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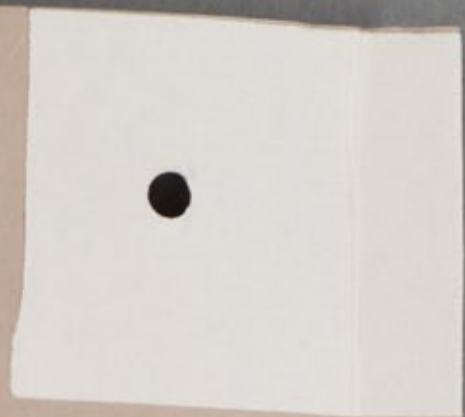
IRELAND

(Northern Ireland situation)

(Part 1)

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PREM 19/80



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PART 1.

Confidential Filing

The situation in Northern Ireland.

IRELAND

May 1979

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PART 1 ends:-

Washington TEL 2417 to FCO 24/8/79

PART 2- begins:-

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FM WASHINGTON 241945Z AUG 79

TO ROUTINE FCO

TELEGRAM NO 2417 OF 24 AUGUST

INFO MODUK, NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST.

ant
fy. Pmt 29/8

Prime Minister

by 20/8

MY TELNO 2406: SUPPLY OF US MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

1. THE UKTSD HAVE BEEN ASKED BY MOD PE WHETHER THE FORM OF ORDERING FOR MOD ORDERS OF US DEFENCE EQUIPMENT CONTAINS ADEQUATE SAFEGUARDS AGAINST ANY ATTEMPTED EMBARGO OF US MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

2. CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORTERS OF THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS HAVE IN THE PAST PUT PRESSURE ON THE ADMINISTRATION TO BAN OR RESTRICT THE SUPPLY TO THE UK OF ALL MILITARY EQUIPMENT OF US ORIGIN WHICH MIGHT BE USED IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND ARE LIKELY TO TRY TO DO SO AGAIN. THIS WAS THE AIM OF THE AMENDMENT INTRODUCED BY REP BIAGGI IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON 12 JULY AND WITHDRAWN IN EXCHANGE FOR REP ZABLOCKI'S UNDERTAKING THAT THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE WOULD INVESTIGATE STATE DEPARTMENT POLICY (WASHINGTON TELS NOS 1870 AND 1918). VANCE'S REASON, OR EXCUSE, FOR CONCEDING TO O'NEILL THE SUSPENSION OF ARMS FOR THE RUC PENDING THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY REVIEW WAS THAT ANY OTHER COURSE RISKED A GENERAL CONGRESSIONAL BAN ON THE SUPPLY OF US ARMS WHICH MIGHT BE USED IN NORTHERN IRELAND, WITH THE TURKISH PRECEDENT IN MIND.

3. THE ZABLOCKI INVESTIGATION AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT REVIEW MAY HOLD THE LINE FOR THE TIME BEING. BUT BIAGGI AND CO CAN BE EXPECTED TO RENEW THEIR CALL FOR A BAN ON THE SUPPLY OF ALL MILITARY EQUIPMENT FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND, EITHER AS AN END IN ITSELF OR TO BARGAIN FOR OPEN CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS ON NORTHERN IRELAND. OUR FRIENDS IN CONGRESS HAVE WARNED US THAT PRESSURE FOR HEARINGS WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO RESIST.

14. I DO NOT

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4. I DO NOT THINK THERE IS ANY LEGISLATION AT PRESENT ON THE BOOKS WHICH COULD CREDIBLY BE INVOKED TO JUSTIFY SUCH A BAN AGAINST THE UK. BIAGGI'S CLAIM THAT SECTION 502B OF THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT OF 1961, AS AMENDED, IS APPLICABLE TO THE RUC IS UNCONVINCING (THIS SECTION BANS THE EXPORT OF CRIME CONTROL EQUIPMENT TO A COUNTRY WHOSE GOVERNMENT QUOTE ENGAGES IN A CONSISTENT PATTERN OF GROSS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED HUMAN RIGHTS UNQUOTE). WE ARE, HOWEVER, CHECKING EXISTING LEGISLATION, AND WILL REPORT AGAIN ON THIS POINT.

5. NEW LEGISLATION, EG ON THE LINES OF THE BIAGGI AMENDMENT REFERRED TO ABOVE, WOULD PROBABLY HAVE TO BE INTRODUCED IN CONGRESS FOR THE PURPOSE. IF IT WERE, WE WOULD EXPECT THE ADMINISTRATION TO RESIST IT ON THE GROUNDS OF ITS DAMAGING REPERCUSSIONS FOR ANGLO-US DEFENCE COOPERATION IN NATO AND WORLDWIDE AND THAT THIS ARGUMENT WOULD PROVE DECISIVE FOR A MAJORITY OF MEMBERS OF CONGRESS. EVEN IF THIS CALCULATION IS WRONG. IN THE END I BELIEVE THE PRESIDENT WOULD BE PREPARED TO USE HIS VETO ON LEGISLATION INVOLVING A BROAD EMBARGO OF THIS KIND. BUT ELECTORAL CONSIDERATIONS WILL MEAN THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL BE VERY RELUCTANT TO ALLOW MATTERS TO COME TO THIS POINT.

6. IF, NEVERTHELESS, A LEGISLATIVE -- OR INDEED ADMINISTRATIVE -- EMBARGO ON THE SUPPLY OF US MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH MIGHT BE USED IN NORTHERN IRELAND WERE TO COME INTO EFFECT, THEN THE FORM OF ORDERING FOR THE MOD COULD NOT IN ITSELF BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE AN ADEQUATE SAFEGUARD. MEANWHILE, IN ORDER TO AVOID CREATING POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES WITH THE ADMINISTRATION, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT IN ANSWER TO ANY QUESTIONS FROM EG THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICE OF MUNITIONS CONTROL ABOUT THE END-USE OF ANY PARTICULAR ITEM WE SHOULD AVOID MENTIONING NORTHERN IRELAND AND SIMPLY SAY THAT THE ITEM IN QUESTION IS NEEDED TO MEET WORLDWIDE REQUIREMENTS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE UK DEFENCE PROGRAMME.

ROBINSON

DEPARTMENTAL D

RID

NAMD

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

NORTHERN IRELAND

CONFIDENTIAL ⁴ ^{no} ⁶⁰

7/1/79



10 DOWNING STREET

Top of byon: Ireland,
Governor Carey
August '79.

From the Private Secretary

23 August 1979

~~BF 6-9-79~~

Dear Sir,

Northern Ireland and Governor Carey

As you know, your Secretary of State called on the Prime Minister this morning in order to discuss the response which should be given to Governor Carey's invitation to him, and to the Irish Foreign Minister, to discuss the problems of Northern Ireland in New York; and how the matter should be handled publicly, in view of the misleading press reports which had appeared. The discussion resulted in action being taken on a number of fronts this afternoon and this evening. This letter is simply to place on record the decisions which were taken.

The Prime Minister made it clear that there could, in her view, be no question of discussing Northern Ireland with Governor Carey in New York. If Governor Carey wished to engage in such discussions, he should come to London. Mr. Atkins agreed, while pointing out that Governor Carey's recent statements about the IRA and terrorism had been helpful to us. He explained that our objectives should be to make the Americans realise the consequences of their words and actions concerning Northern Ireland and to reduce still further the flow of American money and sympathy to the IRA. The Prime Minister agreed that it should be brought home to the Americans that for so long as they continued to finance terrorism, American lives as well as those of others would be lost, as the Hilton Hotel explosion in Belfast had shown. The Prime Minister expressed the view that the British Government should not always turn the other cheek in the face of US criticism of our policies in Northern Ireland. Mr. Atkins agreed that the US Government's decision to withhold export licences for the supply of arms to the RUC should be vigorously criticised.

The Prime Minister enquired about the possibility of manufacturing the weapons that the RUC needed in the UK, or at least of finding an alternative source of supply. Mr. Atkins explained the practical difficulties which stood in the way of obtaining the particular arms which the RUC needed for their special requirements elsewhere than in the United States. The Prime Minister asked that an alternative possibility should nevertheless be investigated: I should be grateful if you could arrange for this to be done and for a report to be sent to Michael Alexander in due course for the Prime Minister's information.

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/Mr. Atkins

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- 2 -

Mr. Atkins explained that he hoped to bring Mr. O'Kennedy to accept that the IRA posed as much of a threat, in the long term, to the Irish Republic as it did to the UK, as recent statements by Gerry Adams had shown. The Prime Minister expressed some doubts as to whether this was really the case: she could detect no fundamental antagonism between the IRA and the Irish Republic. In further discussion of possible means of bringing pressure to bear on Dublin, it was agreed that although the British Government has in theory some cards in its hand, in relation to the British Nationality Act, there were difficulties about playing them including the fact that Ireland and the UK were both members of the EEC.

It was agreed that Mr. Atkins would despatch his reply to Governor Carey's letter of 6 August later today and that the substance of the reply would be made available to the Press. It was also agreed that the No. 10 Press Office would continue to emphasise that reports of a possible visit by the Prime Minister to the United States in the Northern Ireland context were without foundation; and would confirm that Mr. Atkins had discussed his reply to Governor Carey with the Prime Minister. The possibility of including in a Press Statement a veiled reference to the United States' refusal to supply arms to the RUC was considered but the Prime Minister subsequently accepted Mr. Atkins' view that there was nothing to be gained by raising this issue in the context of his correspondence with Governor Carey. The final form of the press releases from the NIO and from No. 10 has been worked out by our respective Press Offices.

As you know, the Prime Minister approved the draft which you sent across this afternoon of Mr. Atkins' reply to Governor Carey subject to minor amendments which I gave you over the telephone.

I am sending copies of this letter to Stephen Wall (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,

John Casimir

Joe Pilling, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

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Original filed on Ireland: Aug
79: Governor Carey invitation to
SIS N-1.
Enter [initials]
Ireland [initials]
24/8

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

NORTHERN IRELAND

Note of a conversation between the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at 10 Downing Street on 23 August 1979 at 12 noon

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland called on the Prime Minister, at her request, at No. 10 on 23 August at 12 noon, accompanied by Mr. K.R. Stowe.

The Prime Minister told Mr. Atkins that there could be no question of talking to Governor Carey about Northern Ireland. Mr. Atkins said that he agreed, at this stage. The Prime Minister said that Governor Carey could come to the UK if he wished to do so: but Northern Ireland was part of the United Kingdom and she herself would not think of discussing with President Carter, for example, US policy towards their black population. The Prime Minister said that she wished to set the record straight publicly, in view of misleading reports which had appeared in the Press.

Mr. Atkins said that he had already made it clear to the Press, in his own statement early in the month, that he had no intention of meeting Governor Carey. The Prime Minister said that the point had not been got across sufficiently. Mr. Atkins said that he did not totally exclude the possibility of meeting Governor Carey at some stage, along with other leading Irish Americans. Governor Carey was not a complete villain; he had, for example, condemned the IRA and terrorism, bracketing the IRA with the PLO and other terrorist groups. Governor Carey's position had helped to reduce the flow of supplies of money from the US to the IRA. The Prime Minister said that there could nevertheless be no question of discussing the future of Northern Ireland in the US.

Mr. Atkins asked the Prime Minister to reflect on what we really wished the US to do. The first objective should be to make the Americans realise that the more they talked the more difficulties

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/they created

This is a copy. The original has been exhausted and closed, 40 years

they created for is in Northern Ireland. Our second objective should be to reduce still further the flow of money and sympathy from the US to the IRA. The Prime Minister commented that this was all too complicated. She was not in the habit of discussing the internal problems of the US with the Americans and they should not attempt to do so with us. The Americans must be made to realise that for so long as they continued to finance terrorism, they would be responsible for the deaths of US citizens (as had happened in the Hilton Hotel explosion in Belfast) as well as others. They must realise that while this went on, the British Government would attack and condemn them. The UK should not be perpetually on the defensive; Governor Carey had already got away with a great deal so far as UK public opinion was concerned. The Americans must be brought to face the consequences of their actions.

Mr. Atkins conceded that this was one way of approaching the problem: there was another, which was to try to talk to the American people, who were basically friendly to the UK, and to reason with them about the consequences of their actions. The Prime Minister said that we should not always turn the other cheek. Mr. Atkins said that it was true that, in refusing to continue the supply of weapons to the RUC, the US was interfering in the internal affairs of another country. The Prime Minister said that she did not agree: this did not constitute interference, since the right to supply arms or to withhold them was sovereign to any Government.

Mr. Atkins told the Prime Minister that he wished to bring Mr. O'Kennedy to accept the view that the IRA was a terrorist organisation, posing as much of a threat to the Irish Republic as to the UK * ~~~~~ *

The Prime Minister said that she did not believe this - there was no evidence of hostility between the Irish Republic on the one hand and the IRA on the other. The only way of changing Dublin's attitude towards the IRA would be to deprive Irishmen in the UK of the vote and to bring them fully within the UK's immigration laws. The fact that both countries were members of the EEC was, however, a complicating factor in exerting pressure on Ireland.

u passage deleted and closed, 40 years, under a FoI Exemption

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Wayland 20 October 2009

/In further

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- 3 -

In further discussion, it was agreed that a Press Statement should be put out from No. 10 later in the day to the effect that there was no truth in reports that the Prime Minister intended to visit the US in the context of the Northern Ireland problem; that there was no truth in reports that Mr. Atkins intended to discuss Ulster with Governor Carey; and that the UK assumed that the US, along with other democratic nations, was totally opposed to terrorism and to violence as a means of achieving political ends. It was also agreed that Mr. Atkins should reply later in the day to Governor Carey's letter of 6 August and that the substance of his reply should be released to the Press.

In a discussion of the US decision to withhold export licences for the supply of arms to the RUC, the Prime Minister said that the UK should make her own weapons and be independent of external sources of supply. Mr. Atkins pointed out that this would be very expensive and that it would be a long time before actual deliveries could be made. The Prime Minister asked that the possibility should nevertheless be investigated.

At the end of the discussion, Mr. Atkins told the Prime Minister that he would telephone Mr. O'Kennedy that afternoon in order to forewarn him of the nature of his reply to Governor Carey. In response to a question from Mr. Atkins, the Prime Minister agreed that the reply need not permanently exclude the possibility of a discussion about Northern Ireland with the Governor.

byu.

23 August 1979

CONFIDENTIAL

020

Prime Minister

held 2



B Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

I discussed this with the
NIO this evening. They
are anxious that the
message should go out today
so that it does not appear to be a response to
the attacks on the Army which are anticipated
tomorrow to mark the anniversary.

13 August 1979

NIO have decided on
reflection that the message could most
appropriately go over Mr Atkins'

See Mr Cartledge signature; I am sure this is right.

I agree - it would be wrong
for me to send it. No
13/8

I rang you this afternoon to say that we have it in mind that a
letter should be sent to the General Officer Commanding, Northern
Ireland, commemorating 10 years of the Army's activities in Northern
Ireland.

2. Here is a draft.

3. Two questions are asked:

1. Should such a letter be sent?
2. If so, should the Prime Minister or Mr Alison, who is
deputising during the absence of the Secretary of State,
send it.

4. We are told that the Ministry of Defence have nothing in mind.

5. So that we do not appear to be acting in consequence of any
incidence which may occur on the 14 August, we would wish to give this
sober and genuine acknowledgement publicity today. (You did say that
you could not put this proposal to the Prime Minister until tonight.)

Yours sincerely
John Francis

JOHN FRANCIS
Private Office

RE

P. A.
14/8

DRAFT LETTER TO GOC

1. It is 10 years ago on 14 August that troops were called into action in Northern Ireland in support of the civil power. Since then the Army have made a vital contribution to the peace-keeping effort. I should like to express my deeply felt gratitude, and that of my colleagues, to all those who have served with the Army in Northern Ireland during these past 10 years.

2. I pay special tribute to those who have lost their lives or who have suffered injury, and to their families.

3. The Army, acting in support of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, will I know sustain their unremitting efforts to combat terrorism and to provide a secure foundation for progress towards peace and stability in Northern Ireland for as long as is necessary and to the extent that it is necessary.

13 AUG 1879



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BRITISH EMBASSY,
DUBLIN.

10 August 1979

The Right Honourable
The Lord Carrington KCMG MC
etc etc etc

My Lord

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO MR LYNCH'S GOVERNMENT

1. For some months there has been much speculation and public discussion about the Government's performance. This has covered their handling of the economy, to a lesser extent their policy on Northern Ireland, and the quality of leadership and the succession to Mr Lynch. This seems a good moment to look at the Government's record after two years in office. My despatch of 7 August covered the economic aspects. In this despatch I shall deal with the political aspects and the Government's overall standing.

Malaise

2. The Government have seemed during 1979 to have lost the sure touch which characterised their policies and approach until then. Various economic problems, discussed in my earlier despatch, have contributed to a general malaise among the Irish people, whatever their political affiliation. These include the 2% levy on farmers, the PAYE protests, industrial unrest and unreasonable wage demands, persistent unemployment, the oil shortage and its effects on industry, tourism and the man in the street, the 19-week postal strike and the sinking of the

/Irish



Irish pound compared with sterling since the break in parity.
The Irish have had an uneasy feeling that Ministers were not in control and that they were not getting the leadership which they had a right to expect.

3. Even more serious from a party political point of view, there was strong criticism within Fianna Fail, culminating in the meeting of the Parliamentary Party on the day that you paid your first visit to this country as Secretary of State. At that meeting Fianna Fail back-benchers aired their dissatisfaction with the Government's handling of the economy, the Party's failure in the elections for the new European Parliament, discontent at lack of consultation by Ministers with TDs and misgivings about the policy on Northern Ireland. It was a meeting which, six months ago, I should have thought was inconceivable.

4. Fianna Fail have the biggest majority in the history of this country and their parliamentary position is unassailable. Why then did they not do more to solve the problems which beset people in their everyday lives? It is hard to say whether the Government could in fact have done more, for instance, to resolve quickly the postal strike which, economic consequences apart, irritated everyone enormously. Oil price increases and shortages were not entirely within the Government's control but, as explained in my despatch of 7 August, they were slow to respond with such measures as were possible. The truth is that Mr Lynch and his Ministers gave an impression of inertia, of

/not



not knowing which way to turn, of just letting things slide. This was not entirely fair. We know from our contacts with Ministers, officials and trade unionists, that a good deal was going on behind the scenes to try to solve most of the problems mentioned in paragraph 2 above. There were excellent reasons for not giving in to the postal workers' demands and for not using the Army when oil distribution workers held up supplies, but they were inadequately publicised - or perhaps just failed to convince. In any case, the media and the public were not made properly aware of the Government's side of the case. Constant criticism in the press, the Dáil and the pubs went without an effective answer.

The Succession to Mr Lynch

5. Criticism of the Government's leadership within the Parliamentary Party (paragraph 3 above) and the speculation that went before and after, naturally renewed rumours (which have been going about since the Government took office in 1977) concerning Mr Lynch's future as Taoiseach and leader of the Party. It is often said that he is tired, or unwell or disillusioned, or all three. My own observation of him leads me to think that he does get tired at times (but who does not?) and that, not unnaturally, he goes through periods when he resents the carping criticism and wild speculation, especially about his own future. I do not know about Mr Lynch's health, though Mrs Lynch has more than once told my wife that she constantly urges him to retire while he is still fit. I believe,

/however,



however, that the last thing he would do would be to give up, unless he had to, if Mr Charlie Haughey had a hope of succeeding. At present, the pandits believe Mr Haughey to be the front-runner in the succession stakes, with Messrs Colley, O'Kennedy and O'Malley as probable alternatives. Mr Lynch might, I suppose, be prepared to retire if he were assured that one of the last three would succeed him.

6. It is possible that in the coming months the economic problems will diminish in intensity or that people will get used to them and they will cease to make news. Again, a successful Irish presidency of the EEC would be a bonus. But shortage of fuels and labour difficulties in the electricity supply industry suggest a tough winter.

Northern Ireland

7. There is one problem that will not go away: Northern Ireland. Mr Lynch has to some extent modified his extreme stand of previous years. However, he cannot show his followers and the public at large any real return. Where, after all, is the goal of Irish unity? It is fair to say, I believe, that this is farther away than when Mr Lynch took office in 1977. He himself has said that he does not expect to see a united Ireland in his lifetime. Of what else is the polarisation, represented by Mr Paisley's European electoral success in the North and Mr Blaney's in the South, symptomatic? Yet Irish unity, historically and actually, is what Fianna Fail is all about.

8. It is possible to look at Irish policy towards the North in

/two



two different contexts. The first is the security situation on the ground, which suggests that the Irish should do all they can to help us and, in political terms, that they should avoid doing or saying anything which might render more difficult the task of making political progress within the North (the reality). But Irish policy must also be seen as the dream of Irish unity and the long history of Irish "patriots" fighting for Irish freedom (the myth). In the latter context, any cooperation with the British is wrong. The great problem for an Irish policy-maker is to say or do things which make sense in both contexts. This is extremely difficult because the myth and the reality only rarely coincide. Nor is it the case that the myth is seen to be just a myth.

9. Public opinion polls should not be taken too seriously but they cannot be ignored entirely. A recent, still confidential Economic and Social Research Institute survey in the Republic showed that 69% of people favour a united Ireland, 59% think the Irish Government should go on talking about reunification, and 70% believe the British Government should withdraw from Northern Ireland whatever the majority there think.

10. Talking to Irish people is a confusing if usually diverting pursuit. Some speak of Irish unity but do not believe it is attainable, others talk about it and believe it is. Some will say that the only solution is for the British to withdraw, with or without an announced date; others throw up their hands in

/horror



horror at the merest hint that we might go. And there is talk of independence for the North, of confederation, of federation, of a larger grouping or association of the British Isles. There is no shortage of talk.

11. But where does it all leave the present Irish Government or, for that matter, the Opposition? Maybe, so far as the Government are concerned, all will be revealed when the long-promised Fianna Fail paper on Northern Ireland is eventually published. Meanwhile, and perhaps even after that, Mr Lynch and his Ministers are not bringing home the bacon in the view of many people. It is difficult to see what they can say or do except to go on talking about Irish unity while, at the same time, cooperating quietly and in a limited way with HMG on security.

New Elements

12. There are, however, two other elements in the situation. The first is the American Dimension which, though it has been with us since the famine, has changed over the years. It has intensified recently with the onset of the US electoral campaign. I fear that it could be tempting for Mr Lynch, especially if things are not going well domestically, not exactly to urge the Irish Americans on but rather not to discourage them from putting pressure on the US Administration to urge on HMG the need to take an initiative or promote some kind of political movement in the North. I doubt if Fianna Fail Ministers wish the US to become involved any more directly

/than



than they now are in Irish affairs but, in some circumstances, it could be useful to the Irish Government if the Americans were to fire the shots for them.

13. But here the second element comes in. The Irish are very aware that they are dealing with a strong British Government with a full term of office before them. They have been impressed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, both in their meetings and conversations with him and with what he is trying to do. This could inhibit them from taking up unhelpful stances but it might equally encourage them to go for the scenario outlined in paragraph 12 above.

Conclusions

14. As I have said, Mr Lynch's parliamentary position is unassailable. Paradoxically this majority poses its own problems. At least ten Fianna Fail back-benchers held their seats in the 1977 election by fewer than 1,000 votes. Now that two years of the parliamentary term have passed, Government TDs are increasingly sensitive to any suggestion that the Government are losing support unnecessarily, whatever the issue. They and others, influenced by Mr Blaney's recent electoral success, have suggested that it is Mr Lynch's restrained Northern policy which is putting off the voters. They may be wrong, and I myself believe that it is the Government's economic record which is principally responsible for their present difficulties. But there is no doubt that Ministers are sensitive to criticism that Fianna Fail has retreated from its traditional republicanism. The risk that they may respond to

/s/

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such criticism by confrontation with us over the North is obviously greater at a time when this may serve to distract the public from domestic troubles.

15. None of this makes Mr Lynch's task vis-à-vis Northern Ireland any easier and I think the coming month will be difficult for us and for the Irish Government. There never are any easy answers in dealing with Northern Ireland, and Anglo-Irish relations in any context. But I believe that, as mentioned in paragraph 13 above, we have advantages on which we should build. It is not necessarily disadvantageous to British interests that Mr Lynch and his Government have been and still are going through a bad patch. If we can operate from strength, show firmness and decision in our policies, take Irish Ministers into our confidence so far as that is practicable, we should be able to exercise some influence at least on their attitude towards Northern Ireland and towards the unique and complex Anglo-Irish relationship. But we shall have to keep a very wary eye on the American Dimension in the coming months.

16. I am sending copies of this despatch to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Secretary of State for Defence, and HM Ambassador Washington.

I have the honour to be
My Lord
Your obedient Servant

Robin Haydon

CONFIDENTIAL

31 AUG 1979



CONFIDENTIAL



WHAT IS HAPPENING TO

SUMMARY

1. The Irish Government's performance in recent months has been the subject of much speculation and discussion. They have been seen to have lost their grip, particularly on the economic side, in the face of a number of unrelated problems. More seriously, back-bench TDs have openly criticised the Government.

(Paragraphs 1-3)

2. Fianna Fail have a big majority in the Dáil yet they have given the impression of inertia and of not knowing which way to turn. Even though they have been quite active behind the scenes this has not been reflected in public. The Government's preceived failings have renewed rumours about Mr Lynch's future as Taoiseach, but there is no obvious acceptable successor. The prospects are for the Government's economic difficulties to increase.

(Paragraphs 4-6)

3. Mr Lynch has no success on Northern Ireland to which he can point to justify his policy. Irish policy depends on trying to reconcile the realities of the situation in the North with the myth of the fight for a united Ireland. Public opinion polls suggest that more Irishmen still believe in the myth than in the reality. There is no shortage of people prepared to talk about the problem but there are very few policy options for any Irish Government.

(Paragraphs 7-11)



4. There are two new elements in the situation - the American Dimension, which risks providing the Irish with a tempting way of allowing indirect pressure to be put on HMG, and the coming to power of a new British Government with a secure majority. First Irish impressions seem favourable.

(Paragraphs 12-13)

5. The back-bench TDs in marginal constituencies are increasingly uneasy at the Government's fall in popularity. There is a tendency to attribute this to Mr Lynch's policy on the North and thus there is a danger that they may call for a more robust policy. This would also distract attention from present economic difficulties. The coming month will be difficult for us and for the Irish, but we should build on our advantages. We will need to operate from strength and take Irish Ministers into our confidence while keeping an eye on the American Dimension.

(Paragraphs 14-15)

Original in GRs

Ireland

VB

cc NIO
Press Office



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

9 August 1979

Dear Sir

Thank you for your telegram about Governor Carey's proposals. I am sure you will by now have seen Mr. Atkins's response, which makes it clear that there was no intention of negotiating the political future of Northern Ireland with United States politicians.

Yours truly

J.H. Molyneaux, Esq., M.P.

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CONFIDENTIAL

TW



FILE

Ireland

CC NIO
CO

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 August 1979

I enclose a copy of a message to the Prime Minister from President Carter, acknowledging Mrs. Thatcher's letter of 20 July with the four position papers on Northern Ireland. This was received from the US Embassy today.

I am sending copies of this letter and enclosure to Mike Hopkins (Northern Ireland Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

M. A. PATTISON

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

CONFIDENTIAL

7 August 1979

(S) 9.8.79

I am writing to thank you for your letter of 6 August, with which you enclosed a personal message from President Carter to the Prime Minister.

I will of course draw the message to the Prime Minister's attention as soon as she returns from Lusaka.

MAP

Mr. Robert J. Morris

SUBJECT

T59/79T

~~SECRET~~

cc N10 (Mr. Pitting)
FLO (Mr. Lewis)

2

CONFIDENTIAL

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
LONDON

PRIME MINISTER'S

August 6, 1979

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T59/79T

Prime Minister

Dear Madam Prime Minister:

6/21
9/18

I am very grateful to you for your letter of July 20 on Northern Ireland, and the four position papers which accompanied it. I will be giving this important material the closest possible study and have already found it most useful in understanding the basis of present British policy. I am sure we will be in further touch regarding developments in Northern Ireland, but in the meantime I wanted you to know how much I appreciate your thoughtfulness in preparing this information for my use.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter

ant

The Rt. Hon. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.,
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W. 1.

CONFIDENTIAL

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FORM NO. 1

7 AUG 1973



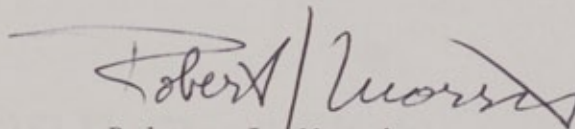
EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
LONDON

August 6, 1979

Dear Mr. Pattison:

The Embassy has been asked to deliver the attached letter to the Prime Minister from President Carter. The message was received at the Embassy today. The signed original will be forwarded to your office in due course.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Morris
Acting Deputy Chief of
Mission

Attachment:

Mr. M. A. Pattison,
Private Secretary to the
Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London S. W. 1.

CONFIDENTIAL

GRS70

Arms for RUC.

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 032052Z AUG 79
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NO 2189 OF 3 AUGUST
INFO NIO BELFAST DUBLIN BIS NEW YORK

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YOUR TELNO 963: ARMS FOR RUC

1. STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE TOLD US TODAY THAT EXPORT LICENCE FOR RADIO COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT HAS NOW BEEN ISSUED (PARA 2 OF YOUR TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE).
2. STATE DEPARTMENT ALSO SAY THAT THE TEXT OF NIMETZ' STATEMENT TO ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE (MY TELNO 2145) HAS NOT SO FAR BEEN RELEASED, BUT IT IS STILL THEIR INTENTION TO DO SO, PROBABLY EARLY NEXT WEEK.

ROBINSON

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FM FCO 031630Z AUG 79
TO IMMEDIATE CERTAIN MISSIONS AND DEPENDENT TERRITORIES
GUIDANCE TELEGRAM NUMBER 99 OF 3 AUGUST 1979

THE SALE OF US EQUIPMENT TO THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY

1. THE US ADMINISTRATION HAS DECIDED NOT TO APPROVE APPLICATIONS FOR THE SALE OF EQUIPMENT TO THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY FOR THE TIME BEING.

LINE TO TAKE

2. THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY MUST HAVE THE WEAPONS IT NEEDS AND WE SHALL SEE THAT THESE ARE PROVIDED.

ADDITIONAL POINTS

3. THE RUC IS THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE SERVICE IN

/NORTHERN IRELAND,

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NORTHERN IRELAND, AND IS REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT ITS DUTIES ON BEHALF OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WITHIN THE LAW AND WITH IMPARTIALITY.

4. IT IS REGRETTABLE THAT THE SUPPLY OF WEAPONS NEEDED TO PROTECT THE WHOLE COMMUNITY AND FOR THE RUC'S OWN DEFENCE SHOULD BE MADE A MATTER OF CONTROVERSY.

5. SEE ALSO FCO TELNO 969 OF 3 AUGUST TO WASHINGTON. NOW BEING REPEATED TO YOU.

BACKGROUND

6. THE STATE DEPARTMENT TOLD US ON 20 JULY THAT FOLLOWING CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE MR VANCE HAD DECIDED THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD HOLD BACK ON THE APPROVAL OF SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT TO THE RUC.

7. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HELD A CLOSED HEARING ON 31 JULY TO CONSIDER THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY ON THE SUPPLY OF ARMS TO THE RUC IN THE CONTEXT OF US LEGISLATION WHICH PROHIBITS THE SUPPLY OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT TO GOVERNMENTS ENGAGED IN GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION.

8. THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE SAID THAT THEY ARE REVIEWING THEIR POLICY AND WILL NOT PROCESS ANY APPLICATIONS FOR EQUIPMENT FOR THE RUC PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THEIR REVIEW. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS OUR CASE WITH THE AMERICANS BUT IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE ANY POSITIVE MOVEMENT FOR AT LEAST TWO MONTHS.

10. THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND EMPHASISED IN HIS STATEMENT ON 2 AUGUST (RETRACT NO 28302) THAT THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF THE RUC BEING HELD SHORT OF WEAPONS WHICH THEY NEED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE.

