



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2019/101/2368
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs
<b>Accession Conditions:</b>	Open
<b>Copyright:</b>	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON

17, GROSVENOR PLACE,  
SW1X 7HR

Telephone: 01-235 2171

TELEX: 916104

Confidential

10 November 1989

Mr. Dermot Gallagher  
Assistant Secretary  
Anglo-Irish Division

Dear Dermot

A conversation with John Hume

I had a brief conversation with John Hume in the Commons yesterday. You might like to have a note summarising two points of interest - with which, however, you may already be familiar.

On the Brooke controversy, Hume indicated that, when he first heard of the Secretary of State's remarks, he did not attach much significance to them. Later on, however, when he noted the very careful response to them from Gerry Adams, he wondered whether Brooke might not, after all, have been sending a deliberate signal to Adams. He regards Brooke as a highly intelligent and thoughtful man and, added to his own general experience of British Ministers (which is that "they never say things like that casually"), he wondered whether there had been some specific intention behind the remarks. He plans to put a direct question about this to the Secretary of State when he sees him shortly.

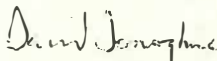
On the other hand, Hume was dismissive of Mary Holland's piece in last Sunday's Observer (which suggested that Brooke's remarks reflected an attempt by the NIO to influence a debate supposedly underway within the Republican movement). As our conversation continued, however, it was clear that he was even more irritated by an article contributed by Mary Holland to yesterday's Irish Times and by a recent BBC interview in which she appeared to espouse integrationism.

Hume's view is that there has been no debate so far within the Republican movement. He was, however, interested in the appearance of a Sinn Féin pamphlet recently which summarised (with his approval) the results of his dialogue with Sinn Féin last year but did not put any polemical gloss on these results. This suggests to him that a debate on the issues covered by the dialogue may be about to be launched within the Republican movement.

Brooke's remarks at least showed a British Minister thinking tactically and had the effect of reinforcing Hume's own long-standing call for dialogue between all parties to the conflict. Hume felt that Kevin McNamara's response to the controversy was badly judged. (On the other hand, he gave him full credit for turning up at the SDLP party conference, despite the flak which he would have to expect there).

On the Birmingham Six case, Hume commented that the involvement of people like Jeremy Corbyn in the B6 campaign (he was referring to a press conference held by Corbyn and Gerard Conlon at Westminster yesterday) was not helpful. The Birmingham Six have no hope of release, he remarked, unless, like the G4, they get Church leaders and other Establishment figures behind them. He noted that Roy Hattersley had come very slightly "off the fence" recently. He was aware that some doubts have been voiced about John Walker's innocence but, having known Walker for years, he himself remains absolutely certain that Walker is innocent.

Yours sincerely



David Donoghue  
Press and Information Officer