

UNDER/  
SEC 84/6  
-5 JUN 1990

M: BRIAN BLACKWELL  
5 JUNE 1990

cc PS/Minister of State (B&L) - B  
PS/Dr Mawhinney (B&L)  
PS/PUS (B&L) - B  
PS/Sir K Bloomfield - B  
Mr Burns - B  
Mr Ledlie - B  
Mr Alston - B  
Mr Thomas - B  
Mr A Wilson - B 178  
Mr Spence - B  
Mr Wood (B&L) - B  
Mr J McConnell - B  
Mr Dodds - B  
Mr R Wilson - B  
Mr T Watson, PAB - B  
HMA Dublin  
HMA Holy See  
Mr George RID, FCO

PS SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) - B

#### SUCCESSOR TO CARDINAL O'FIAICH

Following discussion at the Secretary of State's morning meeting on 9th May which was attended by PUS, Sir K Bloomfield, Messrs Ledlie, Burns, Alston and Wood, SIL was asked to provide coordinated advice on the modalities of transmitting an appropriate message to the Vatican to register our interest in an element of consultation over the appointment of a successor to Cardinal O'Fiaich.

2. Coincidentally, our Ambassador to the Holy See was already scheduled to meet Archbishop Gerada in Rome on 21 May. During their discussion it seems the Archbishop, without any prompting from the Ambassador, launched straight into the question of the search for a new Cardinal. He made it clear that he was already well aware (presumably from his earlier conversation with Dr. Mawhinney) of our interest and he said that he intended that the three names which, under the rules of such appointments, he was

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required to put forward, would all be people whom he knew were well regarded by us. Gerada actually went on to mention the names of Bishops Edward and Cahal Daly in this context.

ARCHBISHOP BARBARITO

3. In response to a question from the Ambassador, Archbishop Gerada indicated that he felt that an approach to the Secretariat of State in the Vatican might not be wise at this juncture; this was delicate ground and the Holy See was jealous of its preserve. The Ambassador, while agreeing that the matter is rather delicate, in fact sees no difficulty in raising the issue in Rome; for instance when he meets Archbishop Sodano on other business. As he pointed out, the Vatican is well used to frank speaking in private. It has suggested to Gerada that, although Archbishop

Barbarito would go to Northern Ireland as the Holy See's political

4. In parallel to this, meanwhile, a letter has now come in from Bishop Cahal Daly seeking a call for Archbishop Gerada on the Secretary of State - some time after 6 June. SIL recommend that the Secretary of State should respond positively to this request and a draft reply to Bishop Cahal Daly is attached. It would be normal to send a Private Secretary's reply, but in view of the personal warmth of the Bishop's letter, I have assumed the Secretary of State will wish to reply personally. However,

in the meanwhile in view of Archbishop Gerada's obvious sympathy

5. In the light of the Archbishop's willingness to discuss the matter of Cardinal O'Fiaich's successor with our Ambassador to the Vatican it is likely that he will raise the matter again in conversation with Mr. Brooke. If however he does not, we see no difficulty in the Secretary of State mentioning it, albeit in a low key way. The Secretary of State might simply say that he is aware that the matter of Cardinal O'Fiaich's successor was touched on in the Archbishop's recent conversation with Dr. Mawhinney and he would simply like to endorse the Minister's view that it would be beneficial to all if the late Cardinal's successor was someone who could carry forward the Catholic outlook and philosophy on major issues within a more broadly based and tolerant framework than had perhaps been the case in recent years. (SIL will provide

a more substantial line to take when the meeting with the Archbishop is confirmed).

#### ARCHBISHOP BARBARITO

6. The Foreign Office is still considering whether the question of Cardinal O'Fiaich's successor should be raised with Archbishop Barbarito. Gerada has told our Ambassador to the Holy See that now that Cardinal O'Fiaich has died, the main obstacle to a visit by Archbishop Barbarito to Northern Ireland has disappeared and he thought that Bishop Cahal Daly should now suggest to Archbishop Barbarito that he should go to Belfast. Our Ambassador has suggested to Gerada that, although Archbishop Barbarito would go to Northern Ireland as the Holy See's political representative, it would probably be easier for such a visit to take place if it was closely associated with some suitable religious occasion around which a programme of calls on Ministers might be arranged; this might provide a useful opportunity to raise the matter of the Cardinal's successor with Archbishop Barbarito.

7. We will consult further with the Foreign Office. However, in the meanwhile in view of Archbishop Gerada's obvious sympathy to our interest and his knowledge of Northern Ireland I recommend we should do no more than raise the issue when the Secretary of State meets Archbishop Gerada.

#### BRIEFING OF THE VATICAN ON NORTHERN IRELAND

8. The Secretary of State has also, separately, asked whether in the light of Dr. Mawhinney's discussion with Archbishop Gerada more might be done to brief the Vatican on Northern Ireland, rather as we do with key Cardinals in the United States.

9. The position is that the Vatican is already briefed regularly through our Embassy there and also through the Papal

Nuncio to Ireland who, although based in Dublin, has of course ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the whole of Ireland. We believe this offers adequate scope for HMG's interests in Northern Ireland to be made known to the Secretariat of State, though it has to be said we are fortunate that the present Nuncio takes a keen interest in Northern Ireland and obviously takes on board the views of the more moderate leaders of the Catholic community. For instance during the conversation reported above with the Ambassador, Gerada confirmed that he had recently discussed the question of social justice in Northern Ireland with John Hume who had agreed with him (Gerada) that there was no justification today for any suggestion that social justice did not exist in Northern Ireland.

Conclusion

10. I therefore recommend that:

a. the Secretary of State should write to Bishop Cahal Daly welcoming a meeting with Archbishop Gerada;

b. at the meeting the Secretary of State should raise the issue of the successor to Cardinal O'Fiaich in a low key way, and the modalities of a visit to Northern Ireland by Archbishop Barbarito; and

c. that there should be no additional briefing arrangements for the Vatican on Northern Ireland affairs at present.

(signed:)

B A BLACKWELL  
SIL DIVISION  
5 JUNE 1990  
EXT OAB 6587

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DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE

TO:	ENCLOSURES	COPIES TO BE SENT
Bishop Cahal Daly		HCC:
Lisbreen		MR BLACKWELL
Somerton Rd		
Belfast BT15 4DE		

FOR SIGNATURE BY: SECRETARY OF STATE

Thank you for your letter of 23 May. I should be delighted to meet the Apostolic Nuncio, the most Reverend Emmanuel Gerada. My office will be in contact with yours to arrange a suitable date.

Thank you also for your good wishes and prayers for my efforts to promote political development. They are much appreciated.

I look forward to meeting you and Archbishop Gerada shortly.

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