11. HE POINTED TO THE FACT THAT THE US ADMINISTRATION HAVE MADE IT EXPLICITLY CLEAR, THAT THEY ARE NOT IMPARTIAL AS BETWEEN A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT AND ARMED TERRORIST GROUPS SUCH AS EXIST IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

CARRINGTON

/BY TELEGRAPH

BY TELEGRAPH

DUBLIN
BELFAST (NIO)

UKMIS NEW YORK
BIS NEW YORK

WASHINGTON
OTTAWA
LUSAKA

[IMMEDIATE]

ANKARA
ATHENS
BONN
BRUSSELS
UKREP EEC BRUSSELS
UKDEL NATO BRUSSELS
COPENHAGEN
THE HAGUE
LISBON
LUXEMBOURG
OSLO
PARIS

STRASBOURG
REYKJAVIK
ROME
UKMIS GENEVA
HOLY SEE
MADRID
STOCKHOLM
VIENNA
MOSCOW
PRAGUE
BUENOS AIRES
CARACAS

MEXICO CITY
BRASILIA
HAVANA
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TRIPOLI
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PEKING
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NEW DELHI
KINGSTON

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031046Z AUG 79

BS TO PM

TO FLASH LUSAKA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 633 OF 3 AUGUST

INFO FLASH WASHINGTON

IMMEDIATE CONSUL-GENERAL NEW YORK, DUBLIN, NIO BELFAST
FOR WALL

1. FOLLOWING BRIEF IS PROVIDED AS REQUESTED FOR SECRETARY OF
STATE'S USE WITH THE PRESS ON
ARMS FOR RUC

POINTS TO MAKE

1. HAVE SEEN MR ATKINS' STATEMENT OF 2 AUGUST.
2. ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY (RUC) IS LEGALLY CONSTITUTED
POLICE SERVICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND WHICH IS REQUIRED TO CARRY
OUT DUTIES ON BEHALF OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY WITHIN THE LAW AND
WITH IMPARTIALITY.
3. REGRET THAT SUPPLY OF WEAPONS NEEDED TO PROTECT WHOLE COMMUNITY
AND FOR THE RUC'S OWN DEFENCE SHOULD BE MADE MATTER OF CONTROVERSY.
4. WE ARE CONTINUING TO KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH US ADMINISTRATION
ON THE MATTER.

POINTS TO MAKE (DEFENSIVE)

1. US ADMINISTRATION HAVE NOT BANNED SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT TO RUC.
2. US HAVE NOT REFUSED ANY APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT
TO RUC: THEY HAVE DECIDED TO TAKE NO ACTION AT THE MOMENT ON
EXPORT LICENCE APPLICATIONS IN RESPECT OF RUC.
3. IT IS NOT PRACTICE TO REVEAL DETAILS ON APPLICATIONS, OR WHETHER
THERE ARE ANY OUTSTANDING.
4. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT US INVESTIGATION DOES NOT AMOUNT
TO CHANGE IN US POLICY ON NORTHERN IRELAND, AS DESCRIBED IN
MR ATKINS STATEMENT OF 2 AUGUST.
5. US DECISION DOES NOT AFFECT SUPPLY OF ARMS TO ARMY IN NORTHERN
IRELAND.

ESSENTIAL FACTS.

1. FOLLOWING CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE PARTICULARLY FROM SPEAKER
O'NEIL, STATE DEPT. TOLD US ON 20 JULY THAT MR VANCE HAD DECIDED
THAT ADMINISTRATION WOULD HOLD BACK ON APPROVAL OF SUPPLY OF
WEAPONS TO RUC.
2. IN RESPONSE TO FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURES LARGELY
FROM BIAGGI AND OTHER SUPPORTERS OF IRISH AMERICAN PIRA SYMPATHISING
IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOREIGN
AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HELD CLOSED HEARING ON 31 JULY TO CONSIDER
POLICY ON SUPPLY OF ARMS TO RUC IN CONTEXT OF US LEGISLATION
PROHIBITING SUPPLY OF ARMS AND EQUIPMENT TO GOVERNMENTS ENGAGED
IN GROSS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.

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3. STATE DEPARTMENT (MR NIMETZ) MADE HELPFUL STATEMENT TO COMMITTEE (WHICH US ADMINISTRATION HAVE RELEASED PUBLICLY) EMPHASISING THAT RUC IS LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE PROTECTING BOTH CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANTS AGAINST TERRORISTS: WEAPONS REQUESTED WERE NOT UNUSUAL FOR POLICE AND WERE ALSO USED BY US POLICE FORCES, RUC ENJOYS CLOSE COOPERATION WITH IRISH REPUBLIC SECURITY FORCES.

4. STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE TOLD US THEY ARE REVIEWING THEIR POLICY AND WILL NOT PROCESS ANY APPLICATIONS FOR EQUIPMENT FOR RUC PENDING OUTCOME OF THEIR REVIEW. STATE DEPARTMENT (NIMETZ) REFUSED TO BE DRAWN ON TIME SCALE BUT DOUBTED WHETHER THERE WOULD BE ANY POSITIVE MOVEMENT FOR AT LEAST TWO MONTHS. NIMETZ SAID STATE DEPARTMENT HAS NOT REVEALED THAT HMG HAS BEEN ASKED TO WITHDRAW APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCES.

5. NIMETZ SAID IT WAS NOT CLEAR HOW ZABLOCKI (CHAIRMAN, FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE) WOULD NEXT PROCEED. FURTHER CLOSED HEARINGS WERE UNLIKELY.

6. NIMETZ WONDERED WHETHER THERE WAS SCOPE FOR DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT OVER REQUESTS FOR LICENCES OF DIFFERENT CATEGORIES DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN AMMUNITION AND SPARES ON THE ONE HAND AND REQUESTS FOR NEW EQUIPMENT ON THE OTHER. WE BELIEVE HE IS DISCUSSING WITH MR VANCE. BUT WE WOULD HAVE GRAVE RESERVATIONS IN ANY CASE.

7. PARSONS CALLED IN US AMBASSADOR 2 AUGUST, AND SAID OUR IMMEDIATE CONCERN WAS STILL TO SECURE ORDERS ALREADY IN PIPELINE. THEREAFTER TO DISCUSS PROBLEM OF FUTURE SUPPLIES IN GREATER DEPTH WITH ADMINISTRATION. BREWSTER SAID HE WOULD CHECK WITH NIMETZ THAT SUPPLY OF COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT PRESENTED NO PROBLEM. BREWSTER DID NOT KNOW WHETHER VANCE WOULD FEEL ABLE TO GO AHEAD WITH OTHER EQUIPMENT IN PIPELINE (SPARE PARTS FOR M1 CARBINES AND AMMUNITION FOR KUGER AND OTHER GUNS).

8. MR ATKINS HAS RELEASED STATEMENT TO PRESS EMPHASISING THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF RUC BEING HELD SHORT OF WEAPONS THEY NEED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND COMMUNITY AND THAT WE HAD NO INFORMATION THAT US ADMINISTRATION HAD IMPOSED BAN ON ANY FURTHER SUPPLIES. MR ATKINS SAID WE UNDERSTAND POLICY OF US ADMINISTRATION IS STRICT IMPARTIALITY IN COMMUNAL CONFLICT. US ADMINISTRATION HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THEY ARE NOT IMPARTIAL AS BETWEEN RUC LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE AND ARMED TERRORIST GROUPS.

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FM WASHINGTON 021627Z AUG 79

TO FLASH F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2163 OF 2 AUGUST

INFO FLASH BIS NEW YORK IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

YOUR TELNOS 960 AND 961 AND TELECON DAVIDSON/PARRAMORE:
ARMS FOR R.U.C.

1. STATE DEPARTMENT (FUNSETH) AGREES TO THE TWO POINTS IN PARA 2 OF YOUR TELNO 960.
2. OUR STATEMENTS SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE U.S. REVIEW OF POLICY RELATES ONLY TO THE SUPPLY OF ARMS TO THE R.U.C. (E.G. SECOND SENTENCE OF PARA 2 OF YOUR TELNO 961). STATE DEPARTMENT ARE PREPARED TO MAKE IT CLEAR ON THE RECORD THAT SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT TO THE ARMY IS SPECIFICALLY EXCLUDED FROM THE POLICY REVIEW. WE CAN SAY IF NECESSARY THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAVE ASSURED US OF THIS.
3. THE STATE DEPARTMENT THINK IT WOULD BE HELPFUL, AND WE AGREE, IF WE MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY REVIEW IS TAKING PLACE IN RESPONSE TO ENQUIRIES FROM CONGRESS.
4. WHILE THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE NO OBJECTION TO US DRAWING ON THE NIMETZ PAPER AS IN PARA 3 OF YOUR TELNO 961, THEY WOULD PREFER A FORMULATION ON THE LINES QUOTE THE ATTITUDE OF THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION IS AS FOLLOWS. WHILE RE-AFFIRMING ... UNQUOTE. THE STATE DEPARTMENT AGREE TO OUR SAYING THAT QUOTE THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION'S ATTITUDE HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR TO US AND, WE UNDERSTAND, TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS CONCERNED. UNQUOTE. BUT, UNTIL NIMETZ'S STATEMENT HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS THEY WOULD PREFER US NOT TO QUOTE IT DIRECTLY OR TO REFER SPECIFICALLY TO NIMETZ'S MEETING ON TUESDAY WITH ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE.

ROBINSON

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FM WASHINGTON 021625Z AUG 79

TO FLASH FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2162 OF 2 AUGUST

INFO FLASH BIS NEW YORK IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

WASHINGTON TELNO 2114: ARMS FOR R.U.C.

1. STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE REVISED THEIR GUIDANCE FOR DEFENSIVE USE IN RESPONSE TO PRESS ENQUIRIES.

2. THE FIRST SIX QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ARE AS IN MY TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE. SUBSEQUENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ARE AS FOLLOWS.

BEGINS QUOTE

QUESTION: WHAT IS YOUR COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT THE U.S. IS NOT TAKING ANY ACTION, FOR THE TIME BEING, ON REQUESTS FOR THE SALE OF ARMS FOR USE BY THE POLICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND ?

ANSWER: AS NOTED EARLIER, A REVIEW OF OUR ARMS SALES POLICY IS UNDER WAY AND, FOR THE TIME BEING, WE ARE TAKING NO ACTION ON EXPORT LICENCE APPLICATIONS FOR THE R.U.C.

QUESTION: ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON THE SALE OF ARMS TO THE BRITISH ARMY ?

ANSWER: NO. WE MAKE AVAILABLE TO THE BRITISH ARMED FORCES A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF DEFENCE MATERIAL FOR THEIR OVERALL GLOBAL INVENTORY. THE UNITED KINGDOM IS ONE OF OUR CLOSEST PARTNERS IN THE NATO ALLIANCE AND PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN OUR COMMON DEFENCE. OUR DEFENCE COOPERATION IS NOT LIMITED TO JUST THE ALLIANCE OR TO OUR IMPORTANT DEFENCE INSTALLATIONS IN THE U.K. BUT EXTENDS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.
UNQUOTE.

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ROBINSON

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Prime Minister

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FM F C O 021843Z AUG 79
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 965 OF 2 AUGUST
INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA (FOR WALDEN AND CARTLEDGE) AND DUBLIN.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT ISSUED BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND AT 1800 HOURS TODAY:

QUOTE

ARMS FOR THE R U C.

1. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THE RUC BEING HELD SHORT OF THE WEAPONS THEY NEED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE AGAINST TERRORISM. THEY HAVE WHAT THEY NEED NOW AND WE SHALL SEE THAT THEY HAVE WHAT THEY NEED IN FUTURE.
2. AS REGARDS CERTAIN SUPPLIES FROM UNITED STATES SOURCES, WE HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION HAS IMPOSED A BAN ON ANY FURTHER SUPPLIES. I UNDERSTAND THAT, IN RESPONSE TO CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE, THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION IS REVIEWING ITS POLICY ON ARMS SUPPLY TO THE RUC: THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL FOR THIS PURPOSE MAKE ITS VIEWS ON WHAT IS NEEDED VERY CLEAR TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AS IT HAS DONE IN THE PAST. IN PARTICULAR, WE HAVE EMPHASISED THAT THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IS THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND, CHARGED WITH THE TASK OF PROTECTING ALL ITS CITIZENS, NO MATTER WHAT THEIR RELIGIOUS PERSUASION.
3. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE ATTITUDE OF THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION IS AS FOLLOWS. WHILE REAFFIRMING THE POLICY OF STRICT IMPARTIALITY IN THE COMMUNAL CONFLICT AND OF SUPPORT FOR ANY SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND TO THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS, THEY HAVE MADE IT EXPLICITLY CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION QUOTE IS NOT IMPARTIAL, HOWEVER, AS BETWEEN A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT SUCH AS THAT OF GREAT BRITAIN AND ARMED TERRORIST GROUPS SUCH AS EXIST IN NORTHERN IRELAND UNQUOTE. THIS HAS BEEN MADE CLEAR TO US, AND I UNDERSTAND, TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.

UNQUOTE.

CARRINGTON

Handwritten signature

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM C O 021717Z AUG 79

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 963 OF 2 AUGUST

INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA (FOR WALDEN AND CARTLEDGE), DUBLIN AND NIO BELFAST.

Sam M. ...

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TELECON FREE-GORE/DAVIDSON: ARMS FOR RUC.

1. BREWSTER CALLED ON SIR A PARSONS AT THE LATTER'S REQUEST THIS AFTERNOON. PARSONS SHOWED HIM THE TEXTS OF THE DUBLIN AND BELFAST PRESS ARTICLES AND GAVE HIM A COPY OF THE DRAFT TEXT (AS AMENDED FOLLOWING THE TELECON UNDER REFERENCE) OF THE STATEMENT WHICH MR ATKINS PROPOSES TO RELEASE THIS AFTERNOON. HE TOLD BREWSTER THAT MR PAISLEY HAD ALREADY SPOKEN TO THE PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE LORD PRIVY SEAL AND WOULD BE RETURNING TO THE CHARGE TOMORROW. BREWSTER CONFIRMED THAT HE WOULD BE SEEING PAISLEY TOMORROW MORNING.

2. PARSONS SAID THAT, WHEN HE HAD ASKED BREWSTER TO CALL, THE NEWS OF THE PUBLICITY HAD NOT BROKEN. OUR PREOCCUPATION WAS STILL TO SECURE THE ORDERS ALREADY IN THE PIPELINE AND THEREAFTER TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM OF FUTURE SUPPLIES IN GREATER DEPTH WITH THE ADMINISTRATION. COULD WE ASSUME, AS MR VANCE HAD PREVIOUSLY CONFIRMED, THAT SUPPLY OF THE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT PRESENTED NO PROBLEM? BREWSTER SAID THAT, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, WE COULD SO ASSUME. AFTER FURTHER DISCUSSION HE SAID THAT HE WOULD CHECK THIS AGAIN WITH NIMETZ.

3. BREWSTER SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER MR VANCE WOULD FEEL ABLE TO GO AHEAD WITH THE OTHER EQUIPMENT IN THE PIPELINE. AGAIN, SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HE THOUGHT THAT THE BEST CHANCE OF ACHIEVING THIS WOULD BE IF WE WERE PREPARED TO GIVE THE AMERICANS AN INFORMAL UNDERTAKING THAT WE WOULD EXHAUST ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF SUPPLY AND THAT WE DID NOT INTEND TO SUBMIT FRESH ORDERS QUOTE FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE UNQUOTE. BUT HE UNDERSTOOD FROM OUR PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS HOW DIFFICULT THIS WOULD BE FOR US. WE SAID THAT WE HAD ALREADY LOOKED INTO THE QUESTION OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES. THE PROBLEM WAS THAT THEY DID NOT EXIST OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES EXCEPT FOR CZECHOSLOVAKIA WHICH WAS CLEARLY UNDESIRABLE. PARSONS GAVE NO UNDERTAKING THAT WE WOULD BE PREPARED FOR A TRADE OFF AS SUGGESTED BY BREWSTER, BUT THE LATTER WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY PUT THIS PROPOSITION TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT. BREWSTER ADDED THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION DID NOT REALISE THAT THERE WERE NO ALTERNATIVE SOURCES FOR THE EQUIPMENT WHICH THE RUC JUDGED TO BE BEST FOR THEIR PURPOSES.

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FM F C O 021357Z AUG 79

TO F L A S H WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 961 OF 2 AUGUST

INFO FLASH BIS NEW YORK LUSAKA (FOR WALDEN AND CARTLEDGE)

IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

M I P T FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF DRAFT STATEMENT FOR ISSUE BY SECRETARY OF STATE OF NORTHERN IRELAND DURING AFTERNOON OF 2 AUGUST 1979
BEGINS

ARMS FOR THE RUC

1. AS THE RUC THEMSELVES HAVE MADE CLEAR, THERE IS NO QUESTION OF THE RUC BEING HELD SHORT OF THE WEAPONS THEY NEED TO PROTECT THEMSELVES AND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE AGAINST TERRORISM. THEY HAVE WHAT THEY NEED NOW AND WE SHALL SEE THAT THEY HAVE WHAT THEY NEED IN FUTURE.
2. AS REGARDS CERTAIN SUPPLIES FROM UNITED STATES SOURCES, WE HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION HAS IMPOSED A BAN ON ANY FURTHER SUPPLIES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION IS REVIEWING ITS POLICY ON ARMS SUPPLY; THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WILL FOR THIS PURPOSE MAKE ITS VIEWS ON WHAT IS NEEDED VERY CLEAR TO THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION AS IT HAS DONE IN THE PAST.
3. THE ATTITUDE OF THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION WAS MADE CLEAR TO THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES EARLIER THIS WEEK WHEN THEIR SPOKESMAN, WHILE REAFFIRMING THE POLICY OF STRICT IMPARTIALITY IN THE COMMUNAL CONFLICT AND OF SUPPORT FOR ANY SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND TO THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS, MADE IT EXPLICITLY CLEAR THAT THE UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION QUOTE IS NOT IMPARTIAL, HOWEVER, AS BETWEEN A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT SUCH AS THAT OF GREAT BRITAIN AND ARMED TERRORIST GROUPS SUCH AS EXIST IN NORTHERN IRELAND UNQUOTE.
ENDS

CARRINGTON

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SUBJECT

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FCO (w/ Level.)

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

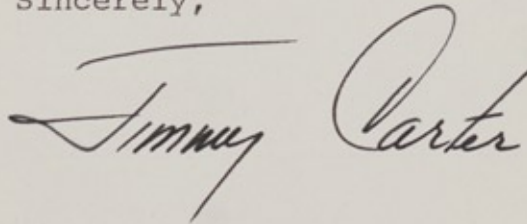
August 1, 1979

PM has
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the
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Dear Madame Prime Minister:

X
I am very grateful to you for your letter of July 20 on Northern Ireland, and the four position papers which accompanied it. I will be giving this important material the closest possible study and have already found it most useful in understanding the bases of present British policy. I am sure we will be in further touch regarding developments in Northern Ireland, but in the meantime I wanted you to know how much I appreciate your thoughtfulness in preparing this information for my use.

Sincerely,



The Right Honorable
Margaret Thatcher
Prime Minister
London

PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. T59/79T.

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Prime Minister
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CONFIDENTIAL

FM FCO 011853Z AUG 79

TO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA

TELEGRAM NUMBER 592 OF 1 AUGUST

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU FOR WALDEN, PS/S OF S AT REQUEST OF PRIVATE OFFICE WAS RECEIVED FROM WASHINGTON BEGINS

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 2150 OF 1 AUGUST 1979

INFO ROUTINE NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN

MY TELNO 2144: ARMS FOR RUC

1. IN THE LIGHT OF MY TEL UNDER REF, IS THERE ANY FURTHER ACTION WE CAN USEFULLY NOW TAKE WITH THE AMERICANS?
2. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS RESPONDED TO CARTER'S REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND MATERIAL: WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO THE AMERICANS THAT WE WILL NOT WITHDRAW THE OUTSTANDING THREE LICENCE REQUEST: AND WE HAVE LEFT THE AMERICANS IN NO DOUBT ABOUT THE DAMAGE AND PUBLIC REACTION WHICH WOULD FOLLOW DISCLOSURE OF THEIR DECISION TO WITHHOLD THE AUTHORISATION OF LICENCES.
3. ON THE US SIDE, THE LIMITING FACTORS ARE VANCE'S COMMITMENT OF 18 JULY TO O'NEILL (WE DO NOT KNOW HOW PRECISELY IT WAS WORDED): INABILITY TO MODIFY THEIR POSITION DURING THE CONGRESSIONAL RECESS IN AUGUST: AND A GENERAL FEELING HERE THAT, EVEN IF ZABLOCKI DOES NOT HOLD A FURTHER MEETING, BIAGGI AND OTHERS WILL NOT GIVE UP, AND NORTHERN IRELAND MATTERS GENERALLY ARE GOING TO BE ACTIVE AND DIFFICULT TO HANDLE IN TERMS OF US DOMESTIC POLITICS DURING THE COMING MONTHS.
4. STATE DEPARTMENT MUST ANSWER THIS WEEK A LARGE NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING LETTERS FROM CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC ABOUT US POLICY. THEY TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT THEY HOPED TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS BY ENCLOSING NIMETZ'S STATEMENT TO ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE YESTERDAY (MY TELNO 2145) AND TO AVOID ANY REFERENCE TO PENDING LICENCE REQUESTS. THE IMMEDIATE RISK OF A PUBLIC DISCLOSURE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS WITHHOLDING APPROVAL FOR OUTSTANDING LICENCES IS MORE LIKELY TO COME FROM A CONGRESSIONAL LEAK OF VANCE'S UNDERTAKING TO O'NEILL OR AS A RESULT OF FURTHER PROBING BY CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS WHO WILL NOW BE DISSECTING NIMETZ'S EVIDENCE OF YESTERDAY.
5. IF MATTERS ARE LEFT TO TAKE THEIR COURSE, THE RISK OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL BE VERY HIGH. I HAVE MADE THIS POINT AGAIN TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT THIS MORNING. I DOUBT IF FURTHER PRESSURE FROM US NOW TO SECURE EARLY APPROVAL OF THE OUTSTANDING LICENCE APPLICATIONS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. BUT YOU MAY WISH TO GO OVER THE GROUND AGAIN WITH KINGMAN BREWSTER IN THE LIGHT OF MY REPORT OF NIMETZ'S EVIDENCE, AND TRY TO ENLIST HIS SUPPORT FOR AN EARLY MOVE BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO APPROVE LICENCES FOR THE SPARES AND AMMUNITION ON THE GROUND THAT THESE ARE IN A SENSE NOT QUOTE NEW UNQUOTE SUPPLIES (COMPARE PARA 6 OF MY TELNO 2144) I AM TOLD THAT KINGMAN BREWSTER'S REPORTING ON THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN FORCEFUL, AND VANCE LISTENS TO HIM.

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CARRINGTON

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CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 011600Z AUG 79

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELNO 2150 OF 1 AUGUST 1979

INFO ROUTINE NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN.

MY TELNO 2144: ARMS FOR RUC

1. IN THE LIGHT OF MY TEL UNDER REF, IS THERE ANY FURTHER ACTION WE CAN USEFULLY NOW TAKE WITH THE AMERICANS?
2. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS RESPONDED TO CARTER'S REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND MATERIAL: WE HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO THE AMERICANS THAT WE WILL NOT WITHDRAW THE OUTSTANDING THREE LICENCE REQUESTS: AND WE HAVE LEFT THE AMERICANS IN NO DOUBT ABOUT THE DAMAGE AND PUBLIC REACTION WHICH WOULD FOLLOW DISCLOSURE OF THEIR DECISION TO WITHHOLD THE AUTHORISATION OF LICENCES.
3. ON THE US SIDE, THE LIMITING FACTORS ARE VANCE'S COMMITMENT OF 18 JULY TO O'NEILL (WE DO NOT KNOW HOW PRECISELY IT WAS WORDED): INABILITY TO MODIFY THEIR POSITION DURING THE CONGRESSIONAL RECESS IN AUGUST: AND A GENERAL FEELING HERE THAT, EVEN IF ZABLOCKI DOES NOT HOLD A FURTHER MEETING, BIAGGI AND OTHERS WILL NOT GIVE UP, AND NORTHERN IRELAND MATTERS GENERALLY ARE GOING TO BE ACTIVE AND DIFFICULT TO HANDLE IN TERMS OF US DOMESTIC POLITICS DURING THE COMING MONTHS.
4. STATE DEPARTMENT MUST ANSWER THIS WEEK A LARGE NUMBER OF OUTSTANDING LETTERS FROM CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC ABOUT US POLICY. THEY TOLD ME THIS MORNING THAT THEY HOPED TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS BY ENCLOSING NIMETZ'S STATEMENT TO ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE YESTERDAY (MY TELNO 2145) AND TO AVOID ANY REFERENCE TO PENDING LICENCE REQUESTS. THE IMMEDIATE RISK OF A PUBLIC DISCLOSURE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION IS WITHHOLDING APPROVAL FOR OUTSTANDING LICENCES IS MORE LIKELY TO COME FROM A CONGRESSIONAL LEAK OF VANCE'S UNDERTAKING TO O'NEILL OR AS A RESULT OF FURTHER PROBING BY CONGRESSIONAL STAFFERS WHO WILL NOW BE DISSECTING NIMETZ'S EVIDENCE OF YESTERDAY.

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5. IF MATTERS ARE LEFT TO TAKE THEIR COURSE, THE RISK OF PUBLIC DISCLOSURE IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS WILL BE VERY HIGH. I HAVE MADE THIS POINT AGAIN TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT THIS MORNING. I DOUBT IF FURTHER PRESSURE FROM US NOW TO SECURE EARLY APPROVAL OF THE OUTSTANDING LICENCE APPLICATIONS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. BUT YOU MAY WISH TO GO OVER THE GROUND AGAIN WITH KINGMAN BREWSTER IN THE LIGHT OF MY REPORT OF NIMETZ'S EVIDENCE, AND TRY TO ENLIST HIS SUPPORT FOR AN EARLY MOVE BY THE ADMINISTRATION TO APPROVE LICENCES FOR THE SPARES AND AMMUNITION ON THE GROUND THAT THESE ARE IN A SENSE NOT QUOTE NEW UNQUOTE SUPPLIES (COMPARE PARA 6 OF MY TELNO 2144). I AM TOLD THAT KINGMAN BREWSTER'S REPORTING ON THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN FORCEFUL, AND VANCE LISTENS TO HIM.

ROBINSON

DEPARTMENTAL DISTN.

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DESKBY 010800Z

FM WASHINGTON 312302Z JUL 79

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2145 OF 31 JULY

INFO NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN

MY IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING TELEGRAM: ARMS FOR R U C.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF NIMETZ'S OPENING STATEMENT TO ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE IN CLOSED SESSION:

BEGINS

ON JANUARY 31, 1979, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE APPROVED A LICENSE PERMITTING STURM, RUGER AND COMPANY OF SOUTHPORT, CONNECTICUT TO EXPORT 3000 .357 CALIBER REVOLVERS AND 500 .223 CALIBER AUTOMATIC RIFLES TO THE POLICE FORCES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM FOR USE BY THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

THE APPROVAL OF THIS APPLICATION WAS CONSISTENT WITH OUR POLICY OF COOPERATING WITH LEGALLY ESTABLISHED GOVERNMENTS, PARTICULARLY DEMOCRATICALLY-ELECTED AND ALLIED GOVERNMENTS, IN THEIR EFFORTS TO CONTROL TERRORISM. THE RUC IS THE LEGALLY-CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND WE HAVE APPROVED LICENSES FOR THE EXPORT OF MUNITIONS LIST ITEMS TO THIS FORCE. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT THE .357 CALIBER REVOLVER IS A STANDARD POLICE ITEM USED BY MANY POLICE FORCES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. THIS REVOLVER IS CARRIED BY MANY U.S. GOVERNMENT SECURITY PERSONNEL IN PERFORMING PERSONAL PROTECTION DUTIES. THE NUMBER OF 3,000 SUCH REVOLVERS WAS NOT EXCESSIVE FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE APPROXIMATELY 6,000-OFFICER POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. WE WERE ALSO INFORMED THAT THE NEW YORK CITY AND WASHINGTON POLICE FORCES HAVE RIFLES SIMILAR TO THE .223 AND THAT SIMILAR RIFLES ARE ALSO USED BY MAJOR POLICE FORCES CONFRONTED WITH TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND THREATS SUCH AS FACE THE POLICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THE NUMBER OF 500 SUCH RIFLES WAS NOT EXCESSIVE FOR A 6,000-OFFICER POLICE FORCE.

IN APPROVING THIS PARTICULAR LICENSE APPLICATION WE TOOK INTO ACCOUNT THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

-- THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IS THE LEGALLY-CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTING ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND -- PROTESTANT, CATHOLIC AND OTHERS -- AGAINST CRIMES AND ACTS OF TERRORISM. THE CONSTABULARY HAS ACHIEVED INCREASED ACCEPTANCE FROM THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

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— THIS POLICE FORCE CONTINUES TO FACE A VERY SERIOUS TERRORIST THREAT FROM THE PROVISIONAL IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY AND ALSO THE IRISH NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY AS WELL AS A POTENTIAL THREAT FROM PRESENTLY RELATIVELY INACTIVE PROTESTANT PARA-MILITARY ORGANIZATIONS. THESE ILLEGAL FORCES HAVE WEAPONS SIMILAR TO THOSE PURCHASED BY THE NORTHERN IRISH POLICE FORCE.

— MOST MODERATE OBSERVERS OF THE NORTHERN IRISH SCENE SUPPORT THE BRITISH POLICY OF TURNING RESPONSIBILITY FOR SECURITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND OVER TO THE POLICE AND WITHDRAWING U.K. ARMY UNITS.

— IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THIS POLICY GOAL THE BRITISH HAVE BEEN MODERNIZING THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY INCLUDING ITS EQUIPMENT.

— THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY HAS GAINED GROWING ACCEPTANCE FROM THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY AND ENJOYS CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE SECURITY FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND. AS RECENTLY AS MAY 31, IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER O'KENNEDY REAFFIRMED IRELAND'S POLICY OF CLOSE COOPERATION WITH THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IN COMBATTING TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE.

— IN EACH INSTANCE IN WHICH AN APPLICATION FOR THE SALE OF ARMS FOR USE BY THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY WAS APPROVED, WE CONCLUDED THERE WAS NO CAUSE BY REASON OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS TO DISAPPROVE THE APPLICATION. WE ARE SATISFIED THAT THE BRITISH ARE TRYING TO MEET THE PROBLEM OF ALLEGED MALTREATMENT OF PERSONS SUSPECTED OF COMMITTING ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM.

— OVERALL U.S. POLICY ON NORTHERN IRELAND IS ONE OF STRICT IMPARTIALITY IN THIS COMMUNAL CONFLICT AND ONE OF SUPPORT FOR ANY SETTLEMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH PARTS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND COMMUNITY AND THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS. WE ARE NOT IMPARTIAL, HOWEVER, AS BETWEEN A LEGALLY-CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT SUCH AS THAT OF GREAT BRITAIN AND ARMED TERRORIST GROUPS SUCH AS EXIST IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

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ROBINSON

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FM WASHINGTON 312300Z JUL 79

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2144 OF 31 JULY

INFO NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

MY TELNO 2124: ARMS FOR R U C

1. NIMETZ GAVE ME AN ACCOUNT OF HIS APPEARANCE AT ZABLOCKI'S CLOSED-HEARING TODAY. THE TEXT OF HIS OPENING STATEMENT IS IN MY IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING TELEGRAM. NIMETZ DREW MY ATTENTION TO THE LAST SENTENCE DECLARING THAT THE US WAS NOT IMPARTIAL AS BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATIC AUTHORITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE TERRORISTS.

2. IN ADDITION TO ZABLOCKI, CONGRESSMEN GILMAN (R NEW YORK), BIAGGI (D. NEW YORK), BINGHAM (D. NEW YORK), AND BONKER (D. WASHINGTON) WERE AMONG SOME EIGHT CONGRESSMEN PRESENT. BLANCATO (BIAGGI'S AIDE) WHO IS SHORTLY TO VISIT IRELAND AGAIN, WAS ALSO PRESENT.

3. NIMETZ DESCRIBED THE ATMOSPHERE AS LOW KEY AND AFFABLE. HE SAID IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE CONGRESSMEN HAD ALREADY LEARNED FROM O'NEILL THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WAS REVIEWING ITS POLICY AND WOULD NOT PROCESS ANY APPLICATIONS FOR THE RUC PENDING THE OUTCOME OF THE REVIEW. NIMETZ HAD MERELY CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE. SINCE THE CONGRESSMEN DID NOT SPECIFICALLY ASK WHETHER ANY APPLICATIONS WERE CURRENTLY PENDING, NIMETZ SAID HE DID NOT EXPOSE ANY SURFACE ON THIS POINT. HE HAD NOT BEEN QUESTIONED, AND HAD NOT SPOKEN, ABOUT MILITARY SUPPLIES TO THE BRITISH ARMY FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. IN ANSWER TO MY QUESTION, HE CONFIRMED THAT HE HAD NOT REVEALED TO CONGRESS THAT HMG HAD BEEN ASKED TO WITHDRAW ANY APPLICATIONS FOR LICENCES. HE HAD ALSO REFUSED TO BE DRAWN ABOUT THE TIME SCALE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY REVIEW. HE SPECIFICALLY AVOIDED LINKING IT TO THE TIMING OF THE ZABLOCKI COMMITTEE'S OWN ENQUIRIES.

