in acceptable terms to their followers. The alternative would be to deal with the IRA only by security repression, and there were realistic doubts whether peace could be achieved by such a strategy. I developed the point that there was a growing acceptance in the nationalist community in Ireland generally of the reality of Unionism, and growing awareness the unionist community had to be accommodated and that their consent was vital. Hume's dialogue with Adams was entirely in that spirit, and there was some hope that extreme republicanism was attempting, in its own subjective terms, to come to terms with that reality also.
4. Dr. Dunlop pressed for explanations why the IRA might now decide to abandon violence. (This reflected I think his worry that substantial concessions might be on offer in

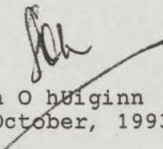
return for that). I explained the theories which had been advanced about generational change within the Republican movement, the growing awareness of the real futility of the campaign, etc.

5. He asked whether there were differences within the Republican movement. I said the general view was that they were a coherent group and could not be grouped into "hawks" and "doves". If they believed their agenda would be espoused, then nothing could be done, but if they wished genuinely to get "off the hook" that should be facilitated, and there seemed some grounds for hope this was the case. If they could acknowledge the substance of unionist rights on condition they were formally derived from the realities of Ireland rather than from rights of the British Government over Ireland, they should be encouraged in that process. I drew an analogy with the New Ireland Forum, which had been dismissed or rejected by Unionists but whose objective impact was a significant enhancement of nationalist acceptance of the reality and integrity of unionism. I recalled the Taoiseach's statements that his first objective was to secure a situation where all differences would be resolved exclusively by peaceful political means, and only then to negotiate new arrangements. Various rumours about joint sovereignty etc. could be dismissed.

6. Dr. Dunlop expressed worries that there could be a shift towards concern for the Republican position at the expense of concern for the Unionist community in Northern Ireland. A united front of the Irish Government, the SDLP and Sinn Fein against the unionists would be a very backward step. I said that the principle of consent was taken for granted, so, as a matter of realism, one was looking at Northern Ireland remaining within the United Kingdom, for some considerable time into the future at any rate. In those circumstances a major area of concern should be how that situation, which did not meet the nationalist aspiration, could be made acceptable to them. Unionists also had a

vital interest in that process. Nationalists had the critical mass to resist imposition in Northern Ireland and change away from rather than towards unionist simplicities would be required to win their consent. I assured him however there was no neglect of the unionist dimension, recounting the efforts the Tanaiste had made to secure a meeting with unionist representatives.

7. Dr. Dunlop said he was very much in favour of such meetings and hoped they would take place. He reverted to the question of Sinn Fein involvement in Talks. He agreed that in principle a peaceful Sinn Fein would be entitled to whatever representation was warranted by their democratic mandate, but, if this was indeed a matter of course, they would need something extra, even as a "face-saver", for an end to violence. That something extra would be seen as a reward for violence. What would it be? I said it was premature as yet to speculate, but anything offered would be compatible with basic principles of both Governments, including of course their profound opposition to violence.
8. Dr. Dunlop agreed warmly on the need for both traditions to develop mutual respect, and he acknowledged unionist failings in this respect. He said that the positive notes in Government statements were registered very carefully by the unionist community, just as negative ones were. I said this was reassuring, as the positive feedback for our outreach efforts was sometimes less than deafening.
9. He is looking forward to his group's dinner with the Tanaiste on 1st November. I confirmed the Tanaiste's intention to attend. Dr. Dunlop said that in addition to any officials the Tanaiste wished to bring, Mr. Donal Spring would also be very welcome.


Sean O hUiginn
22 October, 1993

cc PST
PSS
Mr F. Murray
Joint Sec.