



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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SDLP Constituency Issues

1. The question of SDLP constituency concerns and issues in relation to the forthcoming general election has been discussed at the Secretariat on numerous occasions over recent months and was raised by the Tanaiste at his informal meeting with Secretary of State King on 6 April and at the Conference meeting on 22 April.
2. The Secretariat believes that King and the Northern Ireland Office take very seriously the need to be helpful to the SDLP in the election. It is clear from King's public and private remarks about the results in our general election that it is an important priority to ensure that Sinn Fein do badly also in the election in the North.
3. Dr. Hendron and Mr. McGrady have provided the Department with a list of local issues and concerns in their constituencies (attached). The Secretariat has handed these to the British side as matters where Government action would be extremely helpful to the SDLP.

Mr. Mallon has indicated that he will be meeting Northern Ireland officials on local issues next week and does not wish us to raise local matters until, if necessary, after that meeting.

Mr. Hume's office has indicated that there are no immediate issues that we could raise at the moment.

West Belfast

4. A meeting with the British side was held in the Secretariat on 5 May to discuss ways of enhancing SDLP prospects in West Belfast. The British side expressed optimism about Hendron's prospects in the election and indicated that the list of projects would be approached favourably.

Dr. Hendron met Minister Needham on 6 May. Hendron was offered and accepted a briefing next week on new road plans for West Belfast that will allow him to go public before the plans are made public. He has also been offered a briefing on the Belfast Urban Development Plan. The British side has informed the Secretariat that Minister Needham intends to follow up the issues raised by Dr. Hendron with urgency.

General Election

5. The Taoiseach and Tanaiste could indicate to the SDLP leaders that we will be happy to raise any additional local issues that may be of assistance to them.

0574F

GOVERNMENT MEETING WITH SDLP

FOR O'NEILL FROM LILLES

THE QUESTION OF SDLP DESIDERATA IN RELATION TO THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION HERE HAS BEEN DISCUSSED ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS IN RECENT MONTHS AND WAS PRESSED BY THE TANAISTE WITH KING AT BOTH OF THEIR MEETINGS INCLUDING THE RECENT CONFERENCE. IT HAS BEEN PURSUED IN THE SECRETARIAT WITH OFFICIALS AND STORMONT MINISTERS PERSISTENTLY.

THERE ARE GENERAL AND DETAILED REASONS FOR BELIEVING THAT KING AND HIS ADMINISTRATION HERE TAKE VERY SERIOUSLY INDEED THE NEED TO BE HELPFUL TO THE SDLP IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION. IT IS CLEAR FROM KING'S PUBLIC AND PRIVATE REMARKS ABOUT THE RESULTS IN THE RECENT GENERAL ELECTION IN THE SOUTH THAT IT IS AN IMPORTANT PRIORITY TO ENSURE THAT SINN FEIN DO BADLY ALSO IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION IN THE NORTH.

THE MOOD ON THE PART OF MINISTERS AND OFFICIALS IN STORMONT ABOUT THE SDLP'S CHANCES IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION IS CAUTIOUSLY POSITIVE

OVERALL. SOME BELIEVE THAT THE SDLP'S CHANCES ARE EXCELLENT AND THAT HENDRON, FOR EXAMPLE, CAN WITH A CONSIDERABLE EFFORT WIN IN WEST BELFAST. IT MUST BE SAID HOWEVER THAT THERE IS A GENERAL FEELING THAT THE SDLP IN WEST BELFAST IN PARTICULAR HAS NOT WORKED THE GROUND HARD ENOUGH. THIS AREA IS CONTRASTED WITH FOR EXAMPLE FOYLE WHERE THE SDLP PROFESSIONAL MACHINE IS SAID TO BE VERY EFFECTIVE IN TERMS OF FOLLOW-UP AND DELIVERY.

IT IS QUITE CLEAR FROM YESTERDAY'S MEETING IN THE SECRETARIAT ON WEST BELFAST ISSUES AND THE FOLLOW-THROUGH THIS MORNING BY MINISTER RICHARD NEEDHAM WITH HENDRON THAT THE NEED TO BE AS HELPFUL AS PRACTICALLY POSSIBLE TO THE SDLP IS A VERY HIGH PRIORITY. WE HAVE REPORTED IN A SERIES OF MESSAGES ON THIS SET OF EXCHANGES I.E. NOS. 451C, 453C AND 459C AND HAVE ALSO FAXED TO CORR THE LIST OF ITEMS THAT WE HAVE REQUESTED SHOULD BE TAKEN UP.

