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Mr. Fellen

P/A

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Ballen

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1. Washington
2. Brit. Emb.

19/6

19 June 1991

Mr Brendan Scannell
Embassy of Ireland
Washington

* label Chief of Staff to PM Blair

Dear Brendan, *

Jonathan Powell who is to take up duty as First Secretary (Political) at British Embassy, Washington next month, called on me last Friday, as requested by the Embassy here. He also met Ronan Murphy, Noel Kilkenny and Patricia Cullen.

Powell seems pleasant, quite tough and ready to listen. (George Fergusson of the Embassy here, who was with him, made much of the conversational running.) His questions were about the level of cooperation in Washington between the Embassies and the degree to which Irish American opinion on the North has moderated and become informed, and support for Noraid and the like has declined. He spoke as well about the possible extent of constituency influence on the public statements of political figures, as opposed to their (perhaps different) personal views on Ireland.

Powell will be, I take it, your opposite number - he has been told that between a half and three quarters of his time will be taken up with N. Ireland-related questions. (Nothing was said of his predecessor, Cowper-Coles, and his well publicized remarks on the North last October.)

Finally, it may be of interest that Powell's elder brother, Charles was formerly Mrs Thatcher's foreign-policy adviser - he is now in the private sector.

With best regards.

Yours sincerely,



Michael FitzGerald