

PAB/6186/DP

FROM: J E McCONNELL, PAB
8 MAY 1990



NOTE FOR THE RECORD

cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B)
PS/PUS (L&B)
Mr Burns
Mr Ledlie
Mr Alston
Mr Thomas
Mr Daniell

FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WITH FATHER REID

1. As instructed I maintained a strict listening role with Father Reid - the meeting lasted about 45 minutes and the following points of interest arose.
2. The Redemptorist submissions to the Irish Government, SDLP and Sinn Fein have not really got anywhere. Father Reid blamed inactivity on the part of a colleague who had been detailed to follow up some of the points arising and had not done so. John Hume had simply referred to it as "reams of paper" which really didn't mean very much. A sentiment echoed by Gerry Adams though Father Reid insists that Gerry Adams is still in the process of giving it consideration. Adams' main problem seems to be that there is no substance to the proposals in that there are so many interdependent actions which make it impossible to believe it can succeed. Father Reid says he will be continuing to press forward on this issue.
3. As in all his conversations Father Reid tends to go back on matters which he has raised before and in this instance he discussed a possible "declaration of neutrality" by HMG. He said that John Hume had been rather naive in suggesting to Adams that such a declaration should be the signal for a ceasefire not least because it was too simplistic and also the view that Adams portrayed to both Reid and Hume that "the British would say anything". When this approach seemed to be foundering John Hume then said to Adams that

"the statement could only be helpful in that it would give some latitude to both sides". He also suggested that once the British Government started to move it might be possible to move them even further.

4. Fr Reid then raised the possibility of a meeting convened by Cardinal O Fiaich in the same terms as he had raised it before. When I gave no response and changed the subject he did not persist in his enquiry.

5. He asked if he could ring me in another 2 weeks and I agreed.

[Signed]

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DP/6359

2. The circulation list on your minute of 8 March was, like previous papers in this series, fairly limited, and rightly so. But since PUS's meeting last Friday has expanded the circle of those who are now aware of your contacts, I suggest that when the time comes to record your next exchange with Fr Reid, you should seek the advice of PS/PUS as to how widely you should circulate your note.

SIGNED:

J E McCONNELL

11 March 1990
GAB 6447
DUEL/ER/15193

SECRET AND PERSONAL