WE ARE PURSUING TODAY A SET OF ITEMS OF CONCERN TO MC GRADY AND MALLON IN THEIR RESPECTIVE CONSTITUENCIES.

WE DO NOT AT THE MOMENT HAVE ANY INDICATION OF SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS ON THE PART OF HUME BUT WE ARE OF COURSE READY TO ACT ON THOSE ALSO IF HE SO WISHES. WE ALSO STAND READY TO PURSUE CONSTITUENCY ISSUES WHICH MIGHT BE OF CONCERN TO OTHER SDLP CANDIDATES. IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE AN EARLY INDICATION OF THEIR REQUIREMENTS AND THAT THOSE REQUIREMENTS SHOULD BE "REALISTIC". WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE WILL IN ALL CASES BE ABLE TO HAVE THESE MATTERS CONSIDERED CAREFULLY AND POSITIVELY AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL HERE.

POSTAL VOTING

YOU WILL HAVE NOTED, AS FURTHER EVIDENCE OF BRITISH WILLINGNESS TO BE HELPFUL, THE POSITIVE RESPONSES TO O'CEALLAIGH'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE ON BEHALF OF MALLON AND RODGERS ON POSTAL VOTING PROBLEMS.

SECURITY MATTERS

IN ADDITION TO ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES ARISING IN INDIVIDUAL CONSTITUENCIES, WE ARE PRESSING THE AUTHORITIES HERE VERY HARD FOR DELIVERY IN RELATION TO OVERALL SECURITY MATTERS BOTH AT THE POLICY LEVEL AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY LEVEL. WE ARE STRESSING THE NEED FOR GREAT SENSITIVITY, THE NEED FOR A SYSTEMATIC EFFORT TO CONTACT LOCAL COMMUNITY LEADERS IN THE NATIONALIST COMMUNITY USING THE SDLP AND THE NEED FOR ACTION ON GENERAL ISSUES WHICH WOULD BE REASSURING I.E. SAMPSON AND CODE OF CONDUCT IN PARTICULAR.

TANAISTE'S LETTER

WE HAVE TOLD OUR OPPOSITE NUMBERS THAT A MESSAGE IS IN PREPARATION. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS SHOULD COME TO MINISTERS HERE VERY QUICKLY.

BRITISH CONCERNS

THE BRITISH SIDE HAVE REQUESTED STRONGLY THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD REFRAIN ITSELF FROM CLAIMING CREDIT FOR MATTERS ON WHICH THERE MAY NOW BE PROGRESS WHICH ARE REQUIRED BY THE SDLP IN THE CONTEXT OF THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION.

I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE SDLP SHOULD MOVE VERY QUICKLY NOW ON ALL OF THEIR ISSUES BOTH DIRECTLY AND THROUGH THE SECRETARIAT BEARING IN MIND THAT BRITISH MINISTERS WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY DISAPPEAR FROM STORMONT SOME TIME NEXT WEEK.

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453C

6.5.37

TO HQ FROM BELFAST

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HENDRON

FOR CORR FROM O CEALLAIGH

THE OTHER SIDE HAVE REPORTED ON THE MEETING WHICH TOOK PLACE BETWEEN HENDRON AND MINISTER NEEDHAM THIS MORNING, TO WHICH REFERENCE WAS MADE IN OUR MEETING HERE YESTERDAY. HENDRON WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ATTWOOD AND BOOMER. NEEDHAM IS IN CHARGE OF ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH ISSUES.

WE ARE TOLD THAT NEEDHAM WAS VERY POSITIVE TOWARDS HENDRON'S CONCERNS AND THAT HE TOLD HENDRON THAT HE WOULD DO ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO ASSIST HENDRON IN HIS FIGHT FOR THE WEST BELFAST SEAT.

