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ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
DUBLIN 2

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SECRET

15 February 1977

Dear Dermot

I enclose for information a report from the Embassy in London on recent meetings which Mr. Mason has had with the OUP and the SDLP. Also enclosed is the SDLP's note of their meeting with Mr. Mason - for obvious reasons, it should not be disclosed to anyone, especially in the SDLP, that we have a copy of the latter.

The SDLP is particularly encouraged not only by their recent meeting with Mr. Mason but also by a meeting which they had last week with Mr. Airey Neave during which they were reassured that there was no question of the Tories abandoning power-sharing. And in the House of Commons on 10 February when asked if he saw any developments towards power-sharing, Mr. Mason replied

"From the meetings that I have so far held with the SDLP and the OUP, the answer is no. There has been no willingness to move by the OUP leadership."

This is the first time in a while that a British politician has pointed the finger clearly in the direction of the unionists and though it obviously will not make unionists very happy, it will at least have the effect of steadying the SDLP at a crucial time when they are going through a major reassessment of policy.

Yours sincerely

[Signature]

Mr. Dermot Nally
Assistant Secretary
Department of the Taoiseach
Government Buildings
Dublin 2

[Handwritten notes]
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2. Blair
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