4. NIMETZ SAID HE LAID GREAT STRESS ON COUNTERING TERRORISM, PROVIDING THE CONGRESSMEN WITH INTELLIGENCE ON PIRA LINKS WITH INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST GROUPS. HIS BRIEF HAD BEEN CAREFULLY AND FULLY PREPARED ON THIS POINT. HE FELT THAT THIS HAD MADE SOME IMPRESSION, AT LEAST ON ZABLOCKI AND BINGHAM. HE HAD ALSO EMPHASISED THAT THE REPUBLIC COOPERATED WITH THE RUC ON BORDER SECURITY AND HAD NO OBJECTION TO AMERICAN ARMS SALES TO THE RUC.

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5. IN REPLY TO MY QUESTION, NIMETZ SAID HE WAS NOT CLEAR HOW ZABLOCKI INTENDED TO PROCEED. HE COULD NOT SEE ANY PURPOSE IN A FURTHER CLOSED HEARING UNDER ZABLOCKI. NIMETZ HAD DELIBERATELY AVOIDED DISCUSSING THE NEXT STEPS WITH ZABLOCKI IN FRONT OF THE OTHER CONGRESSMEN. IT WOULD BE MORE PRODUCTIVE TO DISCUSS TACTICS PRIVATELY WITH ZABLOCKI.

6. NIMETZ THEN WONDERED ALOUD WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE SCOPE FOR SOME DIFFERENTIAL TREATMENT AS BETWEEN REQUESTS FOR LICENCES OF DIFFERENT CATEGORIES. HE DID NOT WANT TO RAISE FALSE HOPES, AND HAD NOT YET REPORTED TO VANCE. I ASKED WHETHER HE HAD IN MIND DRAWING A DISTINCTION BETWEEN AMMUNITION AND SPARES ON THE ONE HAND, AND REQUESTS FOR NEW EQUIPMENT ON THE OTHER. IF SO, COULD THE ADMINISTRATION NOT AGREE THE OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS? WE COULD THEN AVOID THE RISK OF PUBLIC DIFFERENCES WHILE WE DISCUSSED THE FUTURE. NIMETZ SAID THAT GIVEN VANCE'S UNDER-TAKING TO O'NEILL, IT WAS AS DIFFICULT POLITICALLY FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO CONSIDER APPROVING LICENCES AS IT WAS FOR US TO CONSIDER WITHDRAWING OUR REQUESTS. BUT HE LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD PUT THIS POSSIBILITY TO VANCE.

7. EMPHASISING THE RISKS OF A DAMAGING LEAK THE LONGER THE MATTER WAS HELD IN ABEYANCE, I ASKED FOR NIMETZ'S PERSONAL VIEWS ON TIMING. HE REPLIED CAUTIOUSLY, DOUBTING WHETHER THERE COULD BE ANY POSITIVE MOVEMENT FOR AT LEAST TWO MONTHS. (A MOVE DURING AUGUST WAS EXCLUDED BECAUSE CONGRESS WOULD REGARD IT AS CHEATING.) WHETHER OR NOT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE THEN TO TAKE SOME HELPFUL ACTION WOULD DEPEND ON WHETHER THE CONGRESSIONAL TEMPERATURE COULD BE KEPT RELATIVELY COOL, AS WELL AS ON VANCE'S OWN DECISIONS.

8. IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT TODAY'S CONGRESSIONAL HEARING WAS AS SATISFACTORY AS WE COULD EXPECT IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES, AND NIMETZ SEEMS TO HAVE PERFORMED WELL. THE ESSENTIAL PROBLEM, HOWEVER, REMAINS THAT VANCE MAY FEEL BOUND TO HONOUR COMMITMENTS HE EVIDENTLY MADE TO O'NEILL ON 18 JULY.

9. I MADE CLEAR AGAIN TO NIMETZ THAT THERE COULD BE NO QUESTION OF OUR WITHDRAWING OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS.

ROBINSON

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TO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA

TELNO 564 OF 31 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

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YOUR TELNO 793.

FOLLOWING FOR SECRETARY OF STATE'S PARTY FROM PARSONS.

ARMS FOR RUC.

1. I HAVE HAD A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH THE US AMBASSADOR OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS AND HAVE LEFT HIM IN NO DOUBT OF OUR VIEWS. I SAW HIM AGAIN TODAY AND IMPRESSED ON HIM THAT OUR IMMEDIATE TACTICAL OBJECTIVE IS TO SECURE WHAT IS IN THE PIPELINE WITHOUT PREJUDICING FURTHER DISCUSSION WITH THE AMERICANS ABOUT FRESH ORDERS.
2. ON YOUR PARAGRAPH 4, POSITION IS AS FOLLOWS. OF THE THREE OUTSTANDING APPLICATIONS FOR EXPORT LICENCES, THE SPARES FOR THE M1 CARBINES ARE OBTAINABLE ONLY FROM THE US: AMMUNITION FOR RUGER PISTOLS MIGHT AT A PINCH BE OBTAINABLE FROM ONE OTHER SOURCE, SWEDEN, BUT IT WOULD NOT BE SAME STANDARD AS THE AMERICAN: THE RADIO EQUIPMENT IS HIGHLY SPECIALISED AND IS OBTAINABLE NOWHERE IN THE WORLD EXCEPT THE US.
3. AT PRESENT THE ORDER FOR THE SECOND 3,000 RUGERS, WHICH WAS IN NEGOTIATION THROUGH THE BRITISH AGENTS, IS IN SUSPENSE AND THE MANUFACTURERS HAVE BEEN TOLD NOT (NOT) TO APPLY FOR AN EXPORT LICENCE UNTIL FURTHER INSTRUCTED.
4. THE RUGER PISTOL WAS SELECTED BY THE RUC AFTER EXHAUSTIVE CONSIDERATION OF A WIDE RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES. NO COMPARABLE WEAPON IS AVAILABLE FOROM UK SOURCES. INDEED, GIVEN THE STRONG RUC PREFERENCE ON PRACTICAL GROUNDS FOR A REVOLVER, AS AGAINST AN AUTOMATIC, THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO SOURCE OF SUPPLY AVAILABLE OUTSIDE THE US AND THE EASTERN BLOC COUNTRIES.

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FROM FCO 311801Z JUL 79

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 951 OF 31 JULY

AND TO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN

INFO IMMEDIATE LUSAKA (FOR WALDEN AND CARTLEDGE), NIO BELFAST.

YOUR TELNO 2124: ARMS FOR RUC: ZABLOCKI HEARING.

1. IN EVENT OF RECEIVING ENQUIRIES OVERNIGHT, NEWS DEPARTMENT HAVE BEEN BRIEFED AS FOLLOWS. YOU SHOULD DRAW ON THIS AS APPROPRIATE.

QUESTION

CAN YOU COMMENT ON REPORT THAT CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE IS INVESTIGATING SUPPLY OF ARMS TO RUC?

ANSWER

WE WERE AWARE THAT A HEARING WAS TO TAKE PLACE.

QUESTION

PROPRIETY OF INVESTIGATION BY HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE?

ANSWER

THIS IS A MATTER FOR THE UNITED STATES. SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND SAID ON 1 JUNE THAT HE VERY MUCH REGRETTED "THAT A BODY OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE BORNE THE BRUNT OF THE TERRORIST CAMPAIGN DURING THE PAST TEN YEARS, INCLUDING THE MURDER OF OVER 120 OF ITS MEMBERS AND SERIOUS INJURY TO MANY OTHERS, SHOULD BE MADE THE SUBJECT OF CONTROVERSY OVER THE PROVISION OF MODERN WEAPONS TO DEFEND THE COMMUNITY AND THEMSELVES FROM ATTACKS FROM MINDLESS ASSASSINS."

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QUESTION

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QUESTION

DOES THIS INVESTIGATION IMPLY A CHANGE IN US POLICY TOWARDS NORTHERN IRELAND?

ANSWER

THAT IS A QUESTION FOR US ADMINISTRATION. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT US POLICY RESTS ON PRESIDENT CARTER'S AUGUST 1977 STATEMENT CONDEMNING VIOLENCE, REMAINING COMPLETELY IMPARTIAL AND NO OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE. IN NO WAY CAN SUPPLY OF EQUIPMENT TO RUC, THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND, BE REGARDED AS A BREACH OF THIS IMPARTIALITY.

QUESTION

US ARMS SALES TO RUC SUSPENDED PENDING OUTCOME OF INVESTIGATION?

ANSWER

WE HAVE RECEIVED NO INDICATION FROM US AUTHORITIES THAT ANY EXPORT LICENCES HAVE BEEN REFUSED.

QUESTION

HAS US IMPOSED A COMPLETE BAN?

ANSWER

WE HAVE RECEIVED NO NOTIFICATION FROM US AUTHORITIES OF ANY SUCH DECISION. WE WOULD OF COURSE TAKE A VERY SERIOUS VIEW OF SUCH A DEVELOPMENT.

QUESTION

WHAT APPLICATIONS ARE PENDING?

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ANSWER

THESE RELATE TO PURCHASE OF STANDARD POLICE EQUIPMENT AND SPARES BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLICE AUTHORITY. IT IS NOT THE PRACTICE TO DISCLOSE PRECISE DETAILS OF SUCH EQUIPMENT.

QUESTION

HAVE YOU MADE ANY PROTEST TO US ADMINISTRATION?

ANSWER

OUR VIEWS ARE WELL KNOWN TO UK AUTHORITIES.

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FM WASHINGTON 302020Z JULY 79

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TEL NO 2124 OF 30 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN.

YOUR TELEGRAM NO 944: ARMS FOR RUC.

1. I TOOK ACTION ACCORDINGLY WITH FUNSETH (DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF NORTHERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT), REPEATING ALSO THE POINTS MADE BY PARSONS TO KINGMAN BRESTER (YOUR TELEGRAM NOS 938 AND 940). FUNSETH, WHO HAS BEEN ARGUING STRONGLY WITHIN THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN FAVOUR OF CONTINUING TO APPROVE LICENCE APPLICATIONS. SAID HE WOULD SUBMIT THESE REPRESENTATIONS AND DO WHAT HE COULD.

2. BUT I AM AFRAID THAT THERE IS LITTLE HOPE OF A CHANGE OF MIND BY VANCE, BECAUSE OF THE POINT IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF YOUR TUR, WHICH I CAN CONFIRM INDEPENDENTLY. VANCE SAW O'NEILL ON 18 JULY AND, CONTRARY TO THE OFFICIAL ADVICE SUBMITTED TO HIM, SOLD THE PASS TO O'NEILL BY PROMISING THE WITHHOLDING OF APPROVAL OF FURTHER LICENCE APPLICATIONS TO AVOID HEARINGS AND THE RISK OF A CONGRESSIONALLY IMPOSED EMBARGO.

3. ZABLOCKI'S CLOSED HEARING IS NOW FIXED FOR NOON LOCAL TIME TOMORROW. I WILL REPORT AGAIN THEREAFTER.

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TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 944 OF 30 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

YOUR TELS: 2106 AND 2113: ARMS FOR R U C.

1. FOR THE REASONS DESCRIBED IN MY TELNO 938 WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO WITHDRAW ANY OF THE THREE OUTSTANDING LICENCE APPLICATIONS. THE SPARE PARTS, AMMUNITION AND RADIO EQUIPMENT (MY TELNO 919) ARE REQUIRED URGENTLY FOR OPERATIONAL REASONS. SIMILARLY, WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE ANY COMMITMENT AS REGARDS THE PLACING OF FUTURE ORDERS BY THE N I POLICE AUTHORITY. WE SHOULD BE GRATEFUL THEREFORE FOR ANYTHING YOU CAN DO AT THIS LATE STAGE TO PERSUADE VANCE TO RECONSIDER THE MATTER AND TO HAVE A SUITABLE ADDITION MADE TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE (YOUR TELNO 2114).

2. FOR YOUR OWN INFORMATION ONLY, YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT WE UNDERSTAND FROM BREWSTER THAT VANCE HAS ALREADY DISCUSSED HIS PROPOSED LINE OF ACTION WITH SPEAKER O'NEILL AND OBTAINED HIS AGREEMENT. WE CAN SEE THAT VANCE WOULD BE RELUCTANT TO GO BACK TO O'NEILL NOW.

3. AS REGARDS ANSWER 1 OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S DEFENSIVE GUIDANCE (YOUR TELNO 2114) WE SHARE YOUR VIEW, EXPRESSED IN WASHINGTON TELNO 2029, THAT IN LINE WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S AUGUST 1977 STATEMENT, THE REFERENCE TO STRICT IMPARTIALITY IN UK POLICY ON NORTHERN IRELAND SHOULD BE REINFORCED BY CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM.

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FM WASHINGTON 272314Z JULY
TO IMMEDIATE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2114 OF 27 JULY 1979
INFO NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

MIPT: ARMS FOR RUC.

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATE DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE FOR DEFENSIVE
USE IN RESPONSE TO PRESS AND CONGRESSIONAL ENQUIRIES:

BEGINS

Q: WHAT IS U S POLICY ON THE SALE OF ARMS TO THE POLICE IN NORTHERN
IRELAND?

A. OUR POLICY HAS BEEN TO COOPERATE WITH LEGALLY ESTABLISHED
GOVERNMENTS IN THEIR EFFORTS TO CONTROL TERRORISM. WITH RESPECT
TO THE EXPORT OF ARMS, EACH REQUEST FOR A LICENSE FOR EXPORT OF
ITEMS ON THE MUNITIONS LIST FOR USE IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BEEN
CONSIDERED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. THIS IS CONSISTENT WITH THE
OVERALL U S POLICY ON NORTHERN IRELAND OF STRICT IMPARTIALITY
IN THE TRAGIC COMMUNAL CONFLICT THERE, AND ONE OF SUPPORT FOR ANY
SETTLEMENT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH PARTS OF THE NORTHERN
IRELAND COMMUNITY AND THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS. THIS
POLICY WAS SPELLED OUT BY THE PRESIDENT IN HIS STATEMENT OF AUGUST
30, 1977, AND REMAINS UNCHANGED.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO CONGRESSIONAL CONCERN
ABOUT THE SALE OF ARMS FOR USE BY THE RUC?

A: A NUMBER OF QUERIES HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED TO THE DEPARTMENT BY
MEMBERS OF CONGRESS WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SALE OF ARMS TO
THE RUC. CHAIRMAN ZABLOCKI HAS INDICATED THAT THE HOUSE INTER-
NATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE WILL LOOK INTO THE APPROPRIATENESS OF
THESE SALES. WE ARE COOPERATING CLOSELY WITH CHAIRMAN ZABLOCKI
AND SPEAKER O'NEILL ON THIS ISSUE.

Q: ISN'T THE RUC ACCUSED OF VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTHERN
IRELAND?

A: THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IS THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED
POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. AN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT

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ISSUED A YEAR AGO CONCLUDED THAT MALTREATMENT OF SUSPECTED TERRORISTS HAD TAKEN PLACE WITH SUFFICIENT FREQUENCY TO WARRANT AN INQUIRY. THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY SET UP BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO INVESTIGATE THE CHARGES ISSUED A REPORT IN MARCH WHICH INDICATED THERE HAD BEEN EVIDENCE OF SOME MALTREATMENT DURING INTERROGATION. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED IMMEDIATE APPLICATION OF MEASURES TO MEET THIS PROBLEM AND PROMPT CONSIDERATION OF FURTHER STEPS.

Q: DID THE STATE DEPARTMENT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT HUMAN RIGHTS CONSIDERATIONS IN APPROVING THESE LICENSES?

A: YES. IN EACH INSTANCE IN WHICH AN APPLICATION FOR THE SALES OF ARMS FOR USE BY THE RUC WAS APPROVED, IT WAS DETERMINED THERE WAS NO CAUSE BY REASON OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS TO DISAPPROVE THE APPLICATION.

Q: BUT IF THERE HAS BEEN SOME EVIDENCE OF MALTREATMENT OF PRISONERS WHY HASN'T THE STATE DEPARTMENT DISAPPROVED THESE APPLICATIONS ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS?

A: WE, OF COURSE, DEPLORE ANY MALTREATMENT OF PERSONS IN POLICE CUSTODY ANYWHERE.

HOWEVER, IN THIS SITUATION, WE BELIEVE THE BRITISH ARE TRYING TO MEET THE PROBLEM OF ALLEGED MALTREATMENT OF PERSONS SUSPECTED OF COMMITTING ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM.

WE CONCLUDED THAT THE SITUATION DID NOT JUSTIFY REFUSING TO SELL WEAPONS TO THE RUC -- THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

Q: ISN'T THE RUC A PROTESTANT ORGANIZATION?

A: THE RUC IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTING ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND -- PROTESTANT, CATHOLIC, AND OTHERS -- AGAINST CRIMES AND ACTS OF TERRORISM. MOST OF THE RUC'S PERSONNEL ARE PROTESTANT, BUT THE RUC HAS BEEN TRYING TO INCREASE ITS RECRUITMENT OF CATHOLICS. MOST RESPONSIBLE AND MODERATE LEADERS IN LONDON, DUBLIN AND BELFAST SUPPORT THE POLICY OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO TURN THE SECURITY PROBLEM OVER TO THE RUC AND PHASE OUT THE SECURITY ROLE OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

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Q: WHAT IS YOUR COMMENT ON REPORTS THAT THE U S HAS SUSPENDED ACTION ON ANY FUTURE BRITISH REQUEST OF ARMS TO THE RUC?

A: AS NOTED EARLIER, APPLICATIONS ARE HANDLED ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS. NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON PENDING APPLICATIONS FOR ARMS SALES.

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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2113 OF 27 JULY

INFO NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN.

MY TELNO 2106: ARMS FOR THE R.U.C.

1. VEST ASKED ROBINSON TO CALL LATER THIS EVENING, AND GAVE HIM THE REVISED AMERICAN NOTES FOR PUBLIC GUIDANCE IF THE STORY BREAKS. TEXT IS IN M I F T.
2. VEST SAID THAT NIMETZ WOULD FOLLOW THIS LINE IN THE CLOSED SESSION WITH CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI'S COMMITTEE NOW ON TUESDAY 31 JULY. THIS WOULD MEAN THAT THE TROUBLEMAKERS WOULD BE PRESENT, AND IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR NIMETZ TO HOLD THE LINE PENDING CONSIDERATION OF VANCE'S SUGGESTION THAT OUR APPLICATIONS MIGHT BE WITHDRAWN.
3. ROBINSON ASKED IF THIS MEANT THAT NIMETZ WOULD USE THE ANSWER IN THE GUIDANCE: QUOTE NO ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON PENDING APPLICATIONS FOR ARMS SALES UNQUOTE. VEST SAID NIMETZ WOULD TRY TO FUDGE THE ISSUE, BUT IF HE WAS PINNED DOWN AND USED THIS REPLY, WE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE STOCK OF THE SITUATION. VEST UNDERTOOK TO INFORM US IMMEDIATELY OF THE OUTCOME OF THE HEARING.
4. ROBINSON PRESSED VEST AT LEAST TO AMEND THE LINE IN THE LAST ANSWER, TO INCLUDE THE WORD QUOTE YET UNQUOTE. VEST UNDERTOOK TO SUBMIT THIS TO VANCE.
5. IF IT IS POSSIBLE TO AGREE TO CAUSE THE CURRENT APPLICATIONS TO BE WITHDRAWN BY MONDAY NIGHT 30 JULY WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GET NIMETZ TO STATE TO THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE THAT NO APPLICATIONS ARE CURRENTLY PENDING. THIS WOULD BE THE BEST COURSE FOR US IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

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R F C O 272050Z JUL 79

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 940 OF 27 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST ROUTINE DUBLIN.

MY TELNO 938: ARMS FOR RUC.

FOLLOWING FROM PARSONS.

1. I SPOKE TO BREWSTER ACCORDINGLY THIS EVENING. HE SAID THAT HE WOULD TRANSMIT OUR MESSAGE TO THE STATE DEPT.
2. BREWSTER SPECULATED THAT NIMETZ MIGHT HAVE TO ADD A LITTLE IN REPLY TO SUPPLEMENTARIES. HE MIGHT SAY THAT THE U S GOVERNMENT HAD MADE NO (NO) COMMITMENT REGARDING FRESH EXPORTS: THAT HE KNEW OF NO (NO) NEW ORDERS: AND THAT ANY NEW ORDERS WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED ON THEIR MERITS. I SAID THAT THE FIRST AND LAST PHRASES WERE ALL RIGHT. BUT THE MIDDLE ONE WOULD NOT (NOT) DO. IF IT BECAME KNOWN AND WE DID NOT (NOT) REFUTE IT THERE WOULD BE A PROBABILITY OF A DANGEROUS LEAK: A NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE RUC KNEW THAT THERE WERE FRESH ORDERS IN PROSPECT BEYOND THOSE ALREADY IN THE PIPELINE. BREWSTER TOOK MY POINT.
3. BREWSTER ADDED THAT HE HAD SPOKEN BRIEFLY TO GEORGE VEST ON THE TELEPHONE THIS AFTERNOON. IT WAS CLEAR THAT OPINIONS IN THE STATE DEPT WERE STILL DIVIDED. NIMETZ WAS ASKING FOR POSTPONEMENT OF HIS APPEARANCE AT THE HEARING BUT BREWSTER DOUBTED THAT HE WOULD GET AWAY WITH THIS.

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FM WASHINGTON 272115Z JULY
TO IMMEDIATE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2106 OF 27 JULY 1979
INFO NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN.

YOUR TELNO 911: ARMS FOR RUC

1. VANCE TOLD ME TODAY THAT FOLLOWING HIS TELEPHONE TALK WITH YOU HE HAD, AS PROMISED, GIVEN THE SUBJECT FURTHER THOUGHT.
2. HE TOLD ME OF THE GREAT STRESS YOU HAD LAID ON THE STRONG FEELINGS ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE U K. THERE WAS NO NEED FOR HIM TO REPEAT TO ME THE POLITICAL DELICACY OF THE PROBLEM IN THE U S A AT THE PRESENT TIME. HE WISHED TO SUGGEST THEREFORE THAT WE SHOULD CONSIDER WITHDRAWING THE ORDER FOR SPARES AND AMMUNITION. (THE ORDER FOR TELECOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT COULD GO AHEAD AS IT RAISED NO PROBLEM). IF WE COULD DO THIS THE U S GOVERNMENT COULD MEET CONGRESSIONAL ENQUIRIES BY SAYING THAT THERE WAS NO OUTSTANDING ORDER FOR ARMS.
3. I SAID THAT I UNDERSTOOD THAT REPLIES WOULD HAVE TO GO TO CONGRESSMEN WHO HAD WRITTEN ON THIS SUBJECT. WOULD THEY BE LIMITED SIMPLY TO THE STATEMENT THAT THERE WAS NO ORDER FOR ARMS ON THE TABLE? IT STRUCK ME THAT IT COULD BE VERY DAMAGING IF THE ANSWER, OR ANYTHING SAID TO CONGRESSMEN, INDICATED EITHER THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN ORDER WHICH HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN OR THAT THE U S GOVERNMENT WERE NOT IN THE FUTURE PREPARED TO ENTERTAIN ANY SUCH ORDERS.
4. VANCE THOUGHT ABOUT THIS FOR A MINUTE AND CONSULTED NIMETZ, VEST AND FUNSETH WHO WERE PRESENT. HE THEN REPLIED THAT HE THOUGHT THAT THIS WOULD BE POSSIBLE.
5. I THEN ASKED WHETHER WE COULD BE SURE THAT NOTHING WOULD BE DONE THAT MIGHT GIVE RISE TO PUBLICITY THAT THERE HAD BEEN AN ORDER THAT HAD BEEN WITHDRAWN AS A RESULT OF PRESSURE ITC. VANCE SAID THAT HE WOULD STICK TO THE VERY BRIEF AND CLEAR STATEMENT THAT THERE WAS NO ARMS ORDER ON THE TABLE. HE WOULD TRY TO AVOID ANY SUGGESTION THAT THERE HAD BEEN A WITHDRAWAL OF AN ORDER.

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6. I EMPHASISED HOW IMPORTANT IT WAS TO AVOID ANYTHING BECOMING PUBLIC THAT INDICATED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A CHANGE IN THE POSITION AS STATED BY NIMETZ TO THE CONGRESS ON 15 JUNE.
7. VANCE ALSO THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS NO NEED TO DEAL NOW WITH THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE. THE MAIN PURPOSE WAS TO LET THE THING COOL DOWN AT PRESENT. HE WOULD AVOID SAYING ANYTHING ABOUT THE FUTURE AND SIMPLY STICK TO THE LINE THAT THERE WAS NO OUTSTANDING ORDER. THE ONLY OTHER POINT TO EMERGE WAS THAT NIMETZ THOUGHT THAT THERE MIGHT CONCEIVABLY BE A LEAK IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THIS SHOULD BE AVOIDED ALSO. (THIS IS OBVIOUSLY AN IMPORTANT POINT).
8. I CAN SEE THAT THERE MAY BE A PRACTICAL PROBLEM OVER NOT GETTING IMMEDIATELY THE SPARES AND AMMUNITION AND THE OTHER ARMS THAT THE RUC REQUIRE AND OF COURSE I AM IN NO POSITION TO JUDGE HOW INSUPERABLE THIS IS. BUT CERTAINLY THE SUGGESTION THAT VANCE HAS PUT FORWARD IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR CONVERSATION SEEMS TO ME THE BEST WAY OF LIMITING THE DAMAGE AT THIS MOMENT. WE MAY NOT BE GETTING THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT WE WANT BUT AT LEAST WE WOULD BE AVOIDING THE TREMENDOUS FILLIP WHICH THE TERRORISTS WOULD OBTAIN FROM A PUBLISHED ANNOUNCEMENT OF A U S REFUSAL TO MEET THE RUC'S ORDER.
9. I TOLD VANCE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT WITH ENCLOSURES ABOUT THE NORTHERN IRISH QUESTION WAS BEING DELIVERED THIS AFTERNOON AND I WAS LETTING HIM HAVE A COPY. THE LETTER AND ENCLOSURES DID NOT DEAL WITH THE PARTICULAR PROBLEM HE HAD BEEN DISCUSSING WHICH HAD ARISEN LATER.
10. I WOULD BE GRATEFUL TO KNOW WHETHER YOU CAN AGREE TO VANCES' PROPOSAL.
- HENDERSON

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IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 938 OF 27 JULY

ES TO PM

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST ROUTINE DUBLIN.

MY TELNO 909: ARMS FOR RUC.

1. US AMBASSADOR CALLED ON SIR A PARSONS ON 26 JULY. HE SAID THAT NIMETZ HAD TELEPHONED HIM THAT AFTERNOON ON VANCE'S INSTRUCTIONS TO SAY THAT HE WOULD BE TESTIFYING BEFORE A CLOSED HEARING OF THE ZABLOCKI COMMITTEE ON 30 JULY. HE WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO SAY THAT THERE WERE NO REQUESTS FOR LICENCES FOR ARMS FOR THE RUC PENDING. COULD THE REQUESTS FOR M1 CARBINE PARTS AND FOR AMMUNITION BE WITHDRAWN? THE COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT WAS NOT A PROBLEM.

2. FOLLOWING CONSULTATION WITH MINISTERS SIR A PARSONS WILL BE REPLYING TO BREWSTER IN THE FOLLOWING TERMS:

(A) WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO WITHDRAW ANY OF THE THREE OUTSTANDING LICENCE APPLICATIONS. IT COULD NOT BE KEPT QUIET AND WE COULD NOT CONCEAL THE FACT THAT ACTION HAD BEEN TAKEN AT STATE DEPARTMENT REQUEST. MINISTERS WOULD HAVE TO TELL THE TRUTH AND TO MAKE OUR VIEW OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S ATTITUDE UNMISTAKEABLY CLEAR. THE ORDERS WERE PLACED BEFORE THE LEAK (AND ENSUING FUROR) OVER THE SUPPLY OF HAND GUNS IN JUNE. WE BELIEVE THE US ARE UNDER A CLEAR MORAL OBLIGATION TO SUPPLY THESE ITEMS.

(B) WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE THE US ANY COMMITMENT AS REGARDS THE PLACING OF FUTURE ORDERS BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND POLICE AUTHORITY.

(C) WE WOULD HOPE THAT NIMETZ WOULD BE PREPARED TO SAY TO THE COMMITTEE THAT THE US WAS COMMITTED TO MEETING ORDERS ALREADY IN THE PIPELINE: AND THAT IF ASKED WHAT WAS IN THE PIPELINE HE WOULD SAY THAT IT WAS NOT NORMAL STATE DEPARTMENT PRACTICE TO DIVULGE DETAILS OF ARMS SALES TO ITS ALLIES. AS REGARDS FURTHER ORDERS NIMETZ MIGHT SAY THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO HMG THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO APPROVE EXPORT LICENCES. IF ASKED ABOUT HMG'S ATTITUDE HE COULD SAY NO MORE THAN THAT WE WERE NOT PREPARED TO GIVE THE US ANY COMMITMENT.

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FM WASHINGTON 242202Z JUL 79

TO PRIORITY F C O

TELNO 2059 OF 24 JULY

*File on
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26/7*

M I P T: MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER: NORTHERN IRELAND

1. WHEN I SAW PRESIDENT CARTER TODAY HE MENTIONED NORTHERN IRELAND. HE SAID THAT THE PRIME MINISTER AND HE HAD SPOKEN ON THE SUBJECT BY TELEPHONE ON 4 JULY AND MRS THATCHER HAD PROMISED TO SEND HIM SOME FACTUAL MATERIAL. HE LOOKED FORWARD TO RECEIVING THIS.
2. I SAID THAT I THOUGHT THAT HE WOULD BE GETTING MRS THATCHER'S MESSAGE ON THIS SUBJECT SHORTLY. THERE WERE PARTICULAR NORTHERN IRISH QUESTIONS THAT NEEDED DISCUSSION BUT THESE MIGHT WAIT UNTIL HE HAD RECEIVED THE PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE.
3. THE PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO PURSUE THE SUBJECT JUST FOR THE MOMENT.

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FM FCO 241725Z JULY 79
TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 919 OF 24 JULY

Entire *ms.*
6/24/79
24/7

MY TELNO 911: ARMS FOR RUC

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON STATUS OF OUTSTANDING ORDERS HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY NORTHERN IRELAND POLICE AUTHORITY.

A) STURM RUGER REVOLVERS (SECOND TRANCHE OF 3000)

VIKING ARMS LTD FOUND OUT THIS MORNING THAT STURM RUGER HAVE NOT COMPLETED THEIR PAPERWORK AND HAVE NOT YET APPLIED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR AN EXPORT LICENCE. STURM RUGER HAVE BEEN ASKED NOT TO PROCEED ANY FURTHER WITH THIS ORDER FOR THE TIME BEING.

B) SPARE PARTS FOR M1 CARBINES

THE POLICE AUTHORITY ORDERED THESE VIA PARKER HALE LTD OF BIRMINGHAM IN MAY. THEY HAVE NOT HEARD THAT ANY PROBLEMS HAVE ARISEN.

C) AMMUNITION

THE POLICE AUTHORITY HAVE PLACED AN ORDER VIA VIKING ARMS LTD FOR 400,000 MAGNUM ROUNDS (FOR THE STURM RUGER REVOLVERS) AND 200,000 .38 SPECIAL ROUNDS. VIKING ARMS UNDERSTANDS THAT AN EXPORT LICENCE HAS ALREADY BEEN GRANTED BUT SAY THAT THE FINAL DETAILS OF THE CONTRACT HAVE NOT BEEN SETTLED.

THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIER OF THIS AMMUNITION (NORMA LTD OF SWEDEN) WILL ONLY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE SMALL STOCKS. IN THE MEDIUM AND LONG TERM THIS AMMUNITION WILL HAVE TO BE SUPPLIED FROM THE USA.

D) RADIO EQUIPMENT

THE POLICE AUTHORITY HAVE ORDERED DIRECT FROM MOTOROLA LTD 120 UNITS OF SPECIALISED RADIO EQUIPMENT PLUS BASE STATIONS. THEY HAVE BEEN GIVEN A DELIVERY DATE OF 4 SEPTEMBER WHICH IMPLIES THAT THE ORDER HAS BEEN LICENCED AND IS READY TO GO.