IN ADDITION TO THE MATTERS WHICH WERE ON JOE'S SHOPPING LIST A NUMBER OF HEALTH MATTERS WHICH WERE WITHIN NEEDHAM'S SPECIFIC REMIT WERE DISCUSSED. MOST OF THE MATTERS WHICH HENDRON RAISED WERE IN FACT IN MINISTER VIGGERS' AREA (ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT). CURRIE HAS A MEETING ARRANGED WITH VIGGERS FOR NEXT WEEK AND NEEDHAM SUGGESTED TO HENDRON THAT HE ENSURE THAT HE ALSO BE ON THAT DELEGATION.

HENDRON WAS OFFERED AND ACCEPTED A BRIEFING SCHEDULED FOR 12 MAY ON NEW ROAD PLANS FOR WEST BELFAST. THIS WILL ENABLE HENDRON TO GO PUBLIC BEFORE THE ISSUE EMERGES IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN. SIMILARLY HE HAS BEEN OFFERED A BRIEFING SCHEDULED FOR 18 MAY ON THE BELFAST URBAN DEVELOPMENT PLAN. IN ADDITION HE WILL BE ON THE SOLP DELEGATION MEETING KING IN LONDON ON 14 MAY.

THE OTHER SIDE INFORMED US THAT NUMEROUS FOLLOW UP POINTS EXIST AS A RESULT OF THE MEETING THIS MORNING AND THAT NEEDHAM IS DETERMINED TO FOLLOW THEM UP WITH THE GREATEST POSSIBLE URGENCY. HENDRON INFORMED

THE BRITISH SIDE THAT HE INTENDS TO CALL A PRESS CONFERENCE LATER THIS WEEK TO PUBLICISE HIS MEETING WITH THE BRITISH AND TO PUBLICISE THE MATTERS HE HAS RAISED. THE REASON FOR THE DELAY IS THAT HE FEELS, AND THE BRITISH AGREE, THAT HE WOULD BE SWAMPED BY OTHER EVENTS - PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON SECURITY AND IRA FUNERAL TODAY. HOWEVER THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT PRESS STATEMENTS WILL NOT ISSUE TO-DAY.

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5.5.87

TO HQ FROM BELFAST

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PROPOSALS FOR WEST BELFAST

FOR O TUATHAIL FROM LILLIS

6/5/87 0830
E Bailey

WE HAD A MEETING IN THE SECRETARIAT TODAY TO DISCUSS WAYS OF ENHANCING THE SDLP'S PROSPECTS IN WEST BELFAST IN THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION.

PRESENT ON THE BRITISH SIDE WERE ELLIOTT, HEWITT AND MCCONNELL. O CEALLAIGH AND CORR WERE ALSO PRESENT ON THE IRISH SIDE.

THE OTHER SIDE ARE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT HENDRON'S PROSPECTS OF TAKING THE SEAT. THEY BELIEVE THAT ADAMS WILL REQUIRE 2-3000 VOTES MORE THAN IN 1983 TO OFFSET TWO FACTORS: THE FACT THAT POSSIBILITIES FOR PERSONATION WILL BE GREATLY REDUCED THIS TIME, AND THE FACT THERE IS NO ALLIANCE CANDIDATE STANDING.

THEY WERE CRITICAL OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SDLP TO DATE ON DAY-TO-DAY ISSUES IN THE CONSTITUENCY AND SUGGESTED THAT THE SDLP CAMPAIGN SHOULD FOCUS ON ADAMS' SHORTCOMINGS AS A REPRESENTATIVE AND ON THE FACT THAT THE SDLP NOW HAVE A PERMANENT FULL-TIME OFFICE IN THE CONSTITUENCY.

THEY ARE READY TO ASSIST HENDRON IN ANY PRACTICAL WAY IN HIS CAMPAIGN. MINISTER NEEDHAM WILL MEET HIM TOMORROW TO CONSIDER A LIST

OF PROJECTS FOR WEST BELFAST SUBMITTED BY THE SDLP WHICH MIGHT BE SET IN MOTION IN THE IMMEDIATE TERM. WE WERE TOLD THAT THIS LIST WILL BE APPROACHED FAVOURABLY. THEY WILL NOT DISCOURAGE HENDRON FROM PRESENTING THE OUTCOME OF THIS MEETING, AND FUTURE CONTACTS BETWEEN NOW AND THE ELECTION, TO THE MEDIA IN AN UP-BEAT WAY. NEEDHAM WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO BE POSITIVE IN HIS OWN BRIEFING OF THE PRESS.

