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7 April, 1976

Private Secretary to the
Minister for Foreign Affairs,

For information.

Dear Father Brady,

Thank you for your letter of the 18th March, 1976 which the Taoiseach has asked me to reply to. The Taoiseach is very much aware that there are people engaged in violent activity on both sides of the community in Northern Ireland and he has, on numerous occasions, condemned violence no matter what source it may come from. In this context please see the attached speech which the Taoiseach delivered before both Houses of Congress on 17th March, 1976 and a copy of the communiqué issued by the Taoiseach and the President of the United States following discussions in Washington. It is fully recognised - and indeed you yourself have been very active in bringing detailed information about the situation to our attention - that, as part of this overall picture of violence, the Catholic population of the areas in North Belfast mentioned in your letter have been subjected to violent intimidation and in some cases even assassination.

The Irish Government's policy has in general been directed at ending violence in Northern Ireland and restoring peace and stability. It has agreed with the British Government that an acceptable form of government can only be established through both sections of the community agreeing on a system of government providing for partnership and participation. It was also agreed that until such a system of government could be set up, a period of direct rule and constitutional stability was necessary.

Finally, I enclose for your information some documentation setting out Government policy in relation to the Northern Ireland situation.

Yours sincerely

Handwritten signature
J.E. MORRIS

Private Secretary
Reverend Brian J. Brady,
St. Joseph's College of Education,
Trench House,
Belfast BT11 9GA.