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EMBASSY OF IRELAND

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CONFIDENTIAL

S19030

14 June 1985

Mr Bernard Davenport
Anglo-Irish Section
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin, Ireland

19030

Dear Bernard,

Frank Millar, the OUP General Secretary and Assemblyman for South Belfast passed through Washington this week as part of a U.S.I.A.-sponsored month-long visit to the U.S.

I met him for dinner and provided advise on people he might call on here. It is noteworthy that he was quite critical of the British Embassy here which provided virtually no assistance and did not seek to use his presence in media contacts or with people on Capitol Hill. Mr Millar has been in touch several times during the week seeking our assistance particularly in relation to the San Francisco end of the visit.

He was in bouyant form particularly in relation to the OUP performance in the local elections. Although he frankly admitted that many of the OUP's candidates were less than inspiring, he felt the OUP's success had arisen from a successful media operation (the Sinn Fein poster, etc.) directed from campaign headquarters and because Paisley's thunder had been stolen. He foresaw a trubulent time in local councils particularly where Sinn Fein were well-represented. Mr Millar seemed tempted by the idea of a boycott of councils where the unionist parties could not control the situation (why should the OUP sit down and be dictated to by murderers) but felt that the party leadership would not be prepared to do this. He mentioned that the party leadership was having difficulties with the OUP members of Derry District Council (particularly Jim Guy). The Derry OUP Councillors were anxious to return to the council but have been forced to remain outside it by the leadership.

In relation to the Anglo-Irish discussions he repeated his view that the South was pushing for too much. If we agreed to a process of consultation which did not infringe sovereignty and established a parliamentary tier which excluded the Assembly, he felt that the majority community would reluctantly accept that. If we pushed further, there would, however, be outright opposition. He was aware before the recent newspaper publicity that the Chief Justice had been approached on the question of mixed courts and seemed rather gleeful that a unionist political

Mr Bernard Davenport
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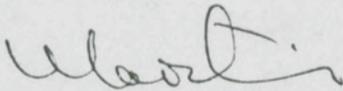
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impulse was being displayed by the judiciary and repeated his view that a minimum package involving consultation was the only thing that would work in view of unionist attitudes.

He mentioned that he has already been approached about his willingness to stand in South Down at the next Westminster election. Powell is not expected to run again. Mr Millar is not terribly keen to move in the direction of South Down as he doubts the ability of the OUP to retain the seat.

Finally, he mentioned that he had recently visited some N.I. prisons in the company of Ken Maginnis. He had been perturbed by the situation in Magilligan where the atmosphere appeared tense and a strict disciplinary regime appeared to be in force. He had received several complaints of alleged beatings and ill-treatment and has taken the matter up with the NIO.

Yours sincerely,



Martin Burke
Political Counsellor

cc. Mr J Sharkey