



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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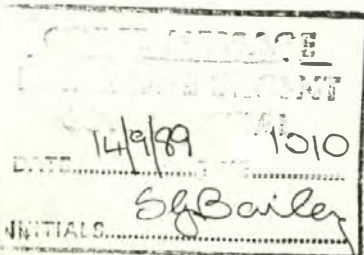
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9 copies with the  
views of Mr. O'Huigin.  
cc PS4; Mr. Nally  
PR; Mr. O'Huigin / Mr. Russell  
Cassidy A1  
Mr. McCarthy  
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TO HQ FROM BELFAST  
14 SEPTEMBER 1989

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FOR ASST. SEC. GALLAGHER

FROM O'HUIGIN INITIALS



1. PLEASE SEE MR. RUSSELL'S TELEX C503 TO MR. COLLINS PASSING TO US A BRITISH DELEGATION LIST RECEIVED FROM THE BRITISH EMBASSY.
2. WE HAD BEEN IN TOUCH IN THE COURSE OF YESTERDAY MORNING WITH VARIOUS SENIOR BRITISH OFFICIALS HERE, CONVEYING THE GENERAL VIEWS ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE CONFERENCE WHICH WE HAD BEEN GIVEN FROM THE POLITICAL LEVEL ON OUR SIDE AND ASKING THEM TO LET US HAVE THEIR DELEGATION LIST AS SOON AS IT WAS DECIDED. IN THE INTEREST OF AVOIDING SUPERFLUOUS PAPER WE WERE HOLDING BACK REPORTING ON THESE CONTACTS UNTIL WE COULD SUMMARISE THE OUTCOME. WE NOW FIND THE RESPONSE HAS BEEN MADE VIA THE BRITISH EMBASSY IN DUBLIN.
3. YOU WILL BE AWARE OF OUR CONCERNS ON THE QUALITY OF THE RESPONSE WE ARE GETTING IN THE SECRETARIAT ON A RANGE OF ISSUES AND A VERY MARKED PATTERN THAT OUR BRITISH COUNTERPARTS AT ALL LEVELS FREQUENTLY TELL US, I ASSUME TRUTHFULLY, THAT THEY ARE NOT, SO TO SPEAK, "IN THE LOOP" IN RELATION TO MANY HIGHLY RELEVANT DEVELOPMENTS ON WHICH WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED TO HAVE BEEN INFORMED IF THE SECRETARIAT WAS BEING WORKED IN THE SPIRIT THAT WAS EXPECTED. THIS MAY BE DUE TO PERSONALITY OR BUREAUCRATIC FACTORS BUT IT IS ALSO OBVIOUSLY CONSISTENT WITH A TACIT POLICY OF MARGINALISING THE OPERATION OF THE AGREEMENT, A POLICY WHICH MAY BE DISCERNIBLE IN OTHER AREAS ALSO, POSSIBLY WITH THE AIM OF DEMONSTRATING TO UNIONISTS THAT THE AGREEMENT IS PALPABLY HARMLESS AND IRRELEVANT ON ANY PRACTICAL LEVEL. IT MAY BE THAT THE FUNCTIONING OF THE SECRETARIAT WILL HAVE TO BE THE SUBJECT OF A FRANK EXCHANGE BETWEEN MINISTERS AT SOME POINT. IN THE MEANTIME, WE SHALL BE PART AUTHORS OF OUR OWN MISFORTUNES IF WE GO ALONG WITH ACTIONS WHICH CAN LATER BE USED TO SHOW THE SECRETARIAT IS REDUNDANT, AND THE PRESENT EXAMPLE FALLS VERY DISTINCTLY INTO THAT CATEGORY. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD

ALERT ALL OFFICERS INVOLVED IN CONTACTS WITH BRITISH OFFICIALS ON THE POINT SO AS TO ENSURE THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO BYPASS, (OR INDEED TO NEEDLESSLY DUPLICATE THE WORK OF), THE SECRETARIAT IS FIRMLY REJECTED BY THEM. WE ARE OF COURSE ALSO PROTESTING TO BRITISH OFFICIALS HERE ABOUT THE MATTER.

ENDS  
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