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2 August 1988.

Mr. Dermot Gallagher,
Anglo-Irish Section,
Department of Foreign Affairs,
80 St. Stephen's Green,
Dublin 2.

cc: P. S. TAOISEACH ✓
P. S. M. ✓
MR. NALLY ✓
P. S. S. ✓
MR. MATHENS ✓
3 COUNSELLORS A-I ✓

Mr. J. M. M. ✓
but [unclear] ✓

Dear Assistant Secretary,

In a number of contacts over the August bank holiday with the British Joint Secretary and his deputy we discussed a number of points as follows:

(a) Gibraltar

I said that the Tanaiste had asked us to inform the Secretary of State that in addition to the presence of a legal observer (which I understood had been discussed by Ministers at their recent tete-a-tete) Deputy David Andrews would also be present at the inquest as an observer on behalf of the Fianna Fail party. I mentioned Deputy Andrews' legal background, his consistent humanitarian interest in such cases and his very responsible and judicious record of public comment on them, as was evident for example throughout his involvement in the Birmingham and Guildford cases. I stressed the importance which the Tanaiste attached to the ensuing that no obstacles or difficulties should be put in his way and that all appropriate courtesies and facilities should be afforded to him. Mr. Miles noted this point carefully.

I mentioned also a concern on the part of the Tanaiste and other members of the Government that at least some elements in the British administration seemed to regard Mr. Paddy McGroary as tainted by association with the Provisionals. I stressed our view that this was totally mistaken. Mr. McGroary as a conscientious professional would naturally deploy his best efforts on behalf of his clients but we considered he would do so in a manner that was independent, entirely proper and responsible. The British, for their part, would be well advised to deal with him on this basis. Mr. Miles said that they had perhaps had some initial misgivings but their

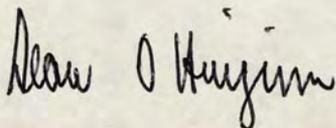
considered opinion was in line with our own and that the Tanaiste could be reassured on this point.

I mentioned also in a very summary way the private contact which the Tanaiste had had with representatives of the victims families, stressing the very cautious position he had adopted, in particular as regards suggestions by the families about taking a case to the European Commission on Human Rights or the European Court of Justice.

(b) The Review

I had a general exchange with Mr. Miles on the Review. He said they would be holding a number of internal official meetings in the next week or two to consider their position on this and would be asking for a joint meeting with us to exchange views on a more formal level. He said British officials had had very little guidance on the issue from the political level so far, beyond a general indication that it should not be organised in a way which increased political tension or in particular the sense of resentment of the unionist community. I cautioned against yet a further attempt to reassure the unionist community by downplaying the Agreement. There was a point where reassurance to the unionist community became simply an endorsement of their veto on all political movement. Mr. Miles expressed exasperation at the unionist rejection of the interparliamentary tier, in spite of the abundant reassurances which the organisers had tried to build into it. He mentioned that the Alliance Leader John Alderdice (who now calls on Mr. King for a briefing after each Conference) had suggested the Anglo-Irish Council as a mechanism whereby unionists could be associated with the Review. I said one had to be careful not to fall into Molyneaux's device of invoking the Council merely as a way of neutralising the North South dimension of the Agreement. Although the structures were within the framework of the Council the Agreement had a status which was independent of it. This had to be borne in mind in any approach to the Review on the lines suggested by Mr. Alderdice.

Yours sincerely,



S. O. Huiginn.