A REPEAT ORDER IS PLANNED FOR THE NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR. THERE IS NO ALTERNATIVE SUPPLIER FOR THIS EQUIPMENT.

2. YOU WILL RECOGNIZE THAT WITH VARIOUS AGENTS INVOLVED IT IS NOT EASY TO GET ACCURATE AND UP TO DATE INFORMATION. FOR EXAMPLE VIKING ARMS ARE PRESUMABLY WRONG IN SAYING THAT EXPORT LICENCE FOR AMMUNITION HAS ALREADY BEEN GRANTED.

3. FACT THAT STURM RUGER HAVE BEEN ASKED NOT TO PROCEED FOR THE TIME BEING WITH ORDER FOR REVOLVERS DOES NOT OF COURSE MEAN THAT REQUIREMENT HAS BEEN DROPPED.

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FM FCO 241135Z JUL 79
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 911 OF 24 JUL 79
INFO UKREP BRUSSELS DUBLIN NIO (BELFAST)

*Info MA
6/24
24/7*

MY TELNO 909: ARMS FOR RUC

1. YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT I TELEPHONED VANCE FROM BRUSSELS LAST NIGHT TO REINFORCE MESSAGE PASSED VIA BREWSTER.
2. VANCE SAID HE WOULD LOOK AT THE MATTER AGAIN. BUT HE GAVE NO UNDERTAKING THAT HIS DECISION WOULD BE REVERSED. HE SAID THAT WHAT HE WAS DOING WAS THE BEST WAY OF ENSURING THAT THE MATTER DID NOT BECOME PUBLIC. HE ADDED THAT THERE WERE LOTS OF OTHER WAYS IN WHICH WE COULD GET THE MATERIAL - PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE TO PROCUREMENT VIA MOD.

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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 July 1979

Dear Paul,

NORTHERN IRELAND

Thank you for sending me, with your letter of 20 July, a redraft of a letter from the Prime Minister to President Carter, to cover the four redrafted papers on Northern Ireland which Mike Hopkins sent me with his letter of the same date.

The Prime Minister has commented that the revised versions of the four papers are now extremely good. She is also content with the revised draft of her covering letter to President Carter. I now enclose the signed original of this letter, together with copies of the four papers; and I should be grateful if you would arrange for them to be forwarded to Washington by fastest means, for delivery to the White House by H.M. Ambassador. You will note that the Prime Minister's letter to President Carter has been dated 20 July: this is a tacit explanation of the fact that it contains no reference to the difference of view which has since arisen between the Government and the US Administration on the question of the supply of arms to the RUC. As you know, the Prime Minister agreed that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary should send a message to Mr. Vance on this subject (and incidentally thought that the text of Lord Carrington's message was excellent) while accepting that it might be necessary for her to intervene personally with President Carter at a later stage.

I am sending copies of this letter and enclosures to Mike Hopkins (Northern Ireland Office) and to Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours ever,
Boris Johnson

Paul Lever, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

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FM FCO 231748Z JUL 79

TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM 910 OF 23 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST UKREP BRUSSELS (FOR SECRETARY OF STATE)^{21/7}
ROUTINE DUBLIN

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FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MY MESSAGE TO VANCE.

BEGINS

1. I THOUGHT I SHOULD LET YOU KNOW AT ONCE OF MY VERY GRAVE CONCERN OVER YOUR DECISION, CONVEYED BY MR NIMITZ TO OUR EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON LAST FRIDAY, TO HOLD BACK ON THE APPROVAL OF THE SUPPLY OF WEAPONS FOR THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY.
2. IN THE PAST YOU HAVE, I KNOW, TAKEN A HELPFUL VIEW OF PROBLEMS OF THIS KIND AND HAVE FULLY UNDERSTOOD THE PRACTICAL AND POLITICAL ARGUMENTS WHICH MAKE IT SO IMPORTANT THAT THE US GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT APPEAR TO HAVE A PARTIAL VIEW OF THE ROLE OF THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IN COMBATTING TERRORISM. I WELL UNDERSTAND YOUR DIFFICULTIES, BUT I WONDER WHETHER YOU HAVE GIVEN FULL WEIGHT TO THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH A DECISION BECOMING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. IT WOULD CERTAINLY BE SEEN AS A SHARP SHIFT IN US POLICY, AND COULD ONLY GREATLY ENCOURAGE THE PROVISIONAL IRA, WHO WOULD EXPLOIT IT TO THE FULL. I MUST LEAVE YOU IN NO DOUBT OF THE APPALLING AFFECT I BELIEVE SUCH A DECISION WOULD HAVE ON BRITISH PUBLIC OPINION AND OF THE CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGE IT COULD DO TO ANGLO-AMERICAN RELATIONS.
3. I HOPE THAT IN INSTRUCTING MR NIMITZ TO SPEAK AS HE DID YOU WERE NOT RULING OUT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO EXPRESS TO YOU HOW STRONGLY MY COLLEAGUES AND I FEEL ON THIS ISSUE, BEFORE COMMITTING YOURSELF TO A FINAL DECISION.

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FM FCO 231750Z JULY 79
TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON
TELEGRAM NUMBER 909 OF 23 JULY
INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST, UKREP BRUSSELS (SECRETARY OF
STATE), ROUTINE DUBLIN

YOUR TELNO : 2029: ARMS FOR RUC

1. IN MY ABSENCE PUS ASKED US AMBASSADOR TO CALL THIS AFTERNOON TO RECEIVE PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM ME TO VANCE.
TEXT IS IN MIFT.
2. PUS EMPHASIZED MY PERSONAL CONCERN OVER THE MATTER. HE QUOTED NIMETZ'S LETTER OF 15 JUNE TO BIAGGI (PARA 6 OF YOUR TELEGRAM UNDER REFERENCE) AND SAID WE FOUND IT HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE ADMINISTRATION NOW APPEARED READY TO REVERSE THEIR POSITION. AS MY MESSAGE MADE CLEAR, WE VERY MUCH HOPED THAT VANCE WOULD RECONSIDER HIS DECISION.
3. THE PUS SAID HE WAS IN NO DOUBT THAT IF THE DECISION COULD NOT BE REVERSED, IT WOULD BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND THERE WOULD BE A STORM OF PROTEST IN THIS COUNTRY. IT COULD NOT FAIL TO BOOST PIRA'S MORALE: IT WOULD STRENGTHEN THE HAND OF PROTESTANT EXTREMISTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND: AND IT WOULD MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TO ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT COOPERATION BETWEEN THE RUC AND THE GARDA. IT WAS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT THAT THE US GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT SEEM TO BE EQUATING PIRA AND THE RUC. THE PHRASE IN THE PROPOSED PRESS GUIDANCE QUOTE OUR POLICY REMAINS ONE OF STRICT IMPARTIALITY IN THE TRAGIC COMMUNAL CONFLICT THERE UNQUOTE (YOUR TELNO 2027) WOULD CERTAINLY CONVEY THIS IMPRESSION. IF THE US DECISION WAS IN FACT IRREVOCABLE WE WOULD AT LEAST EXPECT IT TO BE EXPLAINED IN TERMS WHICH DID NOT CAST DOUBT ON THE RUC'S IMPARTIALITY, AND WE WOULD EXPECT IT TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH A FORTHRIGHT CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM.
4. BREWSTER SAID HE WELL UNDERSTOOD OUR CONCERN. HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER VANCE HAD MADE ANY COMMITMENT, AND IF SO TO WHOM,

AND HE

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AND HE COULD NOT THEREFORE COMMENT ON THE POSSIBILITY OF THE DECISION BEING REVERSED. IF FOR ANY REASON IT COULD NOT, HE WONDERED WHETHER THERE MIGHT BE ANY POSSIBILITY OF SUSPENDING OUR REQUESTS UNTIL THE MATTER COULD BE SORTED OUT.

5. PENDING VANCE'S REPLY, IT IS HARD TO COMMENT ON THE DRAFT PRESS GUIDANCE CONTAINED IN YOUR TELNO 2027. HOWEVER, AS INDICATED ABOVE, WE WOULD TAKE STRONG EXCEPTION TO THE FINAL ANSWER. IT WOULD BE REASONABLE FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO DECLARE ITSELF IMPARTIAL AS BETWEEN THE CONFLICTING POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT THERE SHOULD CERTAINLY BE AN UNEQUIVOCAL CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM, AND WE WOULD HOPE, OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA IN PARTICULAR.

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10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

NORTHERN IRELAND

You approved the revised versions of the briefing papers for President Carter on Northern Ireland. The FCO have proposed some minor amendments to your covering letter to President Carter and the Northern Ireland Office are content with them. They are incorporated in the version which I attach below for your signature. *Mal.*

~ *Dear Mr. President* ~

23 July 1979

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From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

Ireland

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NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

B G Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

23 July 1979

Dear Bryan

NORTHERN IRELAND

Paul Lever sent me a copy of his letter of 20 July to you about the papers for President Carter.

We are content both with the changes to the paper on "Present Government Policy" which the FCO suggests, and with the amendments to the covering letter.

There is, in fact, one addition to one of the papers which we should like to suggest ourselves. In the fourth of the papers, entitled "Security Policy and its Impact on Human Rights in Northern Ireland", we suggest that at the end of the second paragraph there be added the following sentence:

"The RUC is not an armed force; but individual members are on request issued with weapons for their own personal protection."

We think this addition would be wise in view of the fact that the American administration is aware of the current programme for purchasing Ruger pistols for the RUC.

I am copying this letter to Paul Lever in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Yours sincerely
Mike Hopkins
M W HOPKINS

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Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

23 July 1979

Dear Brya,

Arms for the RUC

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You will have seen the week-end's telegrams from Washington, and in particular Washington telegram no 2029 in which Sir N Henderson suggests that the Prime Minister might take up the question of arms for the RUC in her letter to President Carter, on which we were in correspondence last week.

The Secretary of State's view is that, in the first instance at least, the matter might best be handled by means of a personal message from him to Mr Vance. In his absence in Brussels, the PUS accordingly summoned the US Ambassador this afternoon and handed him the enclosed message, which should reach Mr Vance today. Meanwhile we hope the Prime Minister will agree that her letter to President Carter, and the papers to be enclosed with it, should be left as they stand. This would not, of course, preclude the Prime Minister raising the matter later with the President should this be necessary.

I am copying this letter to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

G G H Walden

(G G H Walden)

B G Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street

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Secret.
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Unclassified.

To:-

From
M J Newington

Telephone No. Ext.

Department
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In Confidence

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR VANCE

- 1 I thought I should let you know at once of my very grave concern over your decision, conveyed by Matt Nimitz to our Embassy in Washington last Friday, to hold back on the approval of the supply of weapons for the Royal Ulster Constabulary
- 2 In the past you have, I know, taken a helpful view of problems of this kind and have fully understood the practical and political arguments which make it so important that the US Government should not appear to have a partial view of the role of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in combatting terrorism. I well understand your difficulties, but I wonder whether you have given full weight to the consequences of such a decision becoming public knowledge. It would without doubt be seen as a sharp shift in US policy, and would certainly give encouragement to the Provisional IRA, who would exploit it to the full.
- 3 I hope that in instructing Matt Nimitz to speak as he did you were not ruling out an opportunity for me to express to you how strongly my colleagues and I feel on this issue before committing yourself to a final decision.

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24 JUL 1979



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TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2029 OF 22 JULY 79.

INFORMATION IMMEDIATE NIO LONDON AND NIO BELFAST. *Lord Carrington raised this at 01 this afternoon. He has now sent to*MY TEL NO 2028 : ARMS FOR RUC. *Mr. Vance the message at Flag A below.*

1. VANCE'S DECISION IS UNJUST AND INFURIATING.

I HAVE BEEN CONSIDERING WHETHER THERE IS ANY HELP I CAN GIVE IN SUGGESTING THE MOST EFFECTIVE LINE OF ACTION FOR US TO TAKE. *23/7*

2. WHATEVER WE DO, THE US DECISION IS BOUND TO BECOME PUBLIC HERE BECAUSE (A) THE IRISH-AMERICAN LOBBY IN CONGRESS WILL WANT TO GET THE CREDIT FOR HAVING FORCED THE DECISION UPON THE ADMINISTRATION; AND (B) THE ADMINISTRATION, AS INDICATED BY VANCE'S DEAL WITH O'NEILL, WILL WANT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES (AND THIS IS NO NEW PHENOMENON) TO SHOW THEIR READINESS TO RESPOND TO CONGRESSIONAL OPINION IF THIS IS NECESSARY FOR WIDER POLITICAL PURPOSES.

3. OUR FIRST CONCERN WILL BE TO AVOID REACTING IN A WAY THAT PLAYS INTO THE TERRORISTS' HANDS: THE DANGER HERE OF COURSE IS THAT THE MORE THE PUBLICITY GIVEN TO HMG'S INDIGNATION OVER THE US DECISION, THE MORE THE TERRORISTS CAN SAY THEY HAVE WON A FAMOUR VICTORY.

4. THERE WILL SURELY BE REACTION IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT WHEN THIS BECOMES PUBLIC AND IT WILL BE HEALTHY FOR CONGRESSMEN TO FEEL THIS BLAST, THE STRONGER THE BETTER PARTICULARLY THOSE NOT COMMITTED ON IRISH ISSUES, BUT WHAT HMG DOES SEEMS TO ME A RATHER MORE COMPLICATED MATTER IF WE ARE TO AVOID THE SORT OF GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT CLASH FROM WHICH THE TERRORISTS ALONE WILL BENEFIT.

5. IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAS EVERY RIGHT WHEN TAKING THE PRESIDENT UP ON HIS TELEPHONIC CONVERSATION WITH HER OF 4 JULY IN WHICH HE ASKED FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION, TO SAY THAT SHE IS SENDING THIS TO HIM AND THAT SHE WOULD LIKE TO THINK, IN VIEW OF HIS INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT, THAT HE HAS GIVEN THE SUBJECT CONSIDERATION BEFORE THE US GOVERNMENT COMMITS ITSELF PUBLICLY TO A NEW LINE.

6. THE NEW LINE WHICH VANCE APPEARS TO HAVE DECIDED ON RELATES BOTH TO SUBSTANCE AND PRESENTATION. AS REGARDS THE FORMER IT COULD BE POINTED OUT THAT ON 15 JUNE MATTHEW NIMETZ, COUNSELLOR OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, WAS WRITING TO REP. BIAGGI, CHAIRMAN OF THE AD HOC CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON IRELAND, SAYING INTER ALIA AS FOLLOWS:

"THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IS THE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED POLICE FORCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. AS SUCH, IT HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTING ALL OF THE PEOPLE THERE AGAINST CRIME AND TERRORISM. THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE THAT THE RECENT COMMERCIAL EXPORT SALE OF ARMS TO THIS POLICE FORCE IN NO WAY REFLECTS ANY US PARTIALITY WITH REGARD TO THE TRAGIC COMMUNAL DIFFERENCES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. IN THIS CONNECTION I WOULD NOTE THAT IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER O'KENNEDY, IN A MAY 31 FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH TO THE DAIL, PLEDGED THE CONTINUED COOPERATION OF THE IRISH POLICE AND ARMY WITH THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY IN THE FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND."

7. VANCES DECISION COMPLETELY CONTRADICTS THIS. YET THERE IS NOTHING IN THE IRISH SCENE WHICH WOULD SEEM TO HAVE WARRANTED A CHANGE. THE US GOVERNMENT NOW APPEARS TO HAVE ACCEPTED SPEAKER O'NEILL'S VIEW THAT THE R.U.C. ARE A PARTISAN FACTION.

8. AS REGARDS THE PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF US POLICY MRS THATCHER MIGHT POINT TO THE STRONG LINE THAT PRESIDENT CARTER TOOK IN HIS STATEMENT OF 30 AUGUST 1977 AGAINST TERRORISM. WHILE REFERRING TO THE US GOVERNMENT'S POLICY OF IMPARTIALITY, HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WAS FIRMLY ON THE SIDE OF THOSE WHO SEEK PEACE AND REJECT VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT THE GUIDANCE WHICH THE STATE DEPARTMENT NOW PROPOSE TO USE (WASHINGTON TEL NO 2027) SPEAKS OF US IMPARTIALITY AS STATED IN THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT OF AUGUST 1977 BUT MAKES NO CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM. THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT SAY THAT WHAT IS BEING FREQUENTLY SAID IN CONGRESS ON THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE SECURITY FORCES IS A COMPLETE TRAVESTY. TERRORISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND AT THE PRESENT TIME SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED WITH THE AGE-LONG PROBLEMS OF IRISH INDEPENDENCE. TO TALK ABOUT PERSISTENT DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHEN DESCRIBING THE MEASURES TAKEN TO SUPPRESS TERRORISM IS BEYOND REASON. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT STRONG POLITICAL FEELINGS ARE NOT UNDERSTOOD BUT THESE EXIST ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC AND IT

WILL NOT HELP RELATIONS IF THESE ARE INFLAMED BY MISUNDERSTANDING AND MISREPRESENTATION OF FACTS ON ONE SIDE WHILE THE OTHER IS CONCERNED WITH THE DAY TO DAY PROBLEMS OF COMBATTING TERRORISM.

9. THIS COULD BRING THE PRIME MINISTER TO REFER TO THE SPECIFIC QUESTION OF ARMS. A FURTHER REFERENCE COULD BE MADE TO NIMETZ'S CLEAR ACCEPTANCE OF US ARMS SUPPLIES IN JUNE. HMG HAS OF COURSE NO OPTION BUT TO ACCEPT THE US GOVERNMENT'S DECISION ON THIS BUT THEY MUST REFER TO THE CHANGE AND ASK THAT DUE ATTENTION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE USE TO WHICH THE TERRORISTS CAN PUT THIS DECISION UNLESS GREAT CARE IS TAKEN IN THE PUBLIC PRESENTATION. THE LATTER MUST THEREFORE CONTAIN STRONG CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM. THERE MAY BE IMPARTIALITY AS BETWEEN CATHOLICS AND PROTESTANTS IN IRELAND BUT THERE CAN BE NO IMPARTIALITY AS BETWEEN TERRORISM ON THE ONE HAND AND LAW AND ORDER ON THE OTHER.

10. FINALLY THE PRIME MINISTER MIGHT MAKE A POINT THAT THE NEW BRITISH GOVERNMENT ARE DETERMINED, WHILE COMBATTING TERRORISM, TO TRY TO GET AT THE ROOTS OF A SOLUTION, BUT THIS IS NOT SOMETHING THAT CAN HAPPEN OVERNIGHT.

11. THE ACCOMPANYING BACKGROUND PAPER ON SECURITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS MIGHT ALSO NOW BE STRENGTHENED SO AS TO:

(A) POINT UP THE IMPARTIALITY OF THE SECURITY FORCES:

(B) COUNTER THE USE MADE BY THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS AND ITS SUPPORTERS OF THE AMNESTY AND BENNETT REPORTS TO SUPPORT THEIR ALLEGATIONS OF SYSTEMATIC ILL-TREATMENT OF SUSPECTS AND PRISONERS AND OF OPPRESSION OF THE MINORITY COMMUNITY BY THE R.U.C.

(C) COUNTER ALLEGATIONS OF CONTINUING CIVIL RIGHTS DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE MINORITY COMMUNITY.

12. I DO NOT, IN THE ABSENCE OF FULL INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT, SUGGEST THAT ANYTHING SHOULD BE SAID AT THIS STAGE ON THE POSSIBILITY OF ORDERING THE ARMS BY THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE WITHOUT ANY SPECIFICATION OF THEIR DESTINATION. TO RAISE THE QUESTION MIGHT WELL IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES PROVOKE SOME WEASLY

CONFIDENTIAL

RESPONSE. IF WE WANT TO GO AHEAD ON THIS BASIS I THINK IT IS MUCH BETTER TO DO SO WITHOUT ASKING.

BUT IN ANY EVENT I SHOULD NOT WISH AT THIS STAGE TO ALTER MY EARLIER RECOMMENDATION THAT WE SHOULD AWAIT THE AUGUST CONGRESSIONAL RECESS BEFORE PUTTING IN FURTHER ORDERS: SO THERE IS TIME FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THIS.

13. WHETHER YOU YOURSELF WOULD WISH TO SEND A MESSAGE TO VANCE DEPENDS, I THINK, UPON WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER DECIDES TO DO BUT IT STRIKES ME THAT, IF SHE DOES SEND A MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT ON THE ABOVE LINES, YOU COULD TAKE PARALLEL ACTION WITH VANCE. IF THE PRIME MINISTER DECIDES TO AVOID THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT OF ARMS SUPPLIES IN COMMUNICATING WITH THE PRESIDENT AND TO CONFINE HER COMMUNICATION MAINLY TO THE PAPERS THAT HAVE ALREADY BEEN DRAFTED THEN PERHAPS YOU WOULD CONSIDER RAISING THE ARMS ISSUE YOURSELF WITH VANCE IN THE WAY SUGGESTED ABOVE. AS YOU WILL SEE I DO NOT THINK THERE IS MUCH POINT IN A PUBLIC ROW, BUT WE SHOULD MAKE OUR CASE AND DO WHAT WE CAN TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE IN THE PUBLIC PRESENTATION.

HENDERSON

DEPARTMENTAL DISTN.

RID

N AM D

ADDITIONAL DISTN.

NORTHERN IRELAND

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO MR VANCE

1. I thought I should let you know at once of my very grave concern over your decision, conveyed by Mr Nimitz to our Embassy in Washington last Friday, to hold back on the approval of the supply of weapons for the Royal Ulster Constabulary.
2. In the past you have, I know, taken a helpful view of problems of this kind and have fully understood the practical and political arguments which make it so important that the US Government should not appear to have a partial view of the role of the Royal Ulster Constabulary in combatting terrorism. I well understand your difficulties, but I wonder whether you have given full weight to the consequences of such a decision becoming public knowledge. It would certainly be seen as a sharp shift in US policy, and could only greatly encourage the Provisional IRA, who would exploit it to the full. I must leave you in no doubt of the appalling affect I believe such a decision would have on British public opinion and of the consequential damage it could do to Anglo-American relations.
3. I hope that in instructing Mr Nimitz to speak as he did you were not ruling out an opportunity for me to express to you how strongly my colleagues and I feel on this issue, before committing yourself to a final decision.

TMP

748/79T

SUBJECT



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CO/20
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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

PRIME MINISTER'S

20 July 1979

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T48/79T

Dear Mr President,

You asked me on the telephone if I could let you have a note of our position on Northern Ireland. I have set this out as briefly as possible in the four enclosed papers, one on the background, one on present Government policy, one on terrorism, and one on security policy and its impact on human rights. I am happy that you should show these papers to anybody to whom you think that they might be useful.

The essence of our position today is that as a Government we have a good majority in the House of Commons and five years in which to make progress over this problem, and all those directly concerned know this. Our present view is that we can best make progress by patient and persistent negotiation with the parties, rather than by more precipitate action. We have already taken an initiative, in the sense of starting discussions with all those with a concern in the matter; but this does not mean that we expect an early solution. There is a wide gap between the outlook and aspirations of the two communities in Northern Ireland, and it will not easily be bridged.

I know that you are in close touch with Jack Lynch, and I am sure that he understands our position. I myself met him shortly after taking office, and both Humphrey Atkins and Peter Carrington have had useful talks in Dublin with Irish Ministers during the past few weeks. We recognise that they have a legitimate interest in the matter, and in the outcome; but they recognise that the responsibility is ours alone. Of course Irish unity remains their

/long term

long term aspiration, but they are at one with us that any settlement must have the broad consent of both sides of the community in Northern Ireland, a principle which you endorsed in your statement of August 1977. To seek to impose a settlement in the face of opposition from either community would only aggravate and prolong the troubles.

I have included the paper on our security policy and its impact on Human Rights in Northern Ireland because the subject is often a live one in the United States. We are as concerned, as I know you are, to safeguard civil liberties to the fullest possible extent: we have a fundamental duty to protect all the law abiding citizens of Northern Ireland from murder and maiming by terrorists, which is the most important human right of all. I know that Tip O'Neill and others have been quite concerned about human rights. We have done all we can to encourage understanding of our problems. We have been extremely appreciative of the efforts which he and several of his colleagues have made to reduce the flow of funds from Irish-American sources in the United States to terrorist organisations over here, and more generally to put the record straight on the "Irish question" in those circles. It is an unhappy fact that perspectives on Ireland - and not only in the United States - are still apt to owe more to the 19th Century than to the facts of the present day world.

I have tried to keep these papers as short as possible; but Sir Nicholas Henderson had a very full briefing on all aspects of the Irish question before taking up his post in Washington, including a visit to Northern Ireland. You may be sure that we shall keep him fully informed as our thinking develops.

Warm personal regards.

Yours sincerely

Raghubir Singh

The President of the United States of America

LS

NORTHERN IRELAND: THE BACKGROUND

Northern Ireland is that part of the island of Ireland which did not become independent of the United Kingdom in 1921. When the country now known as the Republic of Ireland came into existence in that year approximately one million Protestants in the North were determined not to become part of a predominantly Catholic 'Irish Free State'. Northern Ireland was therefore given its own Parliament with power to legislate over a very wide range of matters so that it became largely self-governing within the United Kingdom. The act of partition itself gave rise to a terrorist campaign which lasted for most of the 1920's, and there have since been two further campaigns - during the second World War and between 1956 and 1962 - before the present terrorist violence began in 1969.

Unlike the Republic of Ireland, the North is not homogeneous politically or culturally. It is in fact a community divided within itself. It contains not only a million Protestants but also half-a-million Catholics. The two sides are divided not only by religion, but by ethnic origins - the Ulster Scot and the Irish Celt - by culture, and by political aspirations. These divisions, which survive from experience strengthening back far beyond this century, coincide to produce a deep tribal split.

Both communities see themselves as besieged minorities - the Protestants threatened by the Catholic majority in Ireland as a whole; and the Catholics by the Protestant majority in the North. Each seeks to be part of a majority. Nearly all Protestants hold to the union with Great Britain; most Catholics aspire to the unity of Ireland. Politics are dominated by these constitutional issues, rather than by the economic and social questions which are the bread and butter of politics in most countries today.

For fifty years after 1921, because the political parties of Northern Ireland themselves reflected the divided community, the Protestants voted for Unionist parties and the Catholics for a succession of parties aspiring to Irish unity. The devolved Parliament was therefore inevitably under the permanent control of the Unionists. Government was the exclusive preserve of one party. The Catholics were excluded from any say in affairs through their political parties, and many felt it deeply. The continued exclusion of Catholics from political power led over the decades to a strong belief that the minority suffered discrimination at the hands of the Protestant-controlled authorities in such matters as housing, jobs and local voting rights. Whatever the truth of the matter may have been (and it is still a bone of contention between the two sides) there can be no doubt of the minority's perception that discrimination occurred.

A Civil Rights movement emerged in the late 1960s. Its street activities, carried on in the existing atmosphere of sectarian tension, led inexorably to out-breaks of violence, of which the paramilitary organisations - both "Loyalist" (ie Unionist) and Republican - were quick to take advantage. By the summer of 1969 Northern Ireland's small police force was unable to control events satisfactorily. In August the British Army was brought in to assist the police to restore calm in Belfast and Londonderry. But the presence of the Army was soon exploited by the Provisional IRA whose aim was and is to break Northern Ireland's link with the United Kingdom by force.

The focus gradually changed from outbreaks of street violence and public disorder to shooting attacks, principally on the security forces themselves, and widespread bombing of commercial property and public utilities. In 1972 - the worst year for

violence - the United Kingdom Government had no alternative but to take over complete responsibility for the Province from the local administration in order to control the deteriorating security situation. The Provisional IRA has since maintained a continuous, albeit uneven, pattern of terrorist violence. Although the total number of incidents has, until this year, shown a gradual but quite marked decline from another very high figure in 1976, the toll in terms of deaths, injuries and damage to property is nevertheless a matter of serious concern. Since 1972, a total of 119 policemen, 339 soldiers and 1257 civilians have met their deaths as a result of terrorist activity, and a total of 26 members of the security forces have been killed so far this year. Although the increasing strength and professionalism of the police enabled them to take over the primary role in security operations at the beginning of 1977, the continuing presence of the Army is essential to support the police in dealing with terrorist actions. The Government are ready to provide whatever resources are required to ensure the defeat of terrorism, but it is clear that there is no instant or dramatic solution to the security problem.

Throughout the period of direct rule, the principal aims of the United Kingdom Government have been to overcome terrorism, restore law and order, and re-establish a devolved Government, but this time on a basis acceptable to the minority as well as to the majority community.

It was in pursuit of this last principle that the last Conservative Government negotiated successfully with three of the local political parties, including the mainly Catholic SDLP, for the setting up of a power-sharing Executive in 1974. This power-sharing arrangement was, however, rejected by the Provisional IRA who continued their campaign of violence and terrorism.

The parties forming the power-sharing Executive met with the British and Irish Governments in a conference at Sunningdale in late 1973. They agreed on the creation of a Council of Ireland, with equal representation from both the North and South. Although the Irish Government solemnly accepted Northern Ireland's right to remain a part of the United Kingdom so long as a majority of the Northern Ireland electorate so wished, many Unionists saw and feared the Council of Ireland as a first step towards the political unification of the whole island; and they suspected that the minority would exploit their share in power to this end. The power-sharing Executive assumed office in January 1974; but only five months later, in May, "Loyalist" factions were able (with the help of widespread intimidation) to mobilise massive support for a general strike aimed at the scrapping of the Sunningdale arrangements and new elections. The ordinary economic and social life of the Province came virtually to a standstill. The Executive collapsed and the United Kingdom Government was forced to resume direct rule.

In a further attempt to find a way to a generally acceptable form of devolved government, the United Kingdom Government in 1975 held elections in Northern Ireland for a Constitutional Convention. Since this produced another Unionist-dominated body, its 'majority' report called in its essence for a return to majority rule, with only token recognition of the position of the minority. The Convention Report was rejected by all the major parties at Westminster because it was clearly not acceptable to the minority community. Since then the United Kingdom Government has sought a solution through bilateral discussions with the main political parties in Northern Ireland. Efforts by the Labour Government in its last years were hampered by its

minority position at Westminster and by a belief among the Northern Ireland parties that they might get a better deal from a Government with a clear majority and the prospect of a full five year term of office. The present Government qualifies on both these counts. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has already begun bilateral discussions with the leaders of Northern Ireland's political parties.

NORTHERN IRELAND: CALENDAR OF EVENTS 1968-1979

1968

Civil Rights Movement

A Civil Rights movement opposed to discrimination in public housing and employment and demanding changes in the local franchise became prominent in the second half of 1968. Behind the specific grievances undoubtedly lay a general feeling on the part of the Catholic population that they were unfairly treated in the Northern Ireland State. The Civil Rights demonstrations immediately excited counter-demonstrations by Protestant loyalists. Violence was limited and sporadic but when it occurred it was practised against the protest movement rather than for it. But it is not surprising that the Government should have been suspicious, and many in the loyalist population convinced, that the demonstrations were anti-partitionist in their inspiration and in their aim.

1969

Reform Programme

By the summer of 1969 the stated objectives of the Civil Rights Movement had been largely met, if not in terms of full implementation at least in terms of an undertaking that remedial action would be taken.

Sectarian Rioting

August

On 12 and 13 August there were fierce clashes between the inhabitants of the Catholic Bogside area in Londonderry and the Police. In order to relieve the pressure on Londonderry, Nationalist supporters attacked, with stones and petrol bombs, police stations in several other towns. In Belfast major confrontations developed during the nights of 14 and 15 August. Five Catholics and two Protestants were shot dead, while 270 houses were completely burnt out and a similar number damaged, the majority of which were inhabited by Catholics.

The Army was called in to support the civil power. In the early days it was seen as a protective force by many Catholics especially in West Belfast.

The Downing Street Declaration issued after a meeting between the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and of Northern Ireland, re-affirmed Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom; emphasised the entitlement of every Northern Ireland citizen to equality of treatment and freedom from discrimination; and stated that the troops would be withdrawn when law and order was restored.

Oct. The Hunt Report on the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) recommended that the police should be an unarmed force on the normal British model. The Ulster Special Constabulary was to be phased out. A part-time Ulster Defence Regiment was to be formed to assist the Army in its security role.

Protestants in Belfast rioted against the Hunt Report recommendations, killing a policeman.

