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W. Hume
- 13/11
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PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS. 15/4
STORMONT,
BELFAST BT4 3SY
24th March, 1983.

Dr. G. Fitzgerald,
Office of the Taoiseach,
Government Buildings,
Dublin. 2.

cc 2814
PSS
Ms Hume
Ms. Burt
File copy 13/1

Dear Dr. Fitzgerald,

With reference to your letter of 18th March 1983 extending an invitation to me as the Leader of the Democratic Unionist Party to attend a preliminary meeting on the week beginning the 11th of April to make arrangements regarding the proposed Forum on the New Ireland put forward by the S.D.L.P. and supported by your Government, I would like to reiterate the public stand which I and my Party have already made. We see this Forum as a vehicle towards a United Ireland which has been continually rejected by the Unionist majority in Northern Ireland and we believe that it will only give encouragement to the Provisional I.R.A. and all those other groups which seek to bomb and shoot Unionists into an all Ireland state.

The setting up of such a Forum as this is seen as an extension of your false claim to jurisdiction over Northern Ireland, a claim which is unparalleled in the Community of Nations be it with the European Community or the United Nations. Your refusal to recognise the right of the people of Northern Ireland to remain part of the U.K. when you met to sign the Sunningdale Agreement in 1973 is simply reinforced by your interference through this Forum for a New Ireland in 1983.

Secondly, this Forum is not as you stated, an opportunity for those who believe in the Democratic ideal, to come together and discuss their differences. The S.D.L.P. which promoted the idea has failed consistently to realise its aims through the Ballot Box in Northern Ireland and has now sought to go outside the Democratic process

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of our country to obtain support for a goal which the majority has consistently rejected.

You would have done more for democracy on this Island by advising the S.D.L.P. to go and take their seats in the Democratic Forum which is available to them in Northern Ireland namely the Assembly.

Lastly, I note the comments of your Foreign Minister, Mr Barry, in relation to this Forum; he makes it very clear what its aims are:

"The S.D.L.P.'s idea for a Council for a New Ireland would mean the creation of a Forum which would be open to all parties North & South which shared a similar objective." That objective is in reality the over-riding of the wishes of the majority in Northern Ireland.

It is interesting to note that one of your Party Officers has realised the nonsense of your shibboleth of 'unity by consent' when he said last Monday:-

"Some two thirds of Northerners oppose any form of unity with their Southern neighbours. They wish to remain under the British Crown. Surely that must be their democratic right after 60 years of autonomy. The reverse - that the minority impose its wishes upon the majority is hardly tenable. How then can 'unity by consent' even be contemplated? It is a meaningless phrase.

My view of this forum leads to the conclusion that you seek to obtain the old goal of a United Ireland and as a Protestant and traditional Unionist I cannot have any part in it.

I note that you have not set a venue for the first or any subsequent meetings and would warn you that I personally will lead a campaign of resistance to any attempt which is made to use Northern Ireland as a venue for any meetings of your Forum for a New Ireland.

We do not wish to be bad neighbours and we do wish to live in peace with your country, but good neighbourliness is a two way process. We have never claimed jurisdiction over your territory or harboured the murderers of your people, but unfortunately our friendship has never been reciprocated. This was evidenced during World War II.

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Your contribution to peace in our Island should not be the setting up of this Forum, but the relinquishing of your territorial claim to Northern Ireland and the extradition of the murderers of Ulstermen presently living in your country.

Let me in the name of the people for whom I speak tell you in no uncertain terms that contrary to Mr Barry's declared goal we the British People of Ulster will never ever 'be faded out' from our Province.

Yours sincerely,

Ian R. K. Paisley

IAN R.K. PAISLEY, M.P.