

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



Reference Code: 2007/111/1967
Creation Date(s): 24-27 May 1965
Extent and medium: 3 pages
Creator(s): Department of Foreign Affairs
Access Conditions: Open
Copyright: National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

305/470/i

*Miss Brennan
Mr Conway
change.
Mr Wilson
Pl have copy cross
with w Camp Soc Justice
S
27/1*

27 May, 1965.

Dear Paul,

Thank you for your letter of the 24th instant in which you were good enough to furnish fairly comprehensive information on the "Campaign for Democracy in Ulster". We feel here that because of the political implications it would be very wise for the Embassy to avoid being identified with the campaign or clearly associated with its movements or the source of their recriminations against the Unionists of the Six-Counties. You could of course assist the campaign if it approached the Embassy but perhaps avoid voluntary help. As the campaign is closely identified with the Labour Party it may be more concerned with any advantages involved for that party rather than with real benefits to the North. The Unionists would be likely to exploit any suggestion of an association between the campaign and Dublin which could very well damage North-South cooperation.

Therefore I would not be inclined to pursue Mr. Rose M.P. too much and I feel we ought not to take him on departmentally here, as you suggest, during his forthcoming visit to Ireland. You mentioned that he did not immediately seize on your offer to have appointments made for him while in Dublin and I think you might leave any further initiative to him. I think he would do better to make his contacts here through, say, Mr. Bob Briscoe or the headquarters of the political parties rather than through us.

Yours sincerely,

SIGNED, SEAN G. RONAN

Paul J.G. Keating, Esq.,
Embassy of Ireland,
London.



24 May, 1965.

Dear Sean,

Brendan Nolan wrote to me on the 14th of May asking for a report on the Campaign for Democracy in Ulster Movement which had received publicity in the Evening Herald on the 20th of April.

This movement is at the present moment in its initial stage and will have its inaugural meeting in the House of Commons on Wednesday 2nd of June next. The President at the present time is Fenner Brockway and the Chairman is Mr. Paul Rose, M.P. The provisional officers and committee are as follows:

Chairman: Paul Rose, M.P.
 Secretary: Bill O'Shaughnessy
 Treasurer: M.P. Melly
 Cllrs. : D. Speakman, O. Donohue, P. Byrne, M. Downing.

The aims of the campaign are stated to be as follows:

- (a) to secure a full and impartial enquiry into the administration of government in Northern Ireland and into allegations of discrimination in the fields of housing and employment;
- (b) to bring electoral law in Northern Ireland into line with that in the rest of the U.K. and to examine electoral boundaries with a view to providing fair representation for all sections of the community;
- (c) to press for the application of the "Race Relations Bill" to be extended to Northern Ireland and to include religious discrimination and incitement.

It is understood that 44 M.Ps. have already agreed to sponsor the campaign together with many local councils^{lax} and constituency Labour party officials. This movement is basically one for Labour party members. Most of the committee at the present time are of Irish birth or descent but they have not on the whole been members of the U.I.A. Most of them are active in the London area but one of the prime movers, Councillor P. Byrne, is well known to the Embassy as a former secretary of the Council of Irish County Associations and as a former chairman of the Dublin Men's Association.

The movement has been called into being to a certain extent by the activities of the campaign for social justice in Northern Ireland. Mrs. McClusky, it is understood, will come to the meeting on the 2nd of June.

Labour party interest in the Six County position is particularly understandable at the present time because of the narrow majority the Government enjoys. This gives the 12 Unionist votes a considerable importance in parliamentary questions. The present practice here is to prevent the Parliament discussing affairs in the Six Counties which are within the concurrent jurisdiction of Stormont. Similar

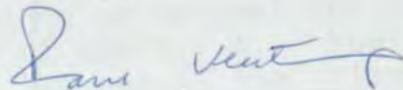
/considerations

considerations do not, however, limit the activities of the Six County M.Ps. in discussing matters of local importance in British politics. Mr. Rose, the M.P. who is active in this matter, complained to me last week that Six County M.Ps. had voted on matters affecting Manchester as an example of the way the Six County Commons vote is of great importance at the present time. At the present time, however, this campaign is not stressing the question of partition. It is limiting itself to that of discrimination.

I feel that if the campaign gets under way here and is not too much tarred with the Labour brush it should get support from M.Ps. in other parties. Mr. St. John Stevas, a Conservative and Messrs. Thorpe and Lubbock of the Liberal party have declared their interest in religious discrimination in the North. To a certain extent it must be remarked that on questions of the North of Ireland the Labour party are inclined to be foul weather friends and that did they enjoy a larger majority they might not show such an active interest in Irish affairs such as this. Nonetheless, at the present time I feel this group can be important to us. I write this letter to you rather than to Brendan because as I mentioned earlier in this letter I had an opportunity of talking to Mr. Rose last week. He is at present the youngest M.P. in this Parliament and he comes from Manchester where there is a large Irish element in his constituency. He himself, I should say, is Jewish but this does not prevent him from taking an interest in Irish affairs. I should say that as a young man he is anxious to make a name for himself in politics in some untilled field and he feels the Irish question is a comparatively fallow one at the present time.

He will be going to Ireland for a Whitsuntide holiday with his wife and children. He is anxious to make contacts with Irish officials and T.Ds. and I think it would be a good idea if we were to do something to look after him. I mentioned tentatively to him if he liked me to set up some appointments I should do so and although he did not immediately seize on to this I feel it would be a useful step to take. Do you think you could arrange something on this matter? If you can I should be glad to hear from you as quickly as possible so that I can make arrangements before the weekend after next.

Yours sincerely,



Sean Ronan, Esq.,
Department of External Affairs,
Dublin.