970 Throughout 1969, and until the summer of 1970 relations between the Army and the Catholic population were good.

The IRA which had been small, weak and undecided since the end of the abortive Border campaign (1956-62) split into distinct wings. The Provisionals favoured a militant struggle to force Northern Ireland out of the United Kingdom whilst the Officials opted for Marxist-type political action to create the basis for a new socialist Ireland.

3 June 1970 Conservative Government returned to power.

July After a weekend in which seven Protestants were killed in sectarian shooting incidents, and continued rioting, the Army imposed a 36-hour curfew in the Catholic Lower Falls area of Belfast. From this point relations between the Army and the Catholics deteriorated.

71
February First British soldier killed by the Provisional IRA (PIRA).
February Two policemen killed by PIRA.
March Three soldiers taken from a bar and murdered by PIRA.
June Northern Ireland Prime Minister (Brian Faulkner) proposed that the opposition party (SDLP) should chair two new Parliamentary committees. But the SDLP withdrew from Stormont Parliament in protest when the British Government refused to order an inquiry into the shooting of two men by the Army in Londonderry.

Internment

August The IRA were now bombing commercial targets (bars, shops and banks) at the rate of two a day. In July there were 20 explosions in one day. More than 100 civilians were wounded by bombings in this period. Mr Faulkner's Government, faced by a steadily increasing level of violence, and the difficulty of obtaining evidence for convictions under the normal legal procedures, decided, after consultation with London, to introduce internment. 342 people were taken into special holding centres on 9 August.

By mid-December, 1576 people had been arrested under the internment powers, of whom no fewer than 934 had already been released.

From 9 August 1971 to 30 March 1972, 2937 people were arrested, of whom 1711 were released within 48 hours. 796 were served with internment orders, and the remainder were released within 28 days.

But violence intensified after internment. . 30 soldiers, 11 policemen and Ulster Defence Regiment members, and 73 civilians were killed in the next four months.

Reform Programme

By late 1971 reforms had been implemented which in many ways met the Civil Rights demands. Examples were: Electoral Law Acts 1969 and 1971 (universal suffrage at 18 in local elections); Housing Executive Act 1971 (a new central public housing authority outside the control of local authorities); Police Act 1970 (establishing a Police Authority representative of the community to maintain the RUC); independent Commissioners to investigate grievances against central or local government; and the creation of a Ministry of Community Relations. An independent Review Body on local government recommended a new single tier local government system.

1972

January

In the course of clashes between the Army, and demonstrators involved in an illegal march, soldiers, believing themselves to be under fire, shot and killed 13 civilians. These events became known as "Bloody Sunday" and affected attitudes profoundly, in Northern Ireland and further afield.

February

The Official IRA killed seven people outside an Army mess at Aldershot, England.

March

As violence and alienation grew between the two communities, and between the minority and the authorities, Mr Heath's Government decided that full responsibility for law and order must be exercised by Westminster and Whitehall. Mr Faulkner's Unionist Government resigned rather than accept Mr Heath's requirement. The Stormont Parliament was prorogued, Mr Whitelaw was appointed the first Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and direct rule from Westminster began on 30 March 1972. Mr Whitelaw's immediate aims were to phase out internment, and to reduce tension in preparation for a political settlement. By September no less than 723 people held under the internment powers had been released, leaving only 238 either interned or held under a detention order (for 28 days).

May

The Official IRA declared a ceasefire which has, more or less, held until the present.

June

The Provisional IRA announced a ceasefire, and later some Provisional leaders met Mr Whitelaw in London. Within two weeks however PIRA engineered a confrontation with the Army in Belfast and resumed their campaign.

July

Bombings, shootings and casualties (civilians and members of the Security Forces) continued on a large scale. On 21 July, 9 people, including two soldiers, were killed by a wave of bombings ("Bloody Friday"). Six days later nine people were killed or fatally wounded when three PIRA car bombs devastated the village of Claudy, Co Londonderry.

September

Mr Whitelaw invited the Northern Ireland political parties to a conference at Darlington, England, but only three of the seven parties agreed to take part. A discussion paper was issued in October.

Far from responding to the Government's efforts to promote reconciliation through the release of internees, the PIRA escalated its violence. Terrorism claimed 468 lives in Northern Ireland in 1972 - the worst year by far for violence.

1973
March

In fulfilment of a promise made by Mr Heath in 1972, and in an attempt to "take the Border out of politics" a referendum was held in Northern Ireland in which people were asked whether they wished Northern Ireland to remain a part of the United Kingdom, or to be joined with the Republic of Ireland. The SDLP urged a boycott of the poll, and there was largescale abstention by Catholics. Nevertheless an absolute majority of the total electorate (591,820 out of 1,030,084) voted for Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom.

June

Following the publication of the Government's proposals for a new system of government in Northern Ireland to which all the people could subscribe, elections were held by proportional representation to a new 78 member Assembly. Following negotiations between HMG and three of the parties elected to the Assembly (Mr Faulkner's Unionists, the SDLP and Alliance) the formation of an Executive designate was announced. Mr Faulkner was to be Chief Executive, and Mr Fitt, of the mainly Catholic SDLP, Deputy Chief Executive.

November

The Executive designate met representatives of the British and Irish Governments at Sunningdale, England. The Irish Government solemnly recognised Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom so long as that was the majority's wish; and outline agreement was reached on a Council of Ireland to be formed with equal representation from North and South.

December

IRA attacks, both selective and indiscriminate, continued in Great Britain with 86 bombing and shooting incidents, resulting in one death and over 380 injuries.

1974
January

The Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly assumed responsibility for most domestic matters on 1 January.

Mr Faulkner lost the leadership of the Unionist Party because of opposition to his policy.

February

12 killed by bomb in coach carrying Army families near Leeds, England. In the General Election on 28 February, in which the Labour Party returned to power at Westminster, 11 out of Northern Ireland's 12 seats were won by candidates opposed to the power-sharing Executive and the Council of Ireland.

May

A general strike was called by an alliance of Loyalist politicians, para-militaries and key workers in support of their demands for new elections and the scrapping of the Council of Ireland. After 14 days of increasing disruption, backed by intimidation; the Executive recommended negotiation with the strike leaders but HMG refused to negotiate under duress.

The Unionist members of the Executive resigned on 28 May thus effectively ending its existence. The Northern Ireland Assembly was prorogued, and fresh arrangements were made for the resumption of direct rule under the Secretary of State and his Ministers.

July

The Government proposed that, after a period for reflection, a Constitutional Convention should be elected in Northern Ireland to consider what new provisions would be likely to command widespread acceptance.

IRA Attacks in Great Britain

IRA violence in Great Britain intensified in 1974. In all, 44 people were killed, and over 360 injured. The most notorious attacks were the bombing of a bar in Guildford (killing 5) and of two bars in Birmingham, England on 21 November which claimed 21 lives. The Prevention of Terrorism Bill was introduced in the House of Commons six days later.

December

Some Protestant clergymen from Northern Ireland, acting on their own initiative met leading Provisionals at Feakle, Co Clare.

The Irish Republican Socialist Party was formed by discontented Official IRA supporters.

1975
February

A Christmas and New Year ceasefire by PIRA lapsed, but was subsequently turned into a "permanent" ceasefire by the Provisionals. (It has never formally been revoked.)

The Secretary of State (Mr Rees) said his officials were ready to meet any legal group, including Provisional Sinn Fein, for discussions on government policy. Telephonic "incident centres" were set up between Provisional Sinn Fein and the administration in order to prevent misunderstandings leading to a breakdown of the ceasefire. Mr Rees said the Security Forces would respond to the prevailing level of violence.

May

Elections were held on 1 May to the Constitutional Convention. The Unionist Coalition took 46 of the 78 seats.

The PIRA ceasefire against the Security Forces was fairly effective for about three months, although other forms of violence (sectarian and inter-factional) were at a high level. On 10 May, PIRA murdered a policeman in Londonderry.

July

Four soldiers killed in a PIRA explosion in South Armagh on 17 July.

On 31 July Loyalist extremists killed three members of the Miami Showband, from Dublin.

September

Two tourists killed and 63 injured in blast at London Hilton.

October

12 people died on 2 October and sectarian violence, in which Loyalist and Republican groups retaliated against each other's community grew.

November

The Report of the Unionist dominated Convention was published, calling for a strong majority rule Parliament at Stormont with minor concessions to the minority.

Four soldiers were killed by the IRA in South Armagh, the UDA placed bombs at Dublin Airport, and a public figure was assassinated by the IRA in London.

December

The last detainees (internees) were released. Mr Cosgrave, Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland, said that the North's troubles had cost his country at least £250m in compensation, lost tourism and other business.

1976
January

Sectarian killings escalated. Protestants killed five Catholics on 4 January, to which PIRA responded by killing 10 Protestant workmen in a bus next day.

The Government, supported by the other parties at Westminster, declined to accept the Convention Report because its system of government would not command sufficiently widespread acceptance throughout both communities in Northern Ireland.

March

The Constitutional Convention was dissolved after the Unionist Coalition had refused to modify its Report.

Prisoners convicted of offences committed after 1 March 1976 were no longer admitted to Special Category status.

Belfast's airport was attacked by PIRA with mortars; and bombs were placed on public transport in London.

July

The British Ambassador at Dublin and a Northern Ireland Office civil servant were both killed when the PIRA blew up the Ambassador's car near his residence.

August

Following the death of three young children when a car carrying Provisional gunmen ran out of control, women in the local Catholic community formed the Women's Peace Movement, which received massive popular support at demonstrations held throughout the British Isles in the following months.

1977

In the first part of the year the PIRA pursued a campaign of particularly cold blooded murders of businessmen, policemen and prison officers.

May

The United Unionist Action Council, supported by loyalist paramilitaries and Mr Paisley, called a "constitutional stoppage" aimed at the restoration of majority rule and the introduction of a much tougher security policy. The attempted strike failed to gain widespread support; and where intimidation was attempted the Police moved in effectively. The strike petered out after two weeks.

August

HM The Queen visited Northern Ireland for two days as part of the Silver Jubilee tour of the United Kingdom.

On 30 August President Carter made a statement defining America's interest in and policy towards Northern Ireland.

- Octob Mrs Williams and Miss Corrigan of the Peace People were awarded the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize.
- November The Secretary of State (Mr Mason) invited the four main Northern Ireland parties to discuss a scheme for a form of devolved government.
- 1978
January The Unionists withdrew from further talks with Mr Mason following a radio broadcast by the Taoiseach (Mr Lynch) in which he said that the Prime Minister (Mr Callaghan) had given an assurance that there would be no devolved government without power-sharing. In the same broadcast Mr Lynch also repeated his view that the British Government should declare an interest in promoting Irish unity. On 18 January the European Court of Human Rights finally ruled on the cases which had been taken to it by the Irish Government alleging torture, ill-treatment and other breaches of the European Convention in the treatment of suspects in 1971 after internment. The Court found that the use of "five techniques" of interrogation on a total of 14 persons constituted inhuman and degrading treatment, but not torture; and that there had been a practice of inhuman and degrading treatment by the RUC in the autumn of 1971 at a named establishment. The Court rejected the other Irish Government submissions; in particular it refused to find that detention (internment) had been operated in a discriminatory fashion, or that it had been established that the Government's extra judicial measures were in excess of what was required, or that breaches of the Convention had continued beyond the autumn of 1971.
- February On 17 February a PIRA fire bomb killed 12 people in the La Mon House restaurant outside Belfast.
- April The Prime Minister (Mr Callaghan) accepted the near unanimous recommendation of the House of Commons Speaker's Conference that Northern Ireland's representation should be increased from 12 to 17.
- May Following a report by Amnesty International on allegations of ill-treatment of suspects in Police custody the Government set up a committee under Judge Bennett to examine Police procedures.
- November The Deputy Governor of the Maze Prison was murdered by PIRA.
- December On 17/18 December explosive devices, including two car bombs were planted in 6 English cities, including London.
- 1979
January PIRA blew up a gas holder at Greenwich, England, and an oil storage tank at Canvey Island, London's oil terminal.
- March The Bennett Report (on Police procedures) was published, and the Government immediately accepted its main recommendations, including the installation of closed circuit TV in interrogation rooms and an absolute right of access to a solicitor after 48 hours in custody. The new Government has also accepted these recommendations and is implementing them.
- The British Ambassador to the Hague was murdered on 22 March, and Mr Airey Neave, Opposition Spokesman on Northern Ireland was killed by an explosion in his car at Westminster. The Irish National Liberation Army, connected with the Irish Republican Socialist Party, claimed responsibility for Mr Neave's murder.

NORTHERN IRELAND: PRESENT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Northern Ireland policy is a bi-partisan matter at Westminster: the major parties are at one as to the broad objectives and methods of achieving them.

In the longer term the key point at issue is: should Northern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom, or should it be united with the Republic of Ireland? British Government policy is based squarely on the principle of self-determination. The majority of people in Northern Ireland today clearly wish to stay as part of the United Kingdom. Parliament has laid it down in a statute that that status can be changed only with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland voting in a plebiscite. In a referendum (known as the Border Poll) held in 1973, 99% of those voting were in favour of Northern Ireland remaining within the United Kingdom. The (mainly Catholic) Social Democratic and Labour Party, which wants to see Ireland peacefully united, had urged its supporters to boycott this poll and most did so. Nevertheless, the result still showed that 58% of the total electorate favoured continuance of the union. Voting in all subsequent elections in Northern Ireland has followed a similar sectarian pattern and although the relevant legislation provides for a further referendum to be held not earlier than 1983, there is no reason to suppose that views on the issue have changed. Until, therefore, a majority for change emerges the Government would not feel justified in taking any action to alter the present position. The Government of the Republic, while aspiring in the long term to the unity of Ireland, fully endorse the principle of consent, and have been at pains to say so on many occasions.

There is at present no early prospect of reconciling the incompatible views of the two sides of the Northern Ireland community on this long-term issue. The Protestant majority cling to continued union with Britain; the Catholic minority aspire to Irish unity. In this situation the British Government has sought to concentrate minds on the more immediate problem of finding a satisfactory structure for the government of Northern Ireland which, while keeping it within the United Kingdom, would not prejudice the longer-term aspirations of the minority.

The Government of Northern Ireland in its last years and, since then, successive Westminster Governments have been responsible for the introduction of a wide range of legislative measures designed primarily to prevent discrimination in Northern Ireland but also to ensure that there are adequate means of redress if, regrettably, it should still occur. These measures have included the creation of a Northern Ireland "Ombudsman" and a Commissioner of Complaints, who between them investigate complaints over virtually every possible aspect of public administration, a Police Complaints Board, a Fair Employment Agency and an Equal Opportunities Commission. The adequacy of the existing law is kept under continuous review by an independent Advisory Commission on Human Rights. The present Government is determined that this legislation should be implemented fully both in the spirit and in the letter.

Government by Westminster - "Direct Rule" as it is known in Northern Ireland - is an interim device, not a permanent solution. In administering the province HM Government have always sought to be sensitive to local opinion; and seeks equally to be ready to respond to Northern Ireland's needs in social and economic terms.

Declining industries and high unemployment create an urgent need for more industrial investment, and recent decisions by major US companies to invest in Northern Ireland have been most welcome. The British Government will continue to provide attractive investment incentives. As in the rest of the United Kingdom, the relative level of public expenditure is determined by the needs of the people and the resources available. In 1978/79 public expenditure in Northern Ireland totalled about £2,250 million. More than half of this came from local sources including an attributed share of United Kingdom taxes of £765 million. But over £850 million was a direct subvention from Westminster. Public expenditure per head of population in Northern Ireland is higher than in any other part of the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, however sensitively "direct rule" may be conducted, most people in Northern Ireland want to see devolved Government there, although they differ profoundly on the form it should take. Both history and geography point to the need for special arrangements unlike those in the rest of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom Government thus needs to find a way of devolving power to Northern Ireland. As the present Conservative administration put it in their first formal declaration of policy in May, the Government will "seek an acceptable way of restoring to the people of Northern Ireland more control over their own affairs". An "acceptable way" is a way which commands widespread consent within the divided community in Northern Ireland and in the Parliament at Westminster.

It is the more important to find some acceptable way forward because for some six years now there has been no elected local

authority above the 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland, which have very limited powers. The next tier of government is the United Kingdom Parliament at Westminster. There is therefore no elected authority in Northern Ireland responsible for a wide range of matters which in Great Britain are invariably administered by elected local authorities. Merely to enlarge the powers of the present District Councils is no answer, because the now defunct local authorities in Northern Ireland were the source of a good deal of the concern about discriminatory practices which led to the emergence of a civil rights movement in the late sixties; and the form of any new local government structure in Northern Ireland would need to have the same widespread acceptability in Northern Ireland as would a devolved government for the Province as a whole.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is currently engaged in private talks with the leaders of the main Northern Ireland parties looking for an "acceptable" way of making progress. If it is possible to find a political accommodation to which the major parties can subscribe, the Government believes that it may prove feasible to build on it, so that it might lead thereafter to the resolution of the wider problems. "Consent" is essential, not only for sound democratic reasons, but because, in the present situation in Northern Ireland, any attempt to impose a solution against the wishes of the majority or the minority could lead to boycott or, worse, to an upsurge of renewed violence - for there are Protestant paramilitary organisations as well as the Provisional IRA. Politics and security in Northern Ireland are inextricably interwoven and political moves have to be made in full realisation of the background of actual and potential violence.

NORTHERN IRELAND: TERRORISM

The main Republican terrorist group is the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), formed in 1969-70 following a split with the old IRA, which had become increasingly Marxist and involved in political rather than military activities. The most significant Loyalist (ie Unionist) groups are the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force, though both have been relatively inactive since 1977. The street violence which accompanied the Civil Rights campaign in the late 1960s was exploited by paramilitary groups on both sides, with the Provisional IRA claiming that they were "protecting" the minority Catholic population from attack by the Loyalists and an allegedly biased police force. Although PIRA have sought to maintain support in the Catholic community, a combination of terrorist excesses which have sickened people throughout Ireland, with a growing recognition of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) as a fair and effective body for law enforcement and a general weariness of terrorist violence, has steadily reduced the PIRA base in the minority community.

Terrorist violence in Northern Ireland has been characterised in recent years by periods of relative calm alternating with renewed outbursts of activity; but PIRA's main targets have remained largely unchanged. The Police and the Army continue to be prime targets, either for snipers or for explosive devices, sometimes radio-controlled which are detonated as patrols pass by. In one such attack on 17 April this year, four RUC officers were killed. There have been a significant number of shooting attacks on members of the security forces while off-duty, often

resulting in the deaths of police officers and locally recruited prison officers and part time soldiers in their own homes, sometimes under the eyes of their families. PIRA are clearly sensitive to criticisms which arise from their more callous actions, and to avoid a complete alienation of public opinion they generally seek to avoid "innocent" civilian casualties. They are not always successful however, as evidenced most notoriously by the blast bomb attack (a combination of explosives and inflammable fuel) on the "La Mon House" restaurant in Belfast in February 1978, when 12 people were killed and many more injured.

In addition to Police and Army targets, PIRA engage in the bombing of commercial and public property in an endeavour to disrupt the commercial life of the Province. In the past six months alone there have been a number of co-ordinated bomb attacks, mostly using home made explosives, in towns and villages throughout the Province. On 22/23 March for example, 49 devices were left outside premises in a number of towns; 32 of them detonated. As a consequence of attacks over the years, the centres of towns such as Dungannon and Castlederg have been very considerably destroyed. A note of statistics of terrorist violence is attached.

PIRA have recently found it necessary, consequent on the loss of community support and the security forces' improved intelligence, to organise themselves into self-contained, close-knit cells, less susceptible to intelligence penetration. Their weapons are more powerful, and although the emphasis remains on attacks on members of the security forces and commercial targets, the attacks themselves are more carefully planned and better co-ordinated.

The Provisional IRA and other Republican terrorist groups pay no heed to the border between North and South. Being dedicated to the enforced unification of the island, they act on an all-Ireland basis and threaten the security of the South as much as the North (as the Government in the Republic well understand). However, as their first objective is the expulsion of the British from Northern Ireland, it is there that their violence is concentrated: they murder members of the British security forces, not the Irish, and do not bomb targets in the South as they do in the North.

Given the common threat, the security forces in North and South have worked up a high degree of practical co-operation to deny the terrorists the advantages which the border would otherwise offer. Inevitably this is less perfect than if the two parties were allied in a common campaign; but closer relationships are continuously being developed, not least at the local level. It often happens that terrorists who have committed violent crimes in the North live across the border (and the reverse is also true; though they do not attack security forces in the South, they often carry out armed robberies there to replenish their funds). There is a simple arrangement for extradition by warrant between the United Kingdom and the Republic, but Irish legislation provides that extradition shall not be granted for a political offence or for an offence associated with a political offence. This has meant that terrorists can hardly ever be extradited. Both countries have therefore passed legislation providing for the extra-territorial treatment of cross-border offences, under which courts in the Republic can try offenders for terrorist crimes committed in the North, and vice versa.

The efficacy of this system, which depends to a large extent on the quality of the evidence which can be deployed in a cross-border case, has not yet been conclusively demonstrated.

The major source of PIRA finance appears to be the proceeds of robberies, often in the Republic of Ireland. These funds are augmented by various protection and extortion rackets, and by contributions from NORAIID in the United States - although it is clear that these have diminished and we are grateful to those prominent Americans who have helped bring this about. The largest single group of arms recovered from terrorist organisations in Northern Ireland were manufactured in the United States, although this is not to say that the weapons were necessarily obtained there. Efforts have also been made by the terrorists to procure weapons in Europe and the Middle East.

Although, as indicated above, Loyalist terrorist groups have been largely quiescent since 1977 (they had previously concentrated on attacks of a predominantly sectarian nature), there remains the risk that they will be moved to a resumption of violence by what they regard as the continuing "provocation" of PIRA actions.

Although no less brutal, PIRA attacks on the mainland of Great Britain are more spasmodic than those in Northern Ireland because of the logistic difficulties of providing men and materials to carry out the attacks. In the series of attacks which commenced in 1972, by far the most serious were the bomb attacks on an Army officer's mess in Aldershot in 1972 in which seven people died, and the bombing of two bars in Birmingham in 1974 which resulted in the deaths of 21 people and injuries to over 180 others. Deaths and injuries to civilians also occurred in a number of bombing and shooting attacks in London and elsewhere.

STATISTICS OF TERRORIST VIOLENCE

30 June
1979

| | 1970 | 1971 | 1972 | 1973 | 1974 | 1975 | 1976 | 1977 | 1978 | 1979 |
|---------------------------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <u>DEATHS</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Civilian | 23 | 115 | 322 | 171 | 166 | 216 | 245 | 69 | 50 | 18 |
| Army/UDR | - | 48 | 129 | 66 | 35 | 20 | 29 | 29 | 21 | 10 |
| RUC/RUC'RI | 2 | 11 | 17 | 13 | 15 | 11 | 23 | 14 | 10 | 16 |
| TOTAL | 25 | 174 | 468 | 250 | 216 | 247 | 297 | 112 | 81 | 44 |
| <u>INJURIES/WOUNDINGS</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Civilian | 245 | 1838 | 3813 | 1812 | 1680 | 2044 | 2162 | 1027 | 562 | 246 |
| Army/UDR | 620 | 390 | 578 | 548 | 483 | 167 | 264 | 188 | 137 | 81 |
| RUC/RUC'RI | 191 | 315 | 485 | 291 | 235 | 263 | 303 | 183 | 278 | 56 |
| TOTAL | 1056 | 2543 | 4875 | 2651 | 2398 | 2474 | 2729 | 1398 | 977 | 383 |
| <u>EXPLOSIONS</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 153 | 1022 | 1382 | 978 | 685 | 399 | 766 | 366 | 455 | 256 |
| <u>BOMBS NEUTRALISED</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 17 | 493 | 471 | 542 | 428 | 236 | 426 | 169 | 178 | 75 |
| <u>SHOOTING INCIDENTS</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 213 | 1756 | 10628 | 5018 | 3206 | 1803 | 1908 | 1081 | 755 | 360 |

SECURITY POLICY AND ITS IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The aim of the British Government's security policy in Northern Ireland is to do their utmost to defeat terrorism and to extend the pattern of normal policing throughout the whole Province. These aims are pursued within the framework of the normal criminal law and procedures as far as practicable. Terrorists when caught are prosecuted under the criminal law; and if convicted are imprisoned in the ordinary way. There will be no return to special category status for terrorists claiming political motivation for their crimes; and there is no question of an amnesty.

The first responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the police, who took over the primary role in security operations in 1977. They are assisted as necessary by the Army, including the locally-recruited Ulster Defence Regiment, who provide first line support to the police in a number of areas of the Province. The police are also able to call upon the Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve as an additional source of manpower. The RUC itself had almost doubled in size since 1970, and while the force would welcome more Catholic recruits, a number of those Catholics who have joined have risen to fairly senior positions; the last Chief Constable, Sir Jamie Flanagan, who retired in 1976, was a Catholic. All members of the security forces live under the constant threat of terrorist attack, in spite of which they carry out their duties, often in most difficult and arduous circumstances, in an exemplary manner. All are required to operate strictly within the law; and they are individually amenable to the law if they are thought to have transgressed it in carrying out their tasks. The RUC is not an armed force; but individual members are, on request, issued with weapons for their personal protection.

There is some concern abroad, as in the United Kingdom, that the quality of regard for Human Rights in Northern Ireland is liable to be diluted as a result of the Government's determination to eliminate terrorism. Without attempting to spell out the wide range of measures taken in recent years with the positive aim of safeguarding human rights there, there are three particular areas of concern which deserve mention.

First, it has been found necessary to modify some normal practices by the enactment of emergency legislation. The three most significant changes have probably been: the use of non-jury courts to try terrorist cases (made necessary because it was found that juries were subject to intimidation, and justice consequently denied); provision for the executive detention of suspected terrorists (which, however, has not been used for the past 4 years); and a power for the police to hold suspected terrorists for up to 3 days without charge. Because of the emergency character of this legislation, Parliament requires the Government to make a case for its renewal every six months. The Government considers these special arrangements necessary in the present situation, and justified as a counter to the serious denial of human rights represented by the total disregard of the terrorist for the safety of the lives and property of the public at large.

Secondly, there has been concern that the police might be prepared to resort to ill-treatment of suspects in their anxiety to obtain confessions. The Government last year set up a Committee (the Bennett Committee) to investigate police procedures and practice in this area, following a critical report from Amnesty International. The Bennett Committee found that no other police force in the United Kingdom was called upon to deal with so much violent crime

in such unpromising circumstances as the RUC; that the normal methods of crime detection were hampered by special difficulties, and that there was a co-ordinated and extensive campaign to discredit the RUC and its officers. They also noted that the RUC procedures for supervising and controlling interrogation went further than corresponding procedures elsewhere in the UK. The Committee nevertheless felt that there was room for additional measures, and they accordingly made a number of recommendations designed to reduce to a minimum the possibility both of ill-treatment of suspects by the police and of false allegations against the police. The Government have accepted virtually all these recommendations, which are in process of being implemented. All complaints against the police are investigated, and the report of the investigation has to be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who is an independent officer of the Crown who alone decides whether the evidence justifies the bringing of charges. He has recently considered afresh medical evidence in 15 cases which had led the Bennett Committee to the conclusion that some persons had suffered injuries, which were clearly not self-inflicted, while in police custody. He still has some of these cases under consideration, but in 9 of them has confirmed his view that no prosecution is justified.

Thirdly, people have been worried about the conditions in which some terrorist prisoners are living in the Maze. A group of Provisional IRA prisoners have chosen to publicise their demand to be accorded a political (or prisoner-of-war) status by refusing to obey normal prison rules, which require all prisoners to work and to wear prison clothing. The protest has its origins in the introduction of "special category" status in 1972, against a background of mounting tension in Belfast prison,

including hunger and work strikes. "Special category" status was awarded to all prisoners sentenced to more than nine months imprisonment who claimed political motivation for their crimes. "Special category" prisoners were not required to work, were allowed to wear their own clothing and were allowed certain other privileges in regard to food parcels, letters and visits. The Government decided in 1975, on the recommendation of an independent Committee, that "special category" status should be phased out. As a result, no prisoner convicted of an offence committed on or after 1 March 1976 has been granted special category status. In addition to their refusal to work or wear prison clothing, the protesting Provisional IRA prisoners in the Maze prison have for the past 15 months been refusing to wash or to use toilet facilities. The resultant foul living conditions are entirely self-imposed, and have been created in what is one of the most modern and best equipped prisons in the United Kingdom. The Government is not prepared to grant special "political" status to people who have been properly convicted in the courts of serious criminal offences. To do so would be a step towards conceding their ultimate aim, which is an amnesty for all terrorists; and to encourage the belief that this is attainable would be to encourage them to commit crimes with impunity.

Since they will not conform to the rules which are observed by all other prisoners, it follows that the protestors lose remission and other privileges as a punishment for their refusal to conform (although of course they are still entitled to the statutory minimum visits and letters). All of this is a direct consequence of their own acts. On the practical level, the authorities do everything possible - such as steam-cleaning of the cells every 9 or 10 days - to alleviate the unpleasantness of the insanitary conditions that the prisoners have themselves brought about.



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

20 July 1979

Dear Bryan,

Northern Ireland

With his letter of 20 July Joe Pilling sent you a draft letter from the Prime Minister to President Carter, together with four papers to be enclosed with it, all of which were redrafted to take account of the Prime Minister's views recorded in your letter of 16 July.

We have consulted the Embassy in Washington about the earlier drafts, and should like, in the light of their advice, to suggest a number of minor amendments. These arise particularly from the probability that the papers which the Prime Minister sends to President Carter (and perhaps even her letter) will find their way to Dublin and perhaps to the press. So we need to be careful for example that we do not attribute to the Irish views which they might feel compelled to refute.

The main changes which we propose are to the Prime Minister's letter, a redraft of which is enclosed, with proposed changes underlined. In addition, we suggest the following minor changes to the paper on Present Government Policy:-

(a) Delete the last sentence of the second paragraph and replace it by: "The Government of the Republic, while aspiring in the long term to the unity of Ireland, fully endorse the principle of consent, and have been at pains to say so on many occasions".

A

(b) Amend the first sentence of the 6th paragraph to read:

"Nevertheless, however sensitively "direct rule" may be conducted, most people in Northern Ireland want to see devolved Government there, although they differ profoundly on the form it should take. Both history and geography ...".

B

I am copying this letter, with enclosure, to Joe Pilling in the Northern Ireland Office.

Yours etc

Paul

(P Lever)

B G Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street



23 JUL 1979

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No.

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Secret,
Confidential,
Restricted,
Unclassified.

To:- PRESIDENT CARTER

From
PRIME MINISTER

Telephone No. Ext.

Department

PRIVACY MARKING

..... In Confidence

You asked me on the telephone if I could let you have a note of our position on Northern Ireland. I have set this out as briefly as possible in the four enclosed papers, one on the background, one on present Government policy, one on terrorism, and one on security policy and its impact on human rights. I am happy that you should show these papers to anybody to whom you think that they might be useful.

The essence of our position today is that as a Government we have a good majority in the House of Commons and five years in which to make progress over this problem, and all those directly concerned know this. Our present view is that we can best make progress by patient and persistent negotiation with the parties, rather than by more precipitate action. We have already taken an initiative, in the sense of starting discussions with all those with a concern in the matter; but this does not mean that we expect an early solution. There is a wide gap between the outlook and aspirations of the two communities in Northern Ireland, and it will not easily be bridged.

I know that you are in close touch with Jack Lynch,
and I am sure that he understands our position. I myself
met him shortly after taking office, and both Humphrey
Atkins and Peter Carrington have had useful talks in Dublin
with Irish Ministers during the past few weeks. We

recognise that they have a legitimate interest in the matter, and in the outcome; but they recognise that the responsibility is ours alone. Of course Irish unity remains their long term aspiration, but they are at one with us that any settlement must have the broad consent of both sides of the community in Northern Ireland, a principle which you endorsed in your statement of August 1977. To seek to impose a settlement in the face of opposition from either community would only aggravate and prolong the troubles.

I have included the paper on our security policy and its impact on Human Rights in Northern Ireland because the subject is often a live one in the United States. We are as concerned, as I know you are, to safeguard civil liberties to the fullest possible extent: we have a fundamental duty to protect all the law abiding citizens of Northern Ireland from murder and maiming by terrorists, which is the most important human right of all.

I know that Tip O'Neill and others have been quite concerned about human rights. We have done all we can to encourage understanding of our problems. We have been extremely appreciative of the efforts which he and several of his colleagues have made to reduce the flow of funds from Irish-American sources in the United States to terrorist organisations over here, and more generally to put the record straight on the "Irish question" in those circles. It is an unhappy fact that perspectives on Ireland -and not only in the United States - are still apt to owe more to the 19th Century than to the facts of the present day world.