WE PUT FORWARD A LIST OF PROJECTS ON WHICH ACTION IN THE COMING WEEKS WOULD BE HELPFUL. THIS LIST WAS BASED ON THAT SUPPLIED BY THE SDLP TO CORR WITH SOME ADDITIONS. A COPY WILL BE DELIVERED TOMORROW BY CORR IN THE DEPARTMENT. WE SAID THAT WE WERE PUTTING THESE FORWARD UNDER ARTICLE 5(C) OF THE AGREEMENT, BUT WE WOULD NOT MAKE THE FACT THAT WE HAD PUT THESE FORWARD PUBLIC AT THIS TIME. IN PARTICULAR, WE EXPRESSED ANXIETY THAT THE POSSIBLE ANNOUNCEMENT OF A GENERAL ELECTION SHOULD NOT INTERFERE WITH THE TIMETABLE FOR PUBLICATION OF DETAILS OF THE BELFAST URBAN AREA PLAN TOWARDS THE END OF THE MONTH. THE BRITISH TOOK THIS POINT ON BOARD AND UNDERTOOK TO BRIEF HENDRON FULLY ON THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE PLAN FOR WEST BELFAST, HIGHLIGHTING ITS POTENTIAL FOR JOB CREATION IN THE AREA. WE ALSO PUT FORWARD A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS FOR SPECIFIC PROJECTS OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PLAN.

APART FROM ECONOMIC/ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES, WE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF SECURITY RELATED ISSUES IN THE COMING CAMPAIGN. SPECIFICALLY, WE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF HANDLING SENSITIVELY THE FUNERAL TOMORROW OF FINBARR MCKENNA AND URGED THAT THE RUC BE ENCOURAGED TO INITIATE MORE SYSTEMATIC CONTACTS WITH COMMUNITY LEADERS IN WEST BELFAST.

WE INDICATED THAT WE WOULD BE PUTTING FORWARD IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS PROPOSALS FOR PROJECTS WHICH MIGHT BE OF BENEFIT TO SDLP CANDIDATES IN OTHER CONSTITUENCIES. THE OTHER SIDE SAID THAT THESE ALSO WOULD BE CONSIDERED FAVOURABLY AND MENTIONED THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE WILL MEET THE MAIN SDLP CANDIDATES ON 14 MAY.

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3950

Proposals for West Belfast

Belfast Urban Area Plan

- Temporary and permanent job creation opportunities.
- Development linked specifically to West Belfast, including possible cooperative ventures and development of Lower Falls.

Training Centres

- New training centre in West Belfast.
- Extension of facilities, particularly engineering and related skills, in Boucher Road training centre.

Job creation

- Increase in number of ACE places in West Belfast.
- Utilisation of urban development grant schemes and additional provision of rent and rates guarantee measures.
- Establishment of a LEDU sponsored "enterprise centre" in Divis.
- Transfer of vacant IDB property to LEDU.

Environmental recreational development

- Playing facilities for Cromic Albion.
- Recreational use old Dunmurry golf club land.

Roads

- Survey Andersonstown Road from Kennedy Way junction to Finaghy Road junction.
- Traffic lights at Donegall/Falls Road; bottom of Whiterock Road; top Bingham Drive.
- Improvements to pedestrian bridge crossing on the Glen Road at St. Teresa's school.

Housing

- Demolition Unity flats.
- Scheduled demolition for Divis.

Education

- Continuation ACE grants to the Irish language nursery school in the Short Strand.
- Review of proposed cuts in "lollipop men" in West Belfast.

Security forces

- Need for continuous and closer relationship between the minority community and the police.

Proposals for South Down

1. Expansion Government training centre in Downpatrick through provision extra courses and new premises.
2. Town centre plan for Downpatrick.
3. DOE to properly mantain Park Lane in Warrenpoint and a road adjacent to Drumaness.
4. Announcement Downpatrick by-pass.
5. IDB premises in Moss Lane, Castlewellan, presently planned for storage purposes by DHSS, to be freed for industrial purposes.

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