

FROM MICHAEL ANCRAM
21 JULY 1993

ASST./
SEC

16817
22 JUL 1993

C.C.B.U.

- 22.7
1. cc Mr Cahavan
2. Mr Semple JFP

cc: PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) - B
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Thomas 762/7 - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Wood (L&B) - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Cooke - B
Mr Brooker - B
Mrs Collins - B
Mr Quinn - B
Mr Archer, RID - B
HMA Dublin - B
Mr Caine - B

I think you may be
interested in the sort of
qualitative assessments which
(not infrequently) receive from
senior community leaders
of initiatives such as TSN,
MBW + community relations programmes.

PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B

JSW
22.7

1. Mr Cahavan
2. Mr McAtamney
23/7..
ple
cc TSN General

TALKS: THE ANCRAM ROUND

Michael Ancram met Cardinal Daly yesterday in Armagh, as a part of the ongoing Ancram Round. The Cardinal was in good spirits and appeared to be recovering well from his recent car accident.

2. Following some very general discussion on political issues the subject of Protestant alienation was raised by the Minister. The Cardinal was of the view that the perception of Protestant alienation was very real, but that this perception was an inevitable result of very welcome Government policy in terms of the Targeting Social Need and Making Belfast Work initiatives. Movement was needed on the Protestant side for these initiatives to work and the consequent feelings of losing ground would inevitably lead to some resentment. The Cardinal added that Unionist politicians should be trying to persuade their electorate of the value and indeed the

CONFIDENTIAL

ANCRAM/DEH/222

necessity of these initiatives. Taking up this latter point of the role of Unionist politicians, the Cardinal said that he had been very concerned at recent utterances by Unionist politicians along the lines that Loyalist violence was the inevitable consequence of the present political situation and the perceived persuance of a Nationalist agenda by HMG. The Cardinal said that this appears at least to attempt to excuse Loyalist violence and likened it to Gerry Adams' views on IRA violence.

3. The Minister asked the Cardinal how he might fill the present political vacuum. The Cardinal responded by saying that mutual trust and understanding between HMG and the Irish Government was vital to achieve progress. He added that (confidentially) he was of the view that Dick Spring had not been helpful recently in his press interviews and public speeches, and expressed disappointment at this. He felt that Mr Spring had a lot to learn about Northern Ireland and that his current comments were not sensitive enough to Unionist sensibilities. He was hopeful of a resumption of some form of Talks process and had been encouraged by James Molyneaux's speech on 12 July, while observing on the other hand that the Hume/Adams dialogue remained a potential obstacle to progress. In terms of possible solutions, he was not in favour of enlarged powers for local councils but did feel that more local accountability was required, since direct rule was not satisfactory for anyone.

4. The Cardinal felt that real progress must start at grass root level with the two communities learning to live together and accept their differences. He felt that the churches had a role here in bringing the communities together, particularly at this grass root level where they had a better feel for the issues than the politicians. The Minister asked how this mutual trust between the

CONFIDENTIAL

ANCRAM/DEH/222

ASST /

communities might be promoted. The Cardinal again referenced the MBW and TSN initiatives which he observed has helped enormously in West Belfast in reducing street tension and has led to an increased level of contentment amongst the population there. He felt there were very many useful community relations projects going on at present and that the churches had a significant role in influencing views and opinions in respect of these.

5. Throughout the discussion, the Cardinal was clearly very understanding of the Unionist position and very aware of the feelings of alienation in the Protestant community. He was keen for political progress and to assist in that goal in any way he could. To that end, he asked if there was anything the churches could usefully do to help. The Minister said that they should continue with their work at grass-roots level on community reconciliation, and that at a later stage their influence could perhaps be brought to bear in helping to close any gaps which might remain between the parties in coming to an agreed settlement. The Cardinal wished the Minister well in his endeavours in that regard.

SIGNED

KEITH JAGELMAN
PS/Michael Ancram
OAB Ext 6488
21 July 1993

CONFIDENTIAL

ANCRAM/DEH/222