I have tried to keep these papers as short as possible; but Sir Nicholas Henderson had a very full briefing on all aspects of the Irish question before taking up his post in Washington, including a visit to Northern Ireland. You may be sure that we shall keep him fully informed as our thinking develops.

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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2021 OF 20 JULY

MY TELNO 2008: ARMS FOR RUC.

1. WHEN I SAW BRZEZINSKI TODAY I REFERRED TO VANCE'S NEGATIVE DECISION. IN DOING SO I REFERRED TO THE PRESIDENT'S TELEPHONIC CONVERSATION WITH THE PRIME MINISTER ON 4 JULY AND TO THE FORMER'S REQUEST FOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH IRISH AMERICANS. IT LOOKED TO ME AS THOUGH VANCE'S DECISION WAS JUMPING THE GUN.
2. THE PROBLEM SEEMED TO ME NOT SIMPLY ONE OF THE DENIAL OF ARMS TO AN ALLY NEEDING IT FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORISM. BUT THE AMERICAN DECISION, IF IT BECAME PUBLIC AS IT INEVITABLY WOULD, MUST CERTAINLY BE EXPECTED TO GIVE GREAT ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE TERRORISTS.
3. BRZEZINSKI SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW OF THIS PARTICULAR DECISION BUT IN GENERAL THE U.S. AUTHORITIES WERE DOING THEIR BEST TO CLAMP DOWN ON THE SUPPLY OF ARMS FROM THE USA TO THE TERRORISTS: THERE WAS THE TROUBLE OF THE VIEWS OF THE IRISH AMERICANS: AND IT WOULD BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION TO CONDUCT THEIR CAMPAIGN TO CURTAIL THE TERRORISTS IF THEY WERE KNOWN TO BE SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE RUC. I SAID THAT WE COULD NOT ACCEPT THAT THERE WAS ANY EQUIVALENCE BETWEEN THE TWO. THE FORMER WERE A BAND OF TERRORISTS, NOT A HARD PRESSED GROUP OF IDEALISTS YEARNING TO BREATHE FREE: THE LATTER WERE AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE UK ADMINISTRATION ATTEMPTING TO COMBAT VIOLENCE. I SUGGESTED THAT A PARALLEL MIGHT BE SEEN IF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WERE SUPPLYING ARMS TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND REFUSED THEIR USE AGAINST THE BASQUE TERRORISTS.

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4. BRZEZINSKI SAID THAT THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THERE WAS A LARGE BASQUE POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES. IT WAS A QUESTION OF FACING REALITIES AND THE REALITY WAS THAT THERE WAS A LARGE IRISH-AMERICAN LOBBY IN THE UNITED STATES WHICH WAS SYMPATHETIC TO THE IRA. HE WONDERED WHETHER THE PROBLEM COULD NOT BE RESOLVED IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, RATHER THAN THE RUC, ORDERED THESE ARMS WITHOUT SPECIFYING WHERE THEY WERE GOING TO BE USED. HE DID NOT THINK THE U.S. AUTHORITIES WOULD WISH TO ENQUIRE WHERE THEY WERE GOING. I ASKED HIM WHETHER HE WAS RECOMMENDING US TO DO THIS. I SAID THAT IF QUESTIONS WERE ASKED ABOUT THE USE OF U.S. ARMS IN NORTHERN IRELAND WOULD THE U.S. GOVERNMENT THEN BE PREPARED TO SAY THAT THESE ARMS HAD BEEN SUPPLIED TO HMG AND IT WAS UP TO HMG TO USE THEM WHERE THEY WISHED AND THEIR DEPLOYMENT WAS OF NO CONCERN TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

5. BRZEZINSKI SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO GIVE FURTHER THOUGHT TO THIS. AT FIRST SIGHT THIS LOOKED A POSSIBLE WAY OUT OF THE DILEMMA BUT HE WOULD HAVE TO MAKE FURTHER ENQUIRIES WHICH HE UNDERTOOK TO DO.

6. I EMPHASISED THE ILL-EFFECTS THAT THIS MATTER COULD HAVE IN LONDON WHERE FEELINGS RAN JUST AS STRONG ON THIS SUBJECT THOUGH IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION TO THOSE OF THE IRISH AMERICANS. IT SEEMED TO ME OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO AVOID PUBLICITY. WHAT MUST BE PREVENTED WAS THE GREAT PROPAGANDA USE TO WHICH THE TERRORISTS MIGHT TURN PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE OF AN AMERICAN REFUSAL TO LET THE BRITISH AUTHORITIES HAVE ARMS FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORISM.

HENDERSON

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ARMS FOR RUC

1. NIMETZ, STATE DEPARTMENT COUNSELLOR, ASKED ROBINSON TO CALL THIS MORNING. NIMETZ REFERRED TO RECENT CONGRESSIONAL PRESSURE FOR HEARINGS ON NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE CONCLUSION (MY TELEGRAM NUMBER 1940 OF 13 JULY) THAT ZABLOCKI WOULD UNDERTAKE AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S POLICY ON THE SUPPLY OF ARMS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND. THE ADMINISTRATION BELIEVED THAT IF THIS ISSUE GOT TO THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE THERE WAS A CHANCE THAT CONGRESS WOULD IMPOSE A BAN. VANCE HAD CONSULTED A NUMBER OF CONGRESSIONAL FIGURES, INCLUDING SPEAKER O'NEILL. AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND VANCE HAD DECIDED THAT IN THE INTEREST OF NOT MAGNIFYING THE ISSUE AND AGGRAVATING RELATIONS THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD QUOTE NOT MOVE FORWARD BUT WOULD HOLD BACK ON APPROVAL OF SUPPLY OF WEAPONS FOR THE RUC UNQUOTE. NIMETZ SAID THAT HE COULD NOT PREDICT THE QUOTE TIMING OF THIS DELAY UNQUOTE BUT HIS ADVICE WOULD BE THAT IF THE RUC COULD GET SPARES FROM ELSEWHERE THEY SHOULD DO SO. NIMETZ ADDED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF NEW APPLICATIONS FOR WEAPONS FOR THE RUC DID NOT COME IN. NIMETZ SAID HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THERE WERE THREE OUTSTANDING REQUESTS FOR THE RUC (SPARE PARTS FOR THE M.1 CARBINE, A SMALL QUANTITY OF AMMUNITION, AND SOME RADIO COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT). CONSIDERATION WAS STILL BEING GIVEN TO THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE RADIO COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT MIGHT NOT BE COVERED BY THE DECISION TO HOLD BACK APPROVAL.
2. NIMETZ SAID THAT THIS DECISION DID NOT, REPEAT NOT, APPLY TO MILITARY SALES, THE ADMINISTRATION'S UNDERSTANDING BEING THAT MILITARY SALES TO THE UK WERE ALL FOR WORLD-WIDE USE.
3. NIMETZ HOPED TO BE ABLE TO LET US HAVE LATER TODAY TALKING POINTS WHICH THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD PROPOSE TO USE IF VANCE'S DECISION BECAME PUBLIC. NIMETZ HOPED IT WOULD NOT.
4. IN CONCLUSION NIMETZ SAID THAT VANCE HOPED THAT THIS DECISION WOULD LEAD TO A DIMINUTION OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST.
5. ROBINSON SAID THAT HE WAS AFRAID THIS DECISION WOULD BE VERY

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CONFIDENTIAL

BADLY RECEIVED IN LONDON. IF VANCE'S CONSIDERATION WAS TO AVOID AGGRAVATING RELATIONS WITH THE UK, RATHER THAN WITH CONGRESS (NIMETZ SAID THAT THIS WAS THE CASE), ROBINSON FEARED IT WOULD HAVE THE OPPOSITE EFFECT TO THAT DESIRED. NORTHERN IRELAND WAS PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE RUC WAS IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO MAINTAIN IMPARTIALLY LAW AND ORDER. THE PRESIDENT'S 1977 STATEMENT HAD COMMITTED THE ADMINISTRATION TO IMPARTIALITY. NIMETZ SAID THAT THIS WAS STILL THE ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION. ROBINSON SAID THAT THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT THE ADMINISTRATION REGARDED THE RUC AS PARTIAL. VANCE'S DECISION SEEMED TO PRESENT US WITH A CHOICE BETWEEN ACQUIESCENCE OR ORDERING WHAT WE WANTED AS MILITARY SALES. NIMETZ DENIED THIS AND SPECIFICALLY DECLINED TO COMMENT ON THE WAY IN WHICH WE ORDERED. NOR WOULD HE BE DRAWN TO SAY HOW LONG THE DECISION TO DELAY AUTHORISATION WOULD LAST. IT WOULD BE WHILE ZABLOCKI'S INVESTIGATION CONTINUED BUT HE COULD NOT SAY HOW LONG THIS WOULD BE.

6. ROBINSON SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION'S HOPE THAT THIS SUBJECT WOULD LEAD TO A LESSENING OF CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST COULD ONLY MEAN THAT THEY ASSUMED, AS WOULD NO DOUBT BE INEVITABLE ANYWAY, THAT THE DECISION WOULD SOON BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. (NIMETZ ACCEPTED THIS). DID THEY PROPOSE TO LET US KNOW THEIR PROPOSED PUBLIC LINE BEFORE FINALISING IT AND IN TIME FOR US TO COMMENT? NIMETZ PROMISED THAT THIS WOULD BE DONE.

7. IN CONCLUSION NIMETZ SAID THAT VANCE ATTACHED THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UK, BUT HE WAS CONVINCED AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION THAT THIS DECISION WAS NECESSARY BECAUSE ANY OTHER COURSE WOULD BRING WORSE CONSEQUENCES.

8. WE UNDERSTAND THAT IN TAKING THIS DECISION VANCE HAS OVERRULED OFFICIAL ADVICE.

HENDERSON

DEPARTMENTAL D
RID
NAMD

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION
NORTHERN IRELAND



Prime Minister

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

These papers have been revised in the light of your comments (which are attached as Flag A). Are you happy with them as they now stand? *Just 20/7*

Bryan Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

20 July 1979

Thank you - Yes - they are extremely good now. Can we keep copies in the office - particularly the 'Calendar of Events' on the Terrorism release

Dear Bryan

Thank you for your letter of 16 July conveying the Prime Minister's comments on the material about Northern Ireland enclosed with my letter of 13 July. *mb*

In meeting the Prime Minister's wishes we have striven to avoid increasing the length of the material unduly; but inevitably it has had to be expanded quite a bit, and indeed, in place of the three earlier notes we now offer four, with one Annex, as follows:

- (i) A revised version of "The Background", to which is now annexed an annotated calendar of events since 1968.
- (ii) A revised version of "Present Government Policy".
- (iii) A new note on "Terrorism", primarily to deal with the points at (i) and (iv) of your letter.
- (iv) A revised and expanded form of the note on "Security Policy and its impact on Human Rights in Northern Ireland."

I think you will find that one way or another these papers now cover all the Prime Minister's points save two. First, she asks (your point (v)) whether we believe that all Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland favour unity with the Republic. "All" is an absolute term, and the answer in that sense must be 'no'; some Catholics are certainly content with the Union. For example, the Alliance Party, which was founded in part to straddle the sectarian divide, and has a Catholic, Oliver Napier, as leader, has a constitution which is firmly in favour of the union. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that most Catholics, if asked, would favour a united Ireland, and this is reflected in the third paragraph of the background note.

Secondly, the Prime Minister took exception (your point (x) (a)) to the suggestion that the UK Government had "resumed" direct rule, since "it was never formally abandoned". With respect, direct rule was formally replaced, under the Northern Ireland Constitution Act 1973, by the arrangements under which the power-sharing Executive took office. On the collapse of that Executive, the Northern Ireland Act, 1974, had to be passed to re-establish, on a temporary basis, the arrangements under which HMG still administers the province today. We have therefore left this reference - now on page 4 of the Background note - unchanged.

.... I enclose a slightly revised version of the draft letter to President Carter.

I am copying this to George Walden in the FCO.

Yours sincerely

Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS

THE BACKGROUND

Northern Ireland is that part of the island of Ireland which did not become independent of the United Kingdom in 1921. When the country now known as the Republic of Ireland came into existence in that year approximately one million Protestants in the North were determined not to become part of a predominantly Catholic 'Irish Free State'. Northern Ireland was therefore given its own Parliament with power to legislate over a very wide range of matters so that it became largely self-governing within the United Kingdom. The act of partition itself gave rise to a terrorist campaign which lasted for most of the 1920's, and there have since been two further campaigns - during the second World War and between 1956 and 1962 - before the present terrorist violence began in 1969.

Unlike the Republic of Ireland, the North is not homogeneous politically or culturally. It is in fact a community divided within itself. It contains not only a million Protestants but also half-a-million Catholics. The two sides are divided not only by religion, but by ethnic origins - the Ulster Scot and the Irish Celt - by culture, and by political aspirations. These divisions, which survive from experience strengthening back far beyond this century, coincide to produce a deep tribal split.

Both communities see themselves as besieged minorities - the Protestants threatened by the Catholic majority in Ireland as a whole; and the Catholics by the Protestant majority in the North. Each seeks to be part of a majority. Nearly all Protestants hold to the union with Great Britain; most Catholics aspire to the unity of Ireland. Politics are dominated by these constitutional issues, rather than by the economic and social questions which are the bread and butter of politics in most countries today.

NORTHERN IRELAND: CALENDAR OF EVENTS 1968-1979

1968

Civil Rights Movement

A Civil Rights movement opposed to discrimination in public housing and employment and demanding changes in the local franchise became prominent in the second half of 1968. Behind the specific grievances undoubtedly lay a general feeling on the part of the Catholic population that they were unfairly treated in the Northern Ireland State. The Civil Rights demonstrations immediately excited counter-demonstrations by Protestant loyalists. Violence was limited and sporadic but when it occurred it was practised against the protest movement rather than for it. But it is not surprising that the Government should have been suspicious, and many in the loyalist population convinced, that the demonstrations were anti-partitionist in their inspiration and in their aim.

1969

Reform Programme

By the summer of 1969 the stated objectives of the Civil Rights Movement had been largely met, if not in terms of full implementation at least in terms of an undertaking that remedial action would be taken.

Sectarian Rioting

August

On 12 and 13 August there were fierce clashes between the inhabitants of the Catholic Bogside area in Londonderry and the Police. In order to relieve the pressure on Londonderry, Nationalist supporters attacked, with stones and petrol bombs, police stations in several other towns. In Belfast major confrontations developed during the nights of 14 and 15 August. Five Catholics and two Protestants were shot dead, while 270 houses were completely burnt out and a similar number damaged, the majority of which were inhabited by Catholics.

The Army was called in to support the civil power. In the early days it was seen as a protective force by many Catholics especially in West Belfast.

The Downing Street Declaration issued after a meeting between the Prime Ministers of the United Kingdom and of Northern Ireland, re-affirmed Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom; emphasised the entitlement of every Northern Ireland citizen to equality of treatment and freedom from discrimination; and stated that the troops would be withdrawn when law and order was restored.

October

The Hunt Report on the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) recommended that the police should be an unarmed force on the normal British model. The Ulster Special Constabulary was to be phased out. A part-time Ulster Defence Regiment was to be formed to assist the Army in its security role.

Protestants in Belfast rioted against the Hunt Report recommendations, killing a policeman.

1970

Throughout 1969, and until the summer of 1970 relations between the Army and the Catholic population were good.

The IRA which had been small, weak and undecided since the end of the abortive Border campaign (1956-62) split into distinct wings. The Provisionals favoured a militant struggle to force Northern Ireland out of the United Kingdom whilst the Officials opted for Marxist-type political action to create the basis for a new socialist Ireland.

18 June 1970 Conservative Government returned to power.

July

After a weekend in which seven Protestants were killed in sectarian shooting incidents, and continued rioting, the Army imposed a 36-hour curfew in the Catholic Lower Falls area of Belfast. From this point relations between the Army and the Catholics deteriorated.

1971

6 February First British soldier killed by the Provisional IRA (PIRA).
 27 February Two policemen killed by PIRA.
 10 March Three soldiers taken from a bar and murdered by PIRA.
 27 June Northern Ireland Prime Minister (Brian Faulkner) proposed that the opposition party (SDLP) should chair two new Parliamentary committees. But the SDLP withdrew from Stormont Parliament in protest when the British Government refused to order an inquiry into the shooting of two men by the Army in Londonderry.

Internment

9 August

The IRA were now bombing commercial targets (bars, shops and banks) at the rate of two a day. In July there were 20 explosions in one day. More than 100 civilians were wounded by bombings in this period. Mr Faulkner's Government, faced by a steadily increasing level of violence, and the difficulty of obtaining evidence for convictions under the normal legal procedures, decided, after consultation with London, to introduce internment. 342 people were taken into special holding centres on 9 August.

By mid-December, 1576 people had been arrested under the internment powers, of whom no fewer than 934 had already been released.

From 9 August 1971 to 30 March 1972, 2937 people were arrested, of whom 1711 were released within 48 hours. 796 were served with internment orders, and the remainder were released within 28 days.

But violence intensified after internment. 30 soldiers, 11 policemen and Ulster Defence Regiment members, and 73 civilians were killed in the next four months.

Reform Programme

By late 1971 reforms had been implemented which in many ways met the Civil Rights demands. Examples were: Electoral Law Acts 1969 and 1971 (universal suffrage at 18 in local elections); Housing Executive Act 1971 (a new central public housing authority outside the control of local authorities); Police Act 1970 (establishing a Police Authority representative of the community to maintain the RUC); independent Commissioners to investigate grievances against central or local government; and the creation of a Ministry of Community Relations. An independent Review Body on local government recommended a new single tier local government system.

1972

January

In the course of clashes between the Army, and demonstrators involved in an illegal march, soldiers, believing themselves to be under fire, shot and killed 13 civilians. These events became known as "Bloody Sunday" and affected attitudes profoundly, in Northern Ireland and further afield.

February

The Official IRA killed seven people outside an Army mess at Aldershot, England.

March

As violence and alienation grew between the two communities, and between the minority and the authorities, Mr Heath's Government decided that full responsibility for law and order must be exercised by Westminster and Whitehall. Mr Faulkner's Unionist Government resigned rather than accept Mr Heath's requirement. The Stormont Parliament was prorogued, Mr Whitelaw was appointed the first Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, and direct rule from Westminster began on 30 March 1972. Mr Whitelaw's immediate aims were to phase out internment, and to reduce tension in preparation for a political settlement. By September no less than 723 people held under the internment powers had been released, leaving only 238 either interned or held under a detention order (for 28 days).

May

The Official IRA declared a ceasefire which has, more or less, held until the present.

June

The Provisional IRA announced a ceasefire, and later some Provisional leaders met Mr Whitelaw in London. Within two weeks however PIRA engineered a confrontation with the Army in Belfast and resumed their campaign.

July

Bombings, shootings and casualties (civilians and members of the Security Forces) continued on a large scale. On 21 July, 9 people, including two soldiers, were killed by a wave of bombings ("Bloody Friday"). Six days later nine people were killed or fatally wounded when three PIRA car bombs devastated the village of Claudy, Co Londonderry.

- September Mr Whitelaw invited the Northern Ireland political parties to a conference at Darlington, England, but only three of the seven parties agreed to take part. A discussion paper was issued in October.
- Far from responding to the Government's efforts to promote reconciliation through the release of internees, the PIRA escalated its violence. Terrorism claimed 468 lives in Northern Ireland in 1972 - the worst year by far for violence.
- 1973
March In fulfilment of a promise made by Mr Heath in 1972, and in an attempt to "take the Border out of politics" a referendum was held in Northern Ireland in which people were asked whether they wished Northern Ireland to remain a part of the United Kingdom, or to be joined with the Republic of Ireland. The SDLP urged a boycott of the poll, and there was largescale abstention by Catholics. Nevertheless an absolute majority of the total electorate (591,820 out of 1,030,084) voted for Northern Ireland to remain part of the United Kingdom.
- June Following the publication of the Government's proposals for a new system of government in Northern Ireland to which all the people could subscribe, elections were held by proportional representation to a new 78 member Assembly. Following negotiations between HMG and three of the parties elected to the Assembly (Mr Faulkner's Unionists, the SDLP and Alliance) the formation of an Executive designate was announced. Mr Faulkner was to be Chief Executive, and Mr Fitt, of the mainly Catholic SDLP, Deputy Chief Executive.
- November
- December The Executive designate met representatives of the British and Irish Governments at Sunningdale, England. The Irish Government solemnly recognised Northern Ireland's status within the United Kingdom so long as that was the majority's wish; and outline agreement was reached on a Council of Ireland to be formed with equal representation from North and South.
- IRA attacks, both selective and indiscriminate, continued in Great Britain with 86 bombing and shooting incidents, resulting in one death and over 380 injuries.
- 1974
January The Northern Ireland Executive and Assembly assumed responsibility for most domestic matters on 1 January.
- Mr Faulkner lost the leadership of the Unionist Party because of opposition to his policy.
- February 12 killed by bomb in coach carrying Army families near Leeds, England. In the General Election on 28 February, in which the Labour Party returned to power at Westminster, 11 out of Northern Ireland's 12 seats were won by candidates opposed to the power-sharing Executive and the Council of Ireland.
- May A general strike was called by an alliance of Loyalist politicians, para-militaries and key workers in support of their demands for new elections and the scrapping of the Council of Ireland. After 14 days of increasing disruption, backed by intimidation; the Executive recommended negotiation with the strike leaders but HMG refused to negotiate under duress.

The Unionist members of the Executive resigned on 28 May thus effectively ending its existence. The Northern Ireland Assembly was prorogued, and fresh arrangements were made for the resumption of direct rule under the Secretary of State and his Ministers.

July The Government proposed that, after a period for reflection, a Constitutional Convention should be elected in Northern Ireland to consider what new provisions would be likely to command widespread acceptance.

IRA Attacks in Great Britain

IRA violence in Great Britain intensified in 1974. In all, 44 people were killed, and over 360 injured. The most notorious attacks were the bombing of a bar in Guildford (killing 5) and of two bars in Birmingham, England on 21 November which claimed 21 lives. The Prevention of Terrorism Bill was introduced in the House of Commons six days later.

December Some Protestant clergymen from Northern Ireland, acting on their own initiative met leading Provisionals at Feakle, Co Clare.

The Irish Republican Socialist Party was formed by discontented Official IRA supporters.

1975 February A Christmas and New Year ceasefire by PIRA lapsed, but was subsequently turned into a "permanent" ceasefire by the Provisionals. (It has never formally been revoked.)

The Secretary of State (Mr Rees) said his officials were ready to meet any legal group, including Provisional Sinn Fein, for discussions on government policy. Telephonic "incident centres" were set up between Provisional Sinn Fein and the administration in order to prevent misunderstandings leading to a breakdown of the ceasefire. Mr Rees said the Security Forces would respond to the prevailing level of violence.

May Elections were held on 1 May to the Constitutional Convention. The Unionist Coalition took 46 of the 78 seats.

The PIRA ceasefire against the Security Forces was fairly effective for about three months, although other forms of violence (sectarian and inter-factional) were at a high level. On 10 May, PIRA murdered a policeman in Londonderry.

July Four soldiers killed in a PIRA explosion in South Armagh on 17 July.

On 31 July Loyalist extremists killed three members of the Miami Showband, from Dublin.

September Two tourists killed and 63 injured in blast at London Hilton.

October 12 people died on 2 October and sectarian violence, in which Loyalist and Republican groups retaliated against each other's community grew.

- November The Report of the Unionist dominated Convention was published, calling for a strong majority rule Parliament at Stormont with minor concessions to the minority.
- Four soldiers were killed by the IRA in South Armagh, the UDA placed bombs at Dublin Airport, and a public figure was assassinated by the IRA in London.
- December The last detainees (internees) were released. Mr Cosgrave, Taoiseach of the Republic of Ireland, said that the North's troubles had cost his country at least £250m in compensation, lost tourism and other business.
- 1976
January Sectarian killings escalated. Protestants killed five Catholics on 4 January, to which PIRA responded by killing 10 Protestant workmen in a bus next day.
- The Government, supported by the other parties at Westminster, declined to accept the Convention Report because its system of government would not command sufficiently widespread acceptance throughout both communities in Northern Ireland.
- March The Constitutional Convention was dissolved after the Unionist Coalition had refused to modify its Report.
- Prisoners convicted of offences committed after 1 March 1976 were no longer admitted to Special Category status.
- Belfast's airport was attacked by PIRA with mortars; and bombs were placed on public transport in London.
- July The British Ambassador at Dublin and a Northern Ireland Office civil servant were both killed when the PIRA blew up the Ambassador's car near his residence.
- August Following the death of three young children when a car carrying Provisional gunmen ran out of control, women in the local Catholic community formed the Women's Peace Movement, which received massive popular support at demonstrations held throughout the British Isles in the following months.
- 1977 In the first part of the year the PIRA pursued a campaign of particularly cold blooded murders of businessmen, policemen and prison officers.
- May The United Unionist Action Council, supported by loyalist paramilitaries and Mr Paisley, called a "constitutional stoppage" aimed at the restoration of majority rule and the introduction of a much tougher security policy. The attempted strike failed to gain widespread support; and where intimidation was attempted the Police moved in effectively. The strike petered out after two weeks.
- August HM The Queen visited Northern Ireland for two days as part of the Silver Jubilee tour of the United Kingdom.
- On 30 August President Carter made a statement defining America's interest in and policy towards Northern Ireland.

- October Mrs Williams and Miss Corrigan of the Peace People were awarded the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize.
- November The Secretary of State (Mr Mason) invited the four main Northern Ireland parties to discuss a scheme for a form of devolved government.
- 1978
January The Unionists withdrew from further talks with Mr Mason following a radio broadcast by the Taoiseach (Mr Lynch) in which he said that the Prime Minister (Mr Callaghan) had given an assurance that there would be no devolved government without power-sharing. In the same broadcast Mr Lynch also repeated his view that the British Government should declare an interest in promoting Irish unity. On 18 January the European Court of Human Rights finally ruled on the cases which had been taken to it by the Irish Government alleging torture, ill-treatment and other breaches of the European Convention in the treatment of suspects in 1971 after internment. The Court found that the use of "five techniques" of interrogation on a total of 14 persons constituted inhuman and degrading treatment, but not torture; and that there had been a practice of inhuman and degrading treatment by the RUC in the autumn of 1971 at a named establishment. The Court rejected the other Irish Government submissions; in particular it refused to find that detention (internment) had been operated in a discriminatory fashion, or that it had been established that the Government's extra judicial measures were in excess of what was required, or that breaches of the Convention had continued beyond the autumn of 1971.
- February On 17 February a PIRA fire bomb killed 12 people in the La Mon House restaurant outside Belfast.
- April The Prime Minister (Mr Callaghan) accepted the near unanimous recommendation of the House of Commons Speaker's Conference that Northern Ireland's representation should be increased from 12 to 17.
- May Following a report by Amnesty International on allegations of ill-treatment of suspects in Police custody the Government set up a committee under Judge Bennett to examine Police procedures.
- November The Deputy Governor of the Maze Prison was murdered by PIRA.
- December On 17/18 December explosive devices, including two car bombs were planted in 6 English cities, including London.
- 1979
January PIRA blew up a gas holder at Greenwich, England, and an oil storage tank at Canvey Island, London's oil terminal.
- March The Bennett Report (on Police procedures) was published, and the Government immediately accepted its main recommendations, including the installation of closed circuit TV in interrogation rooms and an absolute right of access to a solicitor after 48 hours in custody. The new Government has also accepted these recommendations and is implementing them.
- The British Ambassador to the Hague was murdered on 22 March, and Mr Airey Neave, Opposition Spokesman on Northern Ireland was killed by an explosion in his car at Westminster. The Irish National Liberation Army, connected with the Irish Republican Socialist Party, claimed responsibility for Mr Neave's murder.

PRESENT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Northern Ireland policy is a bi-partisan matter at Westminster: the major parties are at one as to the broad objectives and methods of achieving them.

In the longer term the key point at issue is: should Northern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom, or should it be united with the Republic of Ireland? British Government policy is based squarely on the principle of self-determination. The majority of people in Northern Ireland today clearly wish to stay as part of the United Kingdom. Parliament has laid it down in a statute that that status can be changed only with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland voting in a plebiscite. In a referendum (known as the Border Poll) held in 1973, 99% of those voting were in favour of Northern Ireland remaining within the United Kingdom. The (mainly Catholic) Social Democratic and Labour Party, which wants to see Ireland peacefully united, had urged its supporters to boycott this poll and most did so. Nevertheless, the result still showed that 58% of the total electorate favoured continuance of the union. Voting in all subsequent elections in Northern Ireland has followed a similar sectarian pattern and although the relevant legislation provides for a further referendum to be held not earlier than 1983, there is no reason to suppose that views on the issue have changed. Until, therefore, a majority for change emerges the Government would not feel justified in taking any action to alter the present position. ~~This principle of consent is one which is fully accepted by the Government of the Republic.~~

There is at present no early prospect of reconciling the incompatible views of the two sides of the Northern Ireland community on this long-term issue. The Protestant majority cling to continued union with Britain; the Catholic minority

aspire to Irish unity. In this situation the British Government has sought to concentrate minds on the more immediate problem of finding a satisfactory structure for the government of Northern Ireland which, while keeping it within the United Kingdom, would not prejudice the longer term aspirations of the minority.

The Government of Northern Ireland in its last years and, since then, successive Westminster Governments have been responsible for the introduction of a wide range of legislative measures designed primarily to prevent discrimination in Northern Ireland but also to ensure that there are adequate means of redress if, regrettably, it should still occur. These measures have included the creation of a Northern Ireland "Ombudsman" and a Commissioner of Complaints, who between them investigate complaints over virtually every possible aspect of public administration, a Police Complaints Board, a Fair Employment Agency and an Equal Opportunities Commission. The adequacy of the existing law is kept under continuous review by an independent Advisory Commission on Human Rights. The present Government is determined that this legislation should be implemented fully both in the spirit and in the letter.

Government by Westminster - "Direct Rule" as it is known in Northern Ireland - is an interim device, not a permanent solution. In administering the province HM Government have always sought to be sensitive to local opinion; and seeks equally to be ready to respond to Northern Ireland's needs in social and economic terms. Declining industries and high unemployment create an urgent need for more industrial investment, and recent decisions by major US companies to invest in Northern Ireland have been most welcome. The British Government will continue to provide attractive investment incentives. As in the rest of the United Kingdom, the relative level of public expenditure is determined

by the needs of the people and the resources available. In 1978/79 public expenditure in Northern Ireland totalled about £2,250 million. More than half of this came from local sources including an attributed share of United Kingdom taxes of £765 million. But over £850 million was a direct subvention from Westminster. Public expenditure per head of population in Northern Ireland is higher than in any other part of the United Kingdom.

(3) ~~Nevertheless, however sensitively "direct rule" may be conducted,~~
the people of Northern Ireland are accustomed to their own
~~Government, be they Unionists or members of the minority; and,~~
Both history and geography point to the need for special
arrangements unlike those in the rest of the United Kingdom.
The United Kingdom Government thus needs to find a way of
devolving power to Northern Ireland. As the present Conservative
administration put it in their first formal declaration of policy
in May, the Government will "seek an acceptable way of restoring
to the people of Northern Ireland more control over their own
affairs". An "acceptable way" is a way which commands widespread
consent within the divided community in Northern Ireland and in
the Parliament at Westminster.

It is the more important to find some acceptable way forward
because for some six years now there has been no elected local
authority above the 26 District Councils in Northern Ireland,
which have very limited powers. The next tier of government
is the United Kingdom Parliament at Westminster. There is
therefore no elected authority in Northern Ireland responsible
for a wide range of matters which in Great Britain are invariably
administered by elected local authorities. Merely to enlarge
the powers of the present District Councils is no answer,

because the now defunct local authorities in Northern Ireland were the source of a good deal of the concern about discriminatory practices which led to the emergence of civil rights movement in the late sixties; and the form of ^aany new local government structure in Northern Ireland would need to have the same widespread acceptability in Northern Ireland as would a devolved government for the Province as a whole.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is currently engaged in private talks with the leaders of the main Northern Ireland parties looking for an "acceptable" way of making progress. If it is possible to find a political accommodation to which the major parties can subscribe, the Government believes that it may prove feasible to build on it, so that it might lead thereafter to the resolution of the wider problems. "Consent" is essential, not only for sound democratic reasons, but because, in the present situation in Northern Ireland, any attempt to impose a solution against the wishes of the majority or the minority could lead to boycott or, worse, to an upsurge of renewed violence - for there are Protestant paramilitary organisations as well as the Provisional IRA. Politics and security in Northern Ireland are inextricably interwoven and political moves have to be made in full realisation of the background of actual and potential violence.

TERRORISM

The main Republican terrorist group is the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA), formed in 1969-70 following a split with the old IRA, which had become increasingly Marxist and involved in political rather than military activities. The most significant Loyalist (ie Unionist) groups are the Ulster Defence Association and the Ulster Volunteer Force, though both have been relatively inactive since 1977. The street violence which accompanied the Civil Rights campaign in the late 1960's was exploited by paramilitary groups on both sides, with the Provisional IRA claiming that they were "protecting" the minority Catholic population from attack by the Loyalists and an allegedly biased police force. Although PIRA have sought to maintain support in the Catholic community, a combination of terrorist excesses which have sickened people throughout Ireland, with a growing recognition of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) as a fair and effective body for law enforcement and a general weariness of terrorist violence, has steadily reduced the PIRA base in the minority community.

Terrorist violence in Northern Ireland has been characterised in recent years by periods of relative calm ~~fluctuating~~ ^{alternating} with renewed outbursts of activity; but PIRA's main targets have remained largely unchanged. The Police and the Army continue to be prime targets, either for snipers or for explosive devices, sometimes radio-controlled which are detonated as patrols pass by. In one such attack on 17 April this year, 4 RUC officers were killed. There have been a significant number of shooting attacks on members of the security forces while off-duty, often

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SECURITY POLICY AND ITS IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The aim of the British Government's security policy in Northern Ireland is to do their utmost to defeat terrorism and to extend the pattern of normal policing throughout the whole Province. These aims are pursued within the framework of the normal criminal law and procedures as far as practicable. Terrorists when caught are prosecuted under the criminal law; and if convicted are imprisoned in the ordinary way. There will be no return to special category status for terrorists claiming political motivation for their crimes; and there is no question of an amnesty.

The first responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests with the police, who took over the primary role in security operations in 1977. They are assisted as necessary by the Army, including the locally-recruited Ulster Defence Regiment, who provide first line support to the police in a number of areas of the Province. The police are also able to call upon the Royal Ulster Constabulary Reserve as an additional source of manpower. The RUC itself had almost doubled in size since 1970, and while the force would welcome more Catholic recruits, a number of those Catholics who have joined have risen to fairly senior positions; the last Chief Constable, Sir Jamie Flanagan, who retired in 1976, was a Catholic. All members of the security forces live under the constant threat of terrorist attack, in spite of which they carry out their duties, often in most difficult and arduous circumstances, in an exemplary manner. All are required to operate strictly within the law; and they are individually amenable to the law if they are thought to have transgressed it in carrying out their tasks.

The RUC is not an armed force; but individual members are, on request, issued with weapons for their personal protection.

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

To

PRESIDENT CARTER

Enclosures

Copies to be sent to

(Full Postal Address)

(Full Address, if Necessary)

LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PRIME MINISTER

(Name of Signatory)

When we spoke *Shortly after Tokyo, you asked me*
~~You asked me last week~~ on the telephone if I could let you have
a note of our position on Northern Ireland. I have set this
out as briefly as possible in the four enclosed papers, one on
the background, one on present Government policy, one on
terrorism, and one on security policy and its impact on human
rights. I am happy that you should show these papers to anybody
to whom you think that they might be useful.

The essence of our position today is that as a Government we have
a good majority in the House of Commons and 5 years in which to
make progress over this problem, and all those directly concerned
know this. Our present view is that we can best make progress
by patient and persistent negotiation with the parties, rather
than by more precipitate action. We have already taken an
initiative, in the sense of starting discussions with all those
with a concern in the matter; but this does not mean that we
expect an early solution. There is a wide gap between the outlook
and aspirations of the two parts of the people of Northern Ireland,
and it will not easily be bridged.

I think that Jack Lynch and his Ministers understand this approach very well. We recognise that they have a legitimate interest in the matter, and in the outcome; but they recognise that the responsibility is ours alone. They are at one with us that any settlement must have the broad consent of both sides of the community in Northern Ireland. To seek to impose a settlement in the face of opposition from either community would only aggravate and prolong the troubles.

I have included the paper on our security policy and its impact on Human Rights in Northern Ireland because the subject is often a live one in the United States. I know that Tip O'Neill and others have been ~~quite~~ concerned about this. We have done all we can to encourage understanding of our problems. We have been extremely appreciative of the efforts which he and several of his colleagues have made to reduce the flow of funds from Irish-American sources in the United States to terrorist organisations over here, and more generally to put the record straight on the "Irish question" in those circles. It is an unhappy fact that perspectives on Ireland - and not only in the United States! - are still apt to owe more to the 19th Century than to the facts of the present day world.

SECRET

Copy No 2 of 23



SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR
NORTHERN IRELAND

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Ireland

The Rt Hon Francis Pym MC MP
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1

NHPM ml.
OSM
19/7

19 July 1979

Dear Francis,

It was agreed at last week's meeting of the OD Committee that I should consider, in consultation with you, the points which had been raised about the direction of anti-terrorist operations in Northern Ireland. You had mentioned in the discussion that the Chiefs of Staff were concerned about the present arrangements for command and control of these operations.

I thought that I would let you know straightaway how I am handling this matter.

I entirely agree that it is essential that we should secure the maximum and most effective use of our resources in anti-terrorist operations. It is clearly my ministerial responsibility to bring this about. I shall pursue the policy aims set out in OD (79) 14, which the OD Committee endorsed.

In order to discharge this responsibility I have already decided to alter the pattern of my meetings with the Chief Constable and the GOC. At present I have an informal meeting with them and NIO officials every fortnight to consider the current threat and the pattern of security measures. I propose to make this a formal meeting, with an agenda and papers, to consider issues of policy and any disagreements which have arisen on the implementation of the policy. My concern throughout will be to ensure that the most effective policy is followed on the ground.

As I see it, the implementation of the policy and of the decisions taken at these meetings will be a matter for the Chief Constable and the GOC. I do not have executive authority over the police, or indeed over the army, and I would not think it right that we should seek Parliamentary authority for me or a NIO Minister to exercise such authority. What we have got to do is our best to

SECRET

produce in effect the most integrated arrangements that are practicable for our security operations even though we cannot in form have a single executive authority.

Within this framework, there are other questions and matters which it has been suggested that officials might study, so that the best arrangements are obtained at all levels for the direction and co-ordination of security operations. I propose to put a study in hand, under NIO chairmanship, and my officials will invite representatives of the RUC, HQNI and the Ministry of Defence to join them in this study.

The GOC has separately written to me offering his thoughts about that and other matters and I shall be replying in the sense of this letter.

I will of course keep in touch with you on all this but since time is relatively short I thought I should let you know now of the line of my thinking, so that in consultation with you I can report to the proposed meeting of OD before the end of the summer recess.

I shall also arrange for that meeting of OD to have a full report of the study of cross-border co-operation which I mentioned in paragraph 8(ii) of OD (79) 14, together with a report of the work on intelligence-gathering on PIRA in the Republic.

I also take this opportunity to reply to your letter of 4 July about force levels in Northern Ireland. I am anxious that we should make progress on this point. I am glad that it was accepted that we should have it thoroughly studied, together with the practical considerations, with a view to identifying the appropriate moment for a change. I am as keen as you that the number of soldiers deployed in Northern Ireland should be reduced as soon as may be, not only for your reasons but because it would evidently serve our own policy in the Province. I hope therefore that a joint study may be able to point the way to a reduction of one unit in troop strength in Northern Ireland, though in view of the present advice from the Chief Constable and GOC, which I relayed to you in my minute of 15 June, I do not think that we can pre-judge that.

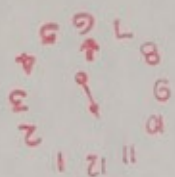
I am sending a copy of this letter to the members of OD and to Sir John Hunt.

Yours ever

Humphrey

2

SECRET



19 JUL 1979



McLennan,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

17 July 1979

Dear Bryan,

Northern Ireland

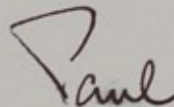
Mike Hopkins sent us a copy of his letter to you of 13 July enclosing a draft letter for the Prime Minister to send to President Carter. As Hopkins suggests, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary would indeed like to give the Embassy in Washington an opportunity to suggest changes to the papers to be enclosed with the Prime Minister's letter. The point could perhaps be dealt with in a covering letter to the Embassy.

As regards the draft letter from the Prime Minister, there are two additional points which we think might be worth making:

- (a) insert the following after the first sentence of the third paragraph. "I myself met Jack Lynch very shortly after taking office, and both Humphrey Atkins and Peter Carrington have had useful talks in Dublin during the past few weeks."
- (b) Add a final paragraph.

"These papers have been kept as short as possible; but you should know that Sir Nicholas Henderson had a very full briefing on the Irish question before taking up his post in Washington, including a visit to Northern Ireland. You may be sure that we shall keep him fully informed as our thinking develops."

Yours ever


P Lever

B G Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street



17 JUL 1874

CONFIDENTIAL



Fue

cc FCO

Ireland 289

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

B.F. 20/7

16 July 1979

Thank you for sending me, with your letter of 13 July, three papers on various aspects of the situation in Northern Ireland which the Prime Minister might send to President Carter in response to his request for background material on the subject.

The Prime Minister has now considered the papers, together with the draft letter to President Carter which you sent me. The Prime Minister thinks that the papers are in general excellent, but she has made the following specific comments on ways in which they might be further improved:-

- (i) The Prime Minister does not consider that the papers on background and present Government policy do justice to the seriousness of terrorist activities in Northern Ireland; she thinks that they should include figures for civilian, RUC and Army casualties and at least a brief description of the tactics used by the terrorists, both in Ulster and in the UK. The Prime Minister thinks that, as they stand, at present, the papers convey the impression that although the security situation is difficult, it is not serious. The Prime Minister suggests that the papers should also contain some indication of where the PIRA's weapons come from, and of who pays for them.
- (ii) The Prime Minister would like to see a reference in the papers to the Border Poll and to its results.
- (iii) The Prime Minister thinks that the papers could usefully be supplemented by a calendar of events, covering Ulster, the UK and the Irish Republic, from November 1969 to the present; this should include the worst terrorist incidents.
- (iv) The Prime Minister would like to see a reference in the papers to the difficulty which the nature of the Border creates in apprehending terrorists and to the fact that there is no extradition treaty with the Irish Republic. She has commented that difficulties with the Republic are the nub of the matter in dealing with terrorism in Northern Ireland.

/ (v) The

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- (v) The Prime Minister has asked whether we believe that all Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland favour unity with the Republic. She thinks it might be worth mentioning in the paper that the last Chief Constable of the RUC was himself a Roman Catholic.
- (vi) On page 2 of the paper on Government policy, the Prime Minister thinks that the point about the UK Government's £800 m. subversion to Northern Ireland could be put more cogently, rather than as little more than a footnote to the paragraph in which it appears.
- (vii) The Prime Minister would like to see a reference in the papers to the problems of local government in Northern Ireland.
- (viii) The Prime Minister would also like to see some reference to the valiant work carried out by the Ulster Volunteer Force.
- (ix) The Prime Minister thinks that the question, covered in the paper on security policy, of special category status for imprisoned terrorists may not be sufficiently understood unless the history of the problem is more fully described and the special status itself better defined.
- (x) In addition, the Prime Minister has raised the following points in detail on the text:-

"The Background"

(a) Page 3, last line: The UK Government should not be described as "resuming" direct rule since it was never formally abandoned.

"Present Government Policy"

(b) Page 2, line 6: More details of "anti-discrimination legislation" needed.

"Security Policy"

(c) Page 2, paragraph 2: Include reference to the favourable findings of the Bennett Committee, which was on the whole complimentary to the Government.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the three papers to be revised as quickly as possible in order to take account of the Prime Minister's comments. It would be helpful if the amended versions could reach me not later than noon on Friday, 20 July.

I am sending a copy of this letter to George Walden (FCO).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

M. W. Hopkins, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE ON FRIDAY
13 JULY 1979. (MR STOWE IN THE CHAIR).

p.a.
rjm
18/7

POLITICS

The Chairman said that the Secretary of State had adopted a careful and cautious approach to the political problems of Northern Ireland and did not intend to set himself an artificial timetable for achieving progress. He had made it clear at the outset that there would be no dramatic or immediate solutions and had embarked on a series of meetings with the major political parties. This initiative would continue in the weeks to come and it was the Secretary of State's intention to maintain momentum by structuring each of his meetings in such a way as to generate further discussion. There were plans for further talks with Mr Fitt, Dr Paisley and Mr Molyneaux. The Secretary of State's approach had been endorsed at OD and had received support in the House of Commons. It was envisaged that a tactical plan would be devised around mid-August which would probably include another visit to Dublin and possibly a trip to the United States. In a brief reference to the European Assembly Elections, the Chairman said that Dr Paisley's large vote had clearly strengthened his personal position and that of the DUP and had not made the Secretary of State's task any easier.

VISIT TO DUBLIN

Mr Marshall reported that the Secretary of State's visit to Dublin on 27 June when the Secretary of State had met the Irish Minister for Foreign Affairs and, significantly, the Irish Minister for Justice, had gone well and that the Secretary of State seemed to have established a personal rapport with both Ministers. On politics, the Irish had said that they understood the Secretary of State's approach and that they were prepared to allow time for his policy to produce results. On security, the Irish were somewhat more receptive than hitherto. It was agreed that both sides were totally committed to the eradication of terrorism and that the efforts of both sides should be improved. The Irish said that the new Task Force had been deployed to the border area although it would not operate there on a permanent basis. The Irish had displayed some sensitivity after the meeting at the Secretary of State's references at his Belfast press conference, and subsequently in the Commons, to the details of security co-operation. It had since been made clear to the Irish that the Secretary of State was under considerable pressure, especially in the House of Commons, to improve security on the border and that there had been a need for something more than generalised policy statements. The FCO said that Lord Carrington had recently visited Dublin to discuss European business with Mr O'Kennedy, who was currently President of the European Council of Ministers. During private discussions, Mr O'Kennedy had said that the Secretary of State's public statements about the Task Force were unhelpful, a point which had been picked up by the Taoiseach at a later meeting. The FCO said that the Taoiseach was himself coming under pressure from the more Republican elements in his party and that this may have led to a reported remark by Mr Lynch at a meeting of the Fianna Fail Parliamentary party that he wanted "an orderly withdrawal of British troops".

FOLLOW-UP TO OD

NIO said that OD had acknowledged and endorsed the Secretary of State's overall authority for the direction of anti-terrorist operations in Northern Ireland. OD had commissioned the Secretary of State to prepare a further paper, in consultation with the Defence Secretary, before the end of Parliamentary recess, taking account of the points made at OD. In accordance with this remit, the Secretary of State would be writing to the Defence Secretary within the next few days, outlining the work which had been put in hand. Reflecting the Secretary of State's view that the approach to security problems should be based on achieving results on the ground, a number of studies were currently being undertaken. An interim report from DCI would go to IPC on 17 July with a view to submission to the Secretary of State in time for discussion with the Chief Constable and the GOC at SRM on 30 July. The proposals in CLF's paper on border crossings were being studied with the same aim of reporting the results to the Secretary of State by 30 July. The review of Force Levels would continue and a work programme was being devised aimed at maintaining pressure on the Irish following the Secretary of State's visit to Dublin. It was also intended that NIO would, in close consultation with other Departments, carry forward the study of other measures, on the lines proposed in the OD paper, with a view to reporting to ONI by mid-September. The projected letter to the Defence Secretary would also refer to a letter which had just been received from the GOC outlining what he considered to be "gaps and weaknesses" in the overall anti-terrorist operation; this was currently being studied. MOD accepted that the focus should be on practical results on the ground. They felt that the paper commissioned by OD would necessitate a continuation of the fruitful consultations between officials in NIO and MOD and believed that the problem of command and control, to which the Defence Secretary had referred at OD, was a matter of very real concern and needed separate examination. The chairman said that the letter which the Secretary of State was writing in the follow-up to OD would indicate the machinery through which the question of command and control might be considered further at official level.

HARLAND & WOLFF

NIO said that the position of Harland & Wolff had been considered as part of the Government's review of British Shipbuilders. As a result, there was now thought to be no prospect of an immediate closure, although a slight reduction in the labour force was a possibility. The yard had enough work for the next two years.

LORD CHANCELLOR'S LETTER

NIO said that the Secretary of State had it in mind to send a short expression of thanks to the Lord Chancellor for his recent letter on possible measures for adoption in Northern Ireland, and indicating that the various points would be carefully considered. This consideration would take place in full consultation with MOD, and FCO as appropriate whose preliminary views would be welcome.

AMENDMENTS TO THE NOTE OF NIOM(79)3 HELD ON 1 JUNE 1979

- (i) Paragraph 4, line 3. Insert 'civilian' after 'fewer'.
- (ii) Paragraph 5, lines 11 and 12. Delete. Replace by:
"troop levels, Ministers might not readily accept
the arguments in favour of withdrawal of a unit in
September."

PRESENT:

MR STOWE(in the chair)
 MR HANNIGAN
 MR MARSHALL
 MISS KELLEY
 MR BUXTON
 MR JONES
 MR BRIDGES
 MR HOUGHTON
 MR HEWITT
 MISS JOHNSTON

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NIO

MR STEPHEN
 MR DROMGOOLE
 MR JACKLING
 COLONEL JONES (MO4)
 MAJOR PHEYSEY (ARMY PR)
 LT COL WAKEMAN (INT)

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MOD

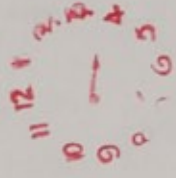
MR NEWINGTON

FCO

MR HEATON

HOME OFFICE

1918 JUL 10 AM 8 1/4



PM's notes on
NIO to BGC re
of 13.7.79



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

I have the following comments about the
o the vvi excellent paper on Northern Ireland.

- 1 The paper gives little idea of the
resources of the terrorist activities, neither
in the numbers of individuals / R.U.C. / soldiers
killed, nor the tactics used, within Ulster and
in the U.K. Anyone reading this paper would
think the situation difficult but not serious.
Nor is there any indication of what the arms
come from nor of where knowledge of things.
- 2 There is no reference to the Border Poll or
its results.
- 3 A calendar of events (across all parts)
from Nov. 69 to now would help. It should
include the most incidents.
- 4 Can we not include something about the
difficulties of ^{collecting} terrorist crossing the border etc

1st that there is no contradiction with
with line. The definition with line are
the rest of the matter is dealing with terrorism.

(5) Do all R.C.'s work with line?
Jim Dalyre would contest that. Is it not
also worth mentioning that the last chief
commander of the R.U.C was himself a Roman
Catholic.

(6) The £800m 'subvention' is not put in
very covert way - the eye should just
run across it - without any impact.

(7) No mention of local government or the
definitely of getting even that.

(8) No mention of the volunteer Ulster Defence Regiment
(? is that the name) which does such valuable work.

(9) Special status for prisoners will not be sufficiently
understood unless better defined and
its history defined.

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Bryan Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

13 July 1979

Dear Bryan

When Mr Atkins saw the Prime Minister last week to discuss Northern Ireland she asked him if he would prepare some material which she could send to President Carter. I understand that President Carter asked for this in the course of his telephone conversation with the Prime Minister on 4 July.

... I enclose a draft letter for the Prime Minister to send covering three papers on various aspects of Northern Ireland. I imagine that the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary will wish to give our Embassy in Washington an opportunity to see these before they are actually delivered to President Carter.

I am sending a copy of this letter and enclosure to George Walden at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Yours sincerely
Mike Hopkins
M W HOPKINS

Prime Minister

I think these papers have been very well done. AM you content with them, and with the draft letter? 13/7

RE

7 6 5 4 3 2
1 12 11 10 9 8

13 JUL 1979

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

To

PRESIDENT CARTER

(Full Postal Address)

Enclosures

Copies to be sent to

(Full Address, if Necessary)

LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PRIME MINISTER
(Name of Signatory)

You asked me last week on the telephone if I could let you have a note of our position on Northern Ireland. I have set this out as briefly as possible in the two enclosed papers, one on the background and one on present Government policy. I am happy that you should show these papers to anybody to whom you think that they might be useful.

The essence of our position today is that as a Government we have a good majority in the House of Commons and 5 years in which to make progress over this problem, and all those directly concerned know this. Our present view is that we can best make progress by patient and persistent negotiation with the parties, rather than by more precipitate action. We have already taken an initiative, in the sense of starting discussions with all those with a concern in the matter; but this does not mean that we expect an early solution. There is a wide gap between the outlook and aspirations of the two parts of the people of Northern Ireland, and it will not easily be bridged.

E.R.

I think that Jack Lynch and his Ministers understand this approach very well. We recognise that they have a legitimate interest in the matter, and in the outcome; but they recognise that the responsibility is ours alone. - They are at one with us that any settlement must have the broad consent of both sides of the community in Northern Ireland. To seek to impose a settlement in the face of opposition from either community would only aggravate and prolong the troubles.

I am also enclosing - because the subject is often a live one in the United States - a short paper on our security policy and its impact on Human Rights in Northern Ireland. I know that Tip O'Neill and others have been quite concerned about this. We have done all we can to encourage understanding of our problems. We have been extremely appreciative of the efforts which he and several of his colleagues have made to reduce the flow of funds from Irish-American sources in the United States to terrorist organisations over here, and more generally to put the record straight on the "Irish question" in those circles. It is an unhappy fact that perspectives on Ireland - and not only in the United States! - are still apt to owe more to the 19th Century than to the facts of the present day world.

THE BACKGROUND

Northern Ireland is that part of the island of Ireland which did not become independent of the United Kingdom in 1921. When the country now known as the Republic of Ireland came into existence in that year approximately one million Protestants in the North were determined not to become part of a predominantly Catholic 'Irish Free State'. Northern Ireland was therefore given its own Parliament with power to legislate over a very wide range of matters so that it became largely self-governing within the United Kingdom.

Unlike the Republic of Ireland, the North is not homogeneous politically or culturally. It is in fact a community divided within itself. It contains not only a million Protestants but also half-a-million Catholics. The two sides are divided not only by religion, but by ethnic origins - the Ulster Scot and the Irish Celt - by culture, and by political aspirations. These divisions, which survive from experiences stretching back far beyond this century, coincide to produce a deep tribal split.

Both communities see themselves as besieged minorities - the Protestants threatened by the Catholic majority in Ireland as a whole; and the Catholics by the Protestant majority in the North. Each seeks to be part of a majority. Nearly all Protestants hold to the union with Great Britain; most Catholics aspire to the unity of Ireland. Politics are dominated by these constitutional issues, rather than by the economic and social questions which are the bread and butter of politics in most countries today.

E.R.

For fifty years after 1921, because the political parties of Northern Ireland themselves reflected the divided community, the Protestants voted for Unionist parties and the Catholics for a succession of parties aspiring to Irish unity. The devolved Parliament was therefore inevitably under the permanent control of the Unionists. Government was the exclusive preserve of one party. The Catholics were excluded from any say in affairs through their political parties, and many felt it deeply. The continued exclusion of Catholics from political power led over the decades to a strong belief that the minority suffered discrimination at the hands of the Protestant-controlled authorities in such matters as housing, jobs and local voting rights. Whatever the truth of the matter may have been (and it is still a bone of contention between the two sides) there can be no doubt of the minority's perception that discrimination occurred.

(A Civil Rights movement emerged in the late 1960s. Its street activities, carried on in the existing atmosphere of sectarian tension, led inexorably to out-breaks of violence, of which the paramilitary organisations - both "Loyalist" (ie Unionist) and Republican - were quick to take advantage. By the summer of 1969 Northern Ireland's small police force was unable to control events satisfactorily. In August the British Army was brought in to assist the police to restore calm in Belfast and Londonderry. But the presence of the Army was soon exploited by the Provisional IRA whose aim was and is to break Northern Ireland's link with the United Kingdom by force. In 1972 - the worst year for violence - the United Kingdom Government had no alternative but to take over complete responsibility for the Province from the local administration in order to control the deteriorating security situation. Since then the principal aims of the United

*This all sounds
A so little
consequence
but it was
a great
moment*

No lip

E.R.

Kingdom Government have been to overcome terrorism, restore law and order, and re-establish a devolved Government, but this time on a basis acceptable to the minority as well as to the majority community.

It was in pursuit of this last principle that the last Conservative Government negotiated successfully with three of the local political parties, including the mainly Catholic SDLP, for the setting up of a power-sharing Executive in 1974. This power-sharing arrangement was, however, rejected by the Provisional IRA who continued their campaign of violence and terrorism.

Chronology.

The parties forming the power-sharing Executive met with the British and Irish Governments in a conference at Sunningdale in late 1973. They agreed on the creation of a Council of Ireland, with equal representation from both the North and South.

Although the Irish Government solemnly accepted Northern Ireland's right to remain a part of the United Kingdom so long as a majority of the Northern Ireland electorate so wished, many Unionists saw and feared the Council of Ireland as a first step towards the political unification of the whole island; and they suspected that the minority would exploit their share in power to this end. The power-sharing Executive assumed office in January 1974; but only five months later, in May, "Loyalist" factions were able (with the help of widespread intimidation) to mobilise massive support for a general strike aimed at the scrapping of the Sunningdale arrangements and new elections. The ordinary economic and social life of the Province came virtually to a standstill. The Executive collapsed and the United Kingdom Government was forced to resume direct rule.

Uc never abandoned rule. The SRS. It remained.

In a further attempt to find a way to a generally acceptable form of devolved government, the United Kingdom Government in 1975 held elections in Northern Ireland for a Constitutional Convention. Since this produced another Unionist-dominated body, its 'majority' report called in its essence for a return to majority rule, with only token recognition of the position of the minority. The Convention Report was rejected by all the major parties at Westminster because it was clearly not acceptable to the minority community. Since then the United Kingdom Government has sought a solution through bilateral discussions with the main political parties in Northern Ireland. Efforts by the Labour Government in its last years were hampered by its minority position at Westminster and by a belief among the Northern Ireland parties that they might get a better deal from a Government with a clear majority and the prospect of a full five year term of office. The present Government qualifies on both these counts. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland has already begun bilateral discussions with the leaders of Northern Ireland's political parties.

PRESENT GOVERNMENT POLICY

Northern Ireland policy is a bi-partisan matter at Westminster: the major parties are at one as to the broad objectives and methods of achieving them.

In the longer term the key point at issue is: should Northern Ireland remain part of the United Kingdom, or should it be united with the Republic of Ireland? British Government policy is based squarely on the principle of self-determination. The majority of people in Northern Ireland today clearly wish to stay as part of the United Kingdom. Parliament has laid it down in a statute that that status can be changed only with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland voting in a plebiscite. Until, therefore, a majority for change emerges the Government would not feel justified in taking any action to alter the present position. This principle of consent is one which is fully accepted by the Government of the Republic.

*Borders now
- date in statute.*

There is at present no early prospect of reconciling the incompatible views of the two sides of the Northern Ireland community on this long-term issue. The Protestant majority cling to continued union with Britain; the Catholic minority aspire to Irish unity. In this situation the British Government has sought to concentrate minds on the more immediate problem of finding a satisfactory structure for the government of Northern Ireland which, while keeping it within the United Kingdom, would not prejudice the wider aspirations of the minority.

*Is it an election
and not a referendum?*

E.P.

Government by Westminster - "Direct Rule" as it is known in Northern Ireland - is an interim device, not a permanent solution. In administering the province HM Government have always sought to be sensitive to local opinion; and they have implemented fully both in the spirit and in the letter, the anti-discrimination legislation which is now the law in Northern Ireland. In recognition of the depressed social and economic conditions, the subvention from public funds, benefitting all the people of the province, and now running at over £800 million a year, is higher per head than in any other part of the United Kingdom; and continuous efforts have been made to create jobs through more investment.

Not to be further

*more detail
+ comparison
with G.B.*

Nevertheless, the people of Northern Ireland are accustomed to their own Government, be they Unionists or members of the minority; and both history and geography point to the need for special arrangements unlike those in the rest of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom Government thus needs to find a way of devolving power to Northern Ireland. As the present Conservative administration put it in their first formal declaration of policy in May, the Government will "seek an acceptable way of restoring to the people of Northern Ireland more control over their own affairs". An "acceptable way" is a way which commands widespread consent within the divided community in Northern Ireland and in the Parliament at Westminster. The British Government is currently seeking, through talks with the parties, how an "acceptable" way forward may be found.

*Local gov
suggestions?*

If it is possible to find a political accommodation to which the major parties can subscribe, the Government believes that it may prove feasible to build on it, so that it might lead thereafter to the resolution of the wider problems. "Consent" is essential,

E.P.

not only for sound democratic reasons, but because, in the present situation in Northern Ireland, any attempt to impose a solution against the wishes of the majority or the minority could lead to boycott or, worse, to an upsurge of renewed violence - for there are Protestant paramilitary organisations as well as the Provisional IRA. Politics and security in Northern Ireland are inextricably interwoven and political moves have to be made in full realisation of the background of actual and potential violence.

E.P.

SECURITY POLICY AND ITS IMPACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The aim of the British Government's security policy in Northern Ireland is to do their utmost to defeat terrorism and to extend the pattern of normal policing throughout the whole Province. These aims are pursued within the framework of the normal criminal law and procedures as far as practicable. Terrorists when caught are prosecuted under the criminal law; and if convicted are imprisoned in the ordinary way. There will be no return to special category status for terrorists claiming political motivation for their crimes; and there is no question of an amnesty.

Handwritten note:
Kilgobbin
Unit → Station

The first responsibility for the implementation of this policy rests upon the police, who are assisted as necessary by the Army. All members of both forces operate strictly within the law, and are individually amenable to the law should they at any time be thought to have transgressed.

There is some concern abroad, as in the United Kingdom, that the quality of regard for Human Rights in Northern Ireland is liable to be diluted as a result of the Government's determination to eliminate terrorism. Without attempting to spell out the wide range of measures taken in recent years with the positive aim of safeguarding human rights there, there are three particular areas of concern which deserve mention.

First, it has been found necessary to modify some normal practices by the enactment of Emergency Legislation. The three most significant changes have probably been: the use of non-jury courts to try terrorist cases (made necessary because it was found that juries were subject to intimidation and justice consequently denied); provision for the executive detention

E.P.

of suspected terrorists (which, however, has not been used for the past 4 years); and a power for the police to hold suspected terrorists for up to 3 days without charge. Because of the emergency character of this legislation, Parliament requires the Government to make a case for its renewal every six months. The Government considers these special arrangements necessary in the present situation, and justified as a counter to the serious denial of human rights represented by the total disregard of the terrorist for the safety of the lives and property of the public at large.

Secondly, there has been concern that the police might be prepared to resort to ill-treatment of suspects in their anxiety to obtain confessions. The Government last year set up a Committee (the Bennett Committee) to investigate police procedures and practice in this area, following a critical report from Amnesty International. This Committee has made a number of recommendations, designed to reduce to a minimum the possibility both of ill-treatment of suspects by the police and of false allegations against the police. The Government have accepted virtually all these recommendations, which are in process of being implemented. All complaints against the police are investigated, and the report of the investigation has to be referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who is an independent officer of the Crown who alone decides whether the evidence justifies the bringing of charges. He has recently considered afresh medical evidence in 15 cases which had led the Bennett Committee to the conclusion that some persons had suffered injuries, which were clearly not self-inflicted, while in police custody. He still has some of these cases under consideration, but in 9 of them has confirmed his view that no prosecution is justified.

*Give some
favourable findings
of the Bennett
committee.
It was
comprehensive
on the whole.*

E.P.

Thirdly, people have been worried about the conditions in which some terrorist prisoners are living in the Maze Prison. A group of Provisional IRA prisoners have chosen to publicise their demand to be accorded a political or prisoner of war status by refusing to obey normal prison rules, which require all prisoners to work and to wear prison clothing. For the past 15 months they have also been refusing to wash or to use toilet facilities. The resultant foul living conditions are entirely self-imposed, and have been created in what is one of the most modern and best equipped prisons in the United Kingdom. The Government is not prepared to grant special "political" status to people who have been properly convicted in the courts of serious criminal offences. To do so would be a step towards their ultimate aim, which is an amnesty for all terrorists; and to encourage the belief that this is attainable would be to encourage them to commit crimes with impunity.

Since they will not conform to the rules which are observed by all other prisoners, it follows that the protestors lose remission and other privileges as a punishment for their refusal to conform. All of this is a direct consequence of their own acts. On the practical level, the authorities do everything possible - such as steam-cleaning of the cells every 9 or 10 days - to alleviate the unpleasantness of the insanitary conditions that the prisoners have themselves brought about.



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

13 July 1979

Dear Sir,

I am replying to your letter of 25 June about the Government's security policy in Northern Ireland.

Let me assure you at the outset that the Government are determined to take effective action to deal with the threat posed by terrorism in Northern Ireland. Our aim is to defeat terrorism and at the same time to extend normal policing throughout the Province so that the community can fully free itself of the terrorists and real progress can be achieved. While we concentrate on building up the strength and effectiveness of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Army will remain in Northern Ireland, at an appropriate level, to assist in the maintenance of law and order. We shall give our full support to the police and the Army in their efforts to protect the people of Northern Ireland from the men of violence. Within this overall policy, Humphrey Atkins has recently undertaken a review of anti-terrorist operations and, as he told the House of Commons on 2 July, we will be seeking fresh progress in three specific areas.

First, we propose to give special attention to the border areas of Northern Ireland. During Humphrey Atkins' recent visit to Dublin he discussed with Irish Ministers the need for more effective joint action against terrorists and it was agreed that improved co-ordination and co-operation between both countries' security forces is essential. Irish Ministers are currently considering specific proposals put forward by the Chief Constable of the RUC aimed at the introduction of improved modes of operation. There

/will be

*Irish cc NIO
Press Office
Original
- G/R*

will be a further meeting soon to review the position: we intend to follow up these matters with determination. I am convinced that the only way to deal with the problems of border security is by full and effective co-operation with the Irish authorities and, while I note your criticisms of the Irish Government, it is our intention to co-operate with them in whatever measures are most likely within our respective, jurisdictions, to bring terrorists to justice.

Secondly, we shall continue to make available all the necessary resources for policing. We have exempted the police force from this year's public expenditure savings exercise and the recruitment freeze as well as making immediately available the final stages of the police pay award. At the same time, we will keep under review the needs of the UDR and the Regular Army. In reply to your comments about the deployment of troops to Hong Kong, I would remind you that the presence of 13,000 regular soldiers in Northern Ireland today, at a time when the services are sorely stretched, is a clear indication of the Government's intention not to let up in our efforts to overcome terrorism. Troop levels continue to be determined in the light of the prevailing security climate, and of our commitments in NATO to the defence of the Western world.

Finally, we have decided to intensify the present intelligence effort in Northern Ireland. Information obtained from intelligence sources is crucial to the task of penetrating and disrupting terrorist organisations. There has already been a significant increase in the number of troops, not all overt or visible, allocated to border areas.

I know that the level of terrorist violence has increased in the first half of the year and that in particular the number of attacks against security force personnel and the number of bomb attacks have risen. I know too that behind the gloomy security statistics lies personal suffering and tragedy. But I believe that our present security policy with the improvements announced by

/Humphrey

Humphrey Atkins early this week, will help to overcome the terrorist threat.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Thatcher

J.A. Kilfedder, Esq., MP.

to



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 July 1979

Dear Mr. Paisley,

Thank you for your letter of 22 June. I am sorry if you found my note unhelpful.

I understand that, since you sent your letter, you have had another chance to discuss the security situation at some length with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and there has also been the Renewal Debate, in which he fully set out the Government's assessment and the policy being followed.

For the moment it seems unlikely that we would have anything to gain from a meeting on security. But you should be in no doubt that the continuing violence in Northern Ireland is a matter of close personal concern to me.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

The Reverend Ian Paisley, M.P.

Ireland. tw

*cc NIO
Rovs office*

tw

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



Ireland.
NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

N J Sanders Esq
10 Downing Street
London SW1

9 July 1979

Dear Nick

REV IAN PAISLEY

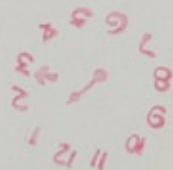
Thank you for your letter of 27 June.

My Secretary of State feels that the Prime Minister should not accede to Mr Paisley's request for a meeting, and I enclose a draft letter suggesting the terms in which the refusal might be couched.

Yours sincerely
Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS

RE



- 9 JUL 1979



DRAFT LETTER FOR SIGNATURE BY THE PRIME MINISTER TO:

The Revd Ian Paisley MP
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Thank you for your letter of 22 June. I am sorry if you found my note unhelpful.

I understand that, since you sent your letter, you have had another chance to discuss the security situation at some length with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and there has also been the Renewal Debate, in which he fully set out the Government's assessment and the policy being followed.

For the moment it seems unlikely that we would have anything to gain from a meeting on security. But you should be in no doubt that the continuing violence in Northern Ireland is a matter of close personal concern to me.



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

9 July 1979

Thank you for your letter of 5 July about the training and equipment of UK troops in Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister has seen and taken note of your letter.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

D. T. Piper, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

GB

4

SECRET

Ref. A09934

PRIME MINISTER

Northern Ireland

(OD(79) 12, 13, 14 and 15)

This will be an important discussion because

- (i) there has not been a collective discussion of Northern Ireland since the Government was formed;
- (ii) there is at the present time an underlying and rather worrying difference of view between the Northern Ireland Office and the Ministry of Defence about the handling of the security situation. This may, or may not, come to the surface at tomorrow's meeting, but in any case I think you ought to be aware of it. It is spelt out in paragraph 3 below and is also relevant to the suggested conclusions in paragraph 7 below.

2. For both these reasons it is desirable that the Committee's conclusions should be as clear as possible about the course which Ministers wish to follow.

3. The Ministry of Defence are concerned that, while the situation on the streets has improved, the hard core of the PIRA has become more professional.

They would like to see tougher security measures but accept that these largely depend upon cross-Border co-operation from the Dublin Government. Accordingly they would like to see a political "initiative" which would secure this support. As a first step they want an interdepartmental study, chaired by the Cabinet Office, of the cross-Border problem. Some people in the MOD would also like to see the appointment of a Resident Minister in Belfast and a Director of Operations. The Northern Ireland Office, on the other hand, tend to see these suggestions as undeserved criticism from soldiers who would like to be let off the leash. More substantively, while they are anxious to make progress, they doubt whether the grounds exist at present for a major political initiative and also whether, even if such grounds existed, there is very much more that the Dublin Government could do, unless the Gardai is much improved, on their side of the Border.

SECRET

4. Having discussed the matter fully with both Departments (I chair the Official Committee on Northern Ireland) I do not think that there is as much between them as some senior officials and generals think. It is however most undesirable for there to be misunderstandings over the cross-Border problem between the NIO and the MOD: and if the way to defuse this is a small working party chaired by the Cabinet Office I think we could take this on provided this is what OD wants. I do not however think you need float the idea unless Mr. Pym himself presses for it (as he is being briefed to do). If however he goes further and suggests the appointment of a Resident Minister in Belfast or a Director of Operations (and he has already canvassed both with Mr. Atkins) I think you ought either to kill both ideas or say that you will reflect on them yourself (they are certainly not suitable for remission to a normal interdepartmental committee). Over the years many of us have felt that the case for a Resident Minister in Belfast is a strong one, but it has always come up against the stumbling block that the Secretary of State of the day feels that his support must lie at Westminster and that he has perforce to commute: I doubt whether Mr. Atkins will feel any differently. The appointment of a Director of Operations would raise great difficulties vis-a-vis the RUC and would be a major reversal of the present policy of giving "primacy to the police".

HANDLING

5. I suggest that you ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland to introduce all his papers together since the first three are inter-connected and there is little which requires discussing on the economic side.

6. The essential questions then are:-

- (a) Do Mr. Atkins's general impressions of the present situation in Northern Ireland accord with those of his colleagues? This will almost certainly prompt Mr. Pym to say that he was profoundly depressed by his recent visit to Belfast, and could lead straight in to a general discussion of the politico/security situation.
- (b) Is the strategy (outlined in paragraphs 5-7 of OD(79) 13) of patient and determined exploration with the political leaders in Northern Ireland going to be regarded as enough of a new political initiative to contain the situation? Mr. Atkins will probably say that none of the political leaders

SECRET

are looking for an initiative at present. But how much time have we got? Is Northern Ireland likely to become a major factor in the United States elections? How much time will the Dublin Government give Mr. Atkins before they start stirring up trouble? Will there be a problem over Army morale unless we are seen to be doing something? On this same question of whether time is working for or against us, how much significance should be attached to Paisley's sweeping victory in the recent Euro-elections? And to rumours that Mr. Lynch may be contemplating retirement? An unprepared initiative which misfires could do great damage: but delay could lead to the development of more extreme views on both North and South of the Border.

- (c) Despite the big drop in civilian casualties since 1973 has the PIRA threat really diminished? Mr. Atkins may say yes: but Mr. Pym is likely to take the view that, although the casualties have diminished in scale, the PIRA threat, particularly in the Border area, has actually grown in terms of sophistication and our ability to cope with it, even though its popular base has shrunk. Is there more we can do on our own account to improve cross-Border security? Or does it depend on help from the Dublin Government? What are the prospects of getting more from them?
- (d) Are the present force levels in Northern Ireland correct? Force levels need to be adjusted both in relation to the demands of the task in Northern Ireland and of more general defence commitments. Does the machinery for making this judgment work satisfactorily?

CONCLUSIONS

7. The Committee seem likely to agree that there is no scope for a major political initiative at the present time: and that Mr. Atkins should continue his talks with the main political leaders and work out specific proposals to be put forward at the right moment. Time may not however be on our side, and you may want the Committee to consider Northern Ireland again after the Summer Recess. In the meantime every effort should be made to ensure that our policies are properly understood in the United States.

SECRET

8. Opinions may be divided on cross-Border security - in which case you could endorse the general policy on law and order but ask that officials, under Cabinet Office chairmanship, should review the security and intelligence arrangements relating to cross-Border security and report to OD.

JH

JOHN HUNT

9th July, 1979



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~938 7052~~ 218 6169

D/S of S 138/79

Prime Minister

You queried

5th July 1979 these points.

pub.

but by 7

Dear Sir,

In your letter of 25th June you said that the Prime Minister was still concerned about some of the points which had been raised with her by Mr P H James in his letter of 6th June about the training and equipment of United Kingdom troops in Northern Ireland.

A replacement for the Self-Loading Rifle has in fact been under consideration for some time and the requirement was endorsed in 1974 when it was envisaged that a replacement would be in service by 1979-80. However, it was subsequently decided to defer the introduction of the new weapon to 1983-84 to enable a standard NATO weapon system to be developed. NATO standardisation tests - in which all NATO countries with a new weapon to offer participated - have just been completed and the results are now undergoing detailed analysis. Whichever weapon is selected, the SLR replacement programme is expected to commence in 1984. The SLR will have to remain in service until then, but, although old, it remains an effective weapon.

5 years for -

The manufacture of urban patrol boots is generally good but, for reasons of cost effectiveness, they are ordered in bulk from civilian manufacturers and due to fluctuating demand it may not always be possible to ensure that sufficient boots of the correct size are available for issue to units before they are posted to Northern Ireland. However, any deficiencies which may occur are rectified by issues from stock when the unit arrives in the Province. It is the exception and not the rule for soldiers to arrive in

! what are they expected to do?

/ Northern ...

B G Cartledge Esq.,
10 Downing Street




2

Northern Ireland without these boots, and the procedures for issuing this relatively new item of equipment have been improved in the light of operational experience. We hope, therefore, that the temporary shortage of certain sizes of boots will not occur again.

I am copying this letter to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office).

Yours sincerely

Allen Piper

(D T PIPER) 

CONFIDENTIAL

cc Master set.

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

P.A. 2/11/97

Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland called on the Prime Minister on 4 July, at 1730 at No. 10, to have a preliminary word about the situation in Northern Ireland in advance of the meeting of OD in the following week.

The Prime Minister first told Mr. Atkins about the telephone conversation which she had just had with President Carter, during which he had asked her if she could provide him with background briefing on Northern Ireland which he could use in the talks which he expected to have with Senator Edward Kennedy and Speaker O'Neill. The Prime Minister asked Mr. Atkins if he would arrange for a suitable paper to be prepared: anything which was for President Carter's eyes only should be contained in a separate note. Mr. Atkins said that he welcomed this opportunity to brief President Carter and would arrange for the paper to be prepared as a matter of urgency.

Mr. Atkins went on to say that he would be submitting a long paper to OD; what he needed from the meeting was the approval of his colleagues for the course of action which he was pursuing. He was approaching his contacts with Northern Ireland politicians in the only way he knew, namely through individual and very private talks. He thought this approach was best and that, providing his talks remained private, he might succeed in persuading some of the politicians to come out of their corners. Mr. Atkins said that he was on very good personal terms both with Ian Paisley and with Gerry Fitt.

* ~ Passage deleted and closed, 40 years,
under a FOI Exemption.

Wayland, 20 October 2009

* In the meantime, a crucial factor was Dublin's attitude: the Border Jurisdiction Act provided a continuing test of Irish intentions and a key case was shortly coming up which would provide an indication of their attitude. Mr. Atkins said that he saw a few glimmers of hope in the situation. The Northern Irish were more prepared to

/ deal with the

deal with the new Conservative Government than they had been with Labour, because they knew that the Conservatives had a five-year term ahead of them. Gerry Fitt still hankered after a Sunningdale solution and power-sharing; but was beginning to accept that this was not any longer a realistic objective.

Mr. Atkins told the Prime Minister that Ian Paisley wanted to be Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. He might be prepared to make some concessions in order to achieve his ambition. Mr. Atkins said that he proposed to ask Mr. Paisley straight out whether he did wish to become Prime Minister and, in the light of Paisley's reply, to gauge what concessions he might be willing to make. The Prime Minister expressed some doubts about this: if Paisley failed to become Prime Minister, he would be likely to withdraw whatever he had conceded. Mr. Atkins said that he thought Paisley would fail but that his ambition might help to loosen up the situation.

Mr. Atkins went on to say that the Ulster Unionists, following their very bad showing in the European elections, were now in disarray; Paisley was the only respected politician among them. The Unionists were, however, beginning to talk about safeguards for the minority, which was a hopeful sign.

Mr. Atkins asked the Prime Minister whether she would be willing to talk to Cardinal Hume about the situation in Northern Ireland. The Prime Minister said that she had already done so, when the Cardinal had called on her shortly after she had taken office and she had not been encouraged by his very naive approach to some aspects of the situation.

Mr. Atkins told the Prime Minister that his recent talks in Dublin had gone well and that the Irish had seemed a little shamefaced about their recent behaviour.

ghl.

SECRET

Top copy on USA, May 1979
(UK/USA Relations)

Ireland P.O. 2
JW
4/7

TRANSCRIPT OF A TELEPHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE PRIME MINISTER
AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ON TUESDAY 4 JULY 1979

Prime Minister: Hello, how are you?

President Carter: Just great. I hope you got home safely.

Prime Minister: Yes, very safely, to a lot to do.

President Carter: And did you have a good trip?

PRIME MINISTER'S

Prime Minister: Very good, no trouble.

PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T38/79T

President Carter: That's good. Were you pleased with the outcome of the Summit?

Prime Minister: Yes, I was, but I was a bit appalled at the way in which we got through it. You know I was a bit disillusioned with summitry.....

President Carter personally be involved a little more in the preparation next time the last few days, because we really wasted half a day or maybe a day. There are three things I would like to discuss with you just to kind of summarise what we discussed privately. We're on an open line so I'll be

Prime Minister:..... you'll be circumspect.

President Carter: I hope that you can expedite getting me your advice after the visit to Rhodesia because Muzorewa's coming over here shortly and I need to have your

Prime Minister: Yes, indeed, I will see to that immediately.

President Carter: OK. Secondly, at the four-party breakfast we discussed the OPEC situation and I need to have some mechanism by which you and I can exchange ideas in a highly confidential way on it, just so you can let me have them - just the mechanism; you might give me your thoughts in a despatch then I'll respond.

/Prime Minister

SECRET

Prime Minister: Right, yes. That shall be done. I think we thought we would only talk to one other person about it. Mine will be Peter Carrington.

President Carter: Can you repeat that please?

Prime Minister: We thought that we'd each of us only talk to one other person in our own. Mine will be Peter Carrington.....

President Carter: I will discuss it with and I presume Lord Carrington with you?

Prime Minister: Yes, that's right.

President Carter: Well, then suppose I let Vance contact Carrington, Lord Carrington.

Prime Minister: Yes. Peter's not yet back because he went to Hong Kong, Delhi and Iraq and he will be returning tomorrow.

President Carter: Well Vance is still in Bali so he'll be a few days. We'll use that mechanism.

Prime Minister: Yes, we will.

President Carter: Thirdly, are you going to send someone out here to exchange letters on the security thing?

Prime Minister: The letter was signed; the person should have exchanged them. If not, I will send someone over. We'll attend to that immediately.

President Carter: OK, well I'll get the letter signed and get it worked out with you through our Foreign Ministers.

Prime Minister: Yes, all right.

President Carter: One other point that I'd like to talk to you briefly about. I've been asked by Senator Kennedy and Chip O'Neill to talk to you briefly about the Northern Ireland question, so that we don't

have another

Prime Minister:..... problem, yes.

President Carter:..altercation as we did with Speaker O'Neill and Vance. Do you have, I know in the campaign both you and Jim avoided that issue.

Prime Minister: We wouldn't have it as a Party issue at all. We'd have been wrong to have had it as a Party issue.

President Carter: Do you have any analysis that's been done within your own Party or Government that you might send to me that I could read over just to describe both the present situation and any prospects for the future.

Prime Minister: I will get one prepared and have it sent over. As a matter of fact my next appointment is with Humphrey Atkins, our Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, so that can be done.

President Carter: I don't have any background knowledge about it and just hearing directly from you about the present situation and prospects for the future would help to guide me..... any restraints on it otherwise I would like to share it confidentially with Senator Kennedy and O'Neill.

Prime Minister: Yes, I'll remember than when drafting it. Anything that's confidential to you I will put separately.

President Carter: Good. Well, right, thank you very much. I hope you have time to get some rest.

Prime Minister: It's not allowed to politicians. But it was very interesting I thought. Well, thank you very much for 'phoning. Best wishes. Goodbye.

President Carter: Goodbye

JWC

CONFIDENTIAL

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DESKBY 281230Z

DUBLIN 281106Z JUN 79

08 TO PM

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 130 OF 28 JUNE

AND TO IMMEDIATE NIO LONDON NIO BELFAST

MY TELECON WITH NEWINGTON, RID, TODAY: VISIT OF SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND.

1. MR ATKINS, ACCOMPANIED BY OFFICIALS, MET THE IRISH FOREIGN MINISTER AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE IN DUBLIN TODAY. THE MEETING WAS DELAYED BY TWO HOURS BECAUSE MR O'KENNEDY WAS DETAINED IN BRUSSELS. THE THREE MINISTERS MET OVER LUNCH AND DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICIALS TOOK PLACE AFTER THAT. IN ALL, THE TALKS LASTED FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS.

2. THE ATMOSPHERE WAS, TO MY MIND, VERY GOOD AND I THINK THINGS HAVE GOT OFF TO A GOOD START. HERE, ONE ALWAYS HAS, HOWEVER, TO ADD A CAUTIONARY NOTE THAT SOMETHING COULD BE SAID TO THE MEDIA OR IN REPLY TO QUESTIONS IN THE DAIL WHICH MIGHT UPSET THINGS.

3. THE USUAL THREE TOPICS, POLITICAL, SECURITY AND ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION WERE DISCUSSED, THE LAST VERY BRIEFLY INDEED BECAUSE OF LACK OF TIME.

4. FROM MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S AIMS AT THIS MEETINGS, HE WAS ABLE TO PUT ACROSS ALL THE POINTS HE WISHED TO MAKE DURING BOTH THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY DISCUSSIONS. THIS TELEGRAM IS NOT A RECORD OF THE TALKS. SOME OF THE MAIN POINTS TO EMERGE ARE OUTLINED BELOW:-

POLITICAL

5. MR ATKINS SAID THE PARTIES IN THE NORTH WERE BACKED INTO CORNERS. HE WISHED TO COAX THEM OUT. HE EMPHASISED THAT WHAT FRIGHTENED THE MAJORITY IN THE NORTH WAS THAT THEY COULD BECOME THE MINORITY SEMICOLON EVERY TIME PEOPLE SPOKE ABOUT THE UNITY OF IRELAND THE UNIONIST TOOK TWO PAGES BACK. HE WENT ON TO DEVELOP THIS THEME AND MENTIONED THAT THE USE OF THE PHRASE QUOTE POWER SHARING UNQUOTE WAS QUOTE FATAL UNQUOTE IN THE NORTHERN CONTEXT. THE PATH WOULD BE LESS STONEY IF PRESSURE WERE NOT PUT ON FROM THE OUTSIDE. TO TAKE AN INITIATIVE TOO SOON WOULD BE THE GREATEST MISTAKE.

CONFIDENTIAL

/6.

CONFIDENTIAL

6. MR O'KENNEDY IN REPLY SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE RULE HAD HAD A MODERATING INFLUENCE. THE IRISH DID NOT EXPECT AN IMMEDIATE INITIATIVE ON THE NORTH. HE CONSIDERED THAT WHAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD SAID ABOUT HIS PRESENT ACTIVITIES WAS PART OF A REASONED LONG-TERM APPROACH AND THUS WAS IN EFFECT AN INITIATIVE. HE STRESSED THAT THE FACT THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD BE IN POWER FOR FIVE YEARS WITH A SECURE MAJORITY WAS VERY IMPORTANT. THE IRISH WERE PREPARED TO SUPPORT THE IDEA, AS THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD EXPRESSED IT, OF SEEKING ANY WAY IN WHICH THE DIFFERING VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE IN THE NORTH COULD BE ACCOMMODATED IN AN ARRANGEMENT.

7. HE WENT ON TO MAKE AN INTERESTING COMMENT ON IRISH UNITY WHEN HE SAID THAT THAT WAS A LONG-TERM POLICY POSITION AND THAT THE IRISH DELIBERATELY AVOIDED OCCASIONS, WHEN THAT WAS POSSIBLE, TO REPEAT THEIR POSITION ON A UNITED IRELAND. THEY HAD, OF COURSE, TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON THE SUBJECT. HE HOPED FOR THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE MOVES TOWARDS RECONCILIATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH.

SECURITY

8. THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID THAT HE STARTED FROM THE POSITION THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS WERE TOTALLY DEDICATED TO THE ERADICATION OF TERRORISM AND THAT WE SHOULD BOTH BE DOING BETTER IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE TERRORISTS.

9. MR COLLINS AGREED WITH THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENT PROFESSIONALISM OF THE PIRA AND AGREED THAT DESPITE QUOTE OUR BEST EFFORTS UNQUOTE WE WERE NOT GETTING ON TOP OF THEM. HE ADMITTED THAT WHILE THE IRISH SECURITY FORCES WERE QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN DONEGAL, THEY WERE LESS SO IN SOUTH ARMAGH AND MONAGHAN, OBSERVING (AS THE IRISH HAVE FREQUENTLY IN THE PAST) THAT THINGS MIGHT BE EASIER IF THERE WERE MORE BRITISH ARMY INVOLVEMENT IN SOUTH ARMAGH. HE THEN WENT ON TO REVEAL THE USUAL IRISH HYPERSENSITIVITY TOWARDS CRITICISM, IMPLIED OR OTHERWISE, BY REFERRING TO PRESS REPORTS SUGGESTING THAT THE IRISH SECURITY FORCES WERE NOT PULLING THEIR WEIGHT AND TO THE LEAKED BRITISH ARMY DOCUMENT.

2

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CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

10. THE SECRETARY OF STATE WELCOMED THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW IRISH TASK FORCE ON THE BORDER AND MADE THE POINT THREE TIMES THAT HE ASSUMED IT WOULD BE A QUOTE CONTINUING OPERATION UNQUOTE. WHILE MR COLLINS DID NOT SPECIFICALLY SAY THAT THAT WAS THE CASE HE DID NOT IN ANY WAY SUGGEST THAT IT WAS NOT. DURING THIS PART OF THE DISCUSSION, HE REVERTED TO THE IDEA THAT MORE BRITISH ARMY INVOLVEMENT WAS NEEDED, ADMITTING AT THE SAME TIME THAT THE IRISH ARMY WAS NOT BEING FIRED AT AS WAS THE CASE WITH OUR SECURITY FORCES.

11. MR ATKINS WELCOMED ALSO THE INFORMATION THAT THE NUMBERS OF GARDAI IN EACH COUNTY WERE BEING INCREASED AND THAT MORE ATTENTION WAS BEING PAID TO THE COLLECTION OF INTELLIGENCE.

12. ON THE QUESTION OF RUC PRESENCE DURING INTERROGATION IN THE REPUBLIC, MR COLLINS REPLIED THAT IF THE ANSWER WERE NO, THE IRISH WERE QUITE PREPARED TO HAVE SOMEONE QUOTE CLOSE BY UNQUOTE BUT NOT INVOLVED IN THE QUESTIONING. THERE IS NOTHING NEW ABOUT THIS EXCEPT FOR THE USE OF THE WORD QUOTE IF UNQUOTE AND THE FACT THAT HE MUTTERED THAT QUOTE WE COULD TEASE IT OUT UNQUOTE. MR COLLINS EMPHASISED THAT A NEGATIVE REPLY SHOULD IN NO WAY BE TAKEN AS IMPLYING LACK OF CO-OPERATION.

13. MR COLLINS' ONLY COMMENT ON THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S QUESTION WHETHER THE IRISH GOVERNMENT MIGHT WISH TO FOLLOW OUR EXAMPLE IN PROSCRIBING THE INLA, WAS TO SAY QUOTE VERY INTERESTING UNQUOTE.

ECONOMIC

14. MR O'KENNEDY SUGGESTED THAT WE SHOULD RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION AND THOUGHT WE SHOULD EXTEND OUR HORIZONS AND LOOK AT WAYS AND MEANS OF JOINT PROMOTIONS BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH ON SUCH THINGS AS TOURISM AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT.

15. THE MEETING ENDED ON A VERY CORDIAL NOTE WHEN MR O'KENNEDY SAID THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD THE GOOD WISHES AND SUPPORT OF THE IRISH WHO KNEW THAT HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO CREATE THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR PEACE AND RECONCILIATION. MR COLLINS ADDED THAT HE MOST SINCERELY HOPED THAT MR ATKINS WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN HIS EFFORTS.

HAYDON

DEPARTMENTAL DIST:

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ADDITIONAL DIST:
NORTHERN IRELAND

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CONFIDENTIAL

GRS 180

UNCLASSIFIED

RS TO PM.

FM DUBLIN 271705Z JUNE 79
TO IMMEDIATE FCO
TELEGRAM NUMBER 129 OF 27 JUNE 79
AND TO NIO BELFAST

MR ATKINS MEETING WITH IRISH MINISTERS

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF JOINT COMMUNIQUE AGREED AT THE CLOSE OF
THE MEETING

BEGINS

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, THE RT. HON.
HUMPHREY ATKINS, M.P., HAD DISCUSSIONS IN DUBLIN TODAY WITH THE
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND, MR
MICHAEL O'KENNEDY, T.D., AND THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, MR GERARD
COLLINS, T.D.

THE MINISTERS DISCUSSED A WIDE RANGE OF TOPICS INCLUDING
THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, SECURITY COOPERATION
AND NORTH/SOUTH ECONOMIC COOPERATION. THE MEETING WAS THE FIRST
BETWEEN THE NEW SECRETARY OF STATE AND MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND.

THE MINISTERS REAFFIRMED THEIR COMMITMENT TO COOPERATIVE
ACTION BY THE IRISH AND BRITISH SECURITY FORCES AGAINST TERRORISM
AND PLEDGED THE SUPPORT OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS TO MEASURES WHICH
WOULD LEAD TO A RESTORATION OF PEACE AND POLITICAL STABILITY.

THE TALKS LASTED FOR TWO AND A HALF HOURS AND WERE CONDUCTED
IN A CORDIAL AND COOPERATIVE ATMOSPHERE. BOTH SIDES LOOK FORWARD
TO FURTHER CONTACT AT AN EARLY DATE.

ENDS

HAYDON

DEPARTMENTAL DISTN.
R.I.D.

ADDITIONAL DISTN.
NORTHERN IRELAND

10/6
B.F. 9/7

27 June 1979

I attach a copy of a letter ^{22/6} the Prime Minister has received from the Reverend Ian Paisley, M.P., following up the earlier correspondence which ended with the Prime Minister's letter to him of 19 June.

I should be grateful for further advice on how the Prime Minister might respond, to reach us here by close of play on Monday 2 July.

Extended to 9/7.

N. J. SANDERS

Joe Pilling, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

203

27 June 1979

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your letter of 22 June. I will place it before the Prime Minister as soon as she returns from Tokyo and you will be sent a reply as soon as possible.

N. J. SANDERS

The Reverend Ian Paisley, M.P.

DSC



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

B/F 9.7.79

25 June 1979

Thank you for sending me, with your letter of 20 June, a draft of a reply which the Prime Minister might send to Mr. P H James about the training and equipment of UK troops in Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister has approved the draft and I enclose a copy of the letter which I have sent today to Mr. James. The Prime Minister remains rather unhappy about some of the points raised with her by Mr. James, although she recognises that lack of resources may be the problem underlying some of them. The Prime Minister has noted, for example, the reference in the enclosure to the reply to Mr. James to the fact that although the Self Loading Rifle is 23 years old, its replacement is only now under consideration. I should be grateful if you would let me know in due course how far this consideration has progressed. The Prime Minister has also noted the reference to production difficulties affecting the prompt issue of urban patrol boots: do these still exist?

I am sending a copy of this letter and enclosure to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

D.T. Piper, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

5



cc: MOD
NIO

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

25 June 1979

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 6 June about the training and equipment of troops in Northern Ireland. Since it would be a matter of serious concern if troops were inadequately prepared for their arduous duties in the Province I should like to respond to the points which you have made in some detail.

It may be helpful if I were to describe the basis of the Northern Ireland training system. The responsibility for deciding on the training required and the time needed to prepare a unit for operations in Northern Ireland rests with the Commanding Officer as a normal function of command. The Northern Ireland Training and Advisory Teams (one in BAOR and one in UKLF) provide training advice and assistance, and the unit's superior Headquarters ensure that the unit is given all the assistance it needs and is fully prepared for its tour. I can assure you that Northern Ireland training is given the highest priority. I understand that The Queen's Own Hussars, whom you mention particularly, have expressed themselves totally satisfied with the training arrangements and believe that the Regiment was fully prepared for its tour in Northern Ireland.

The time which a unit requires for training will depend on its role and previous experience. Non-infantry units are advised to allocate a minimum of eight to ten weeks, although many individuals will commence their training well before this. The Commanding Officer of The Queen's Own Hussars, who are not inexperienced in Northern Ireland duties having completed two successful tours in recent years, allocated ten weeks for the training.

The need to reorganise and train non-infantry units for operations in Northern Ireland is fully appreciated, although in fact many of the qualities needed - alertness, observation, fitness and initiative - are those required of all soldiers, irrespective of role. Non-infantry units are given additional assistance through the attachment of a team from an infantry battalion with recent Northern Ireland experience, and they are advised to allocate more training time than infantry units,

/ I attach

I attach a note on the points raised in the Appendix to your letter about various detailed aspects of equipment and training.

The Prime Minister hopes that this letter will reassure you that the closest attention is given to the training and equipment of needs of troops serving in Northern Ireland. Our soldiers there do an excellent job in very difficult conditions, and they deserve no less.

B. G. CARTLEDGE

P. H. James, Esq.

TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND

1. Age and Serviceability of Self Loading Rifles (SLRs).

The SLR entered service in the British Army in 1956 and we are now considering its replacement. All SLRs are relatively old and well used, although still effective weapons. All weapons are inspected by the armourers of the unit drawing weapons for Northern Ireland and defective weapons are replaced. Each SLR requires an individual gun aperture setting, sufficient to cock the weapon but not so great as to cause too large a recoil. Each weapon is adjusted by the firer to ensure there is no delay in firing. If he is not satisfied the weapon is replaced.

2. Training of SLR for Royal Armoured Corps Recruits.

All soldiers using the SLR in Northern Ireland are given thorough training in its use. Most soldiers will have completed the full eight to ten weeks Northern Ireland training and will have been in possession of their SLRs for this complete period. If for any reason they join the training later, it is the duty of the Squadron Commander to ensure that their weapon handling is of the required standard. There are facilities for training to be continued if necessary in Northern Ireland before the soldiers take up duties.

3. & 4. Urban Patrol Boots.

All units going to Northern Ireland receive a 100% allocation of patrol boots. Both The Queen's Own Hussars (QOH) and the Blues and Royals (RHG/D) received all the boots they demanded. The boots are a relatively new issue and there may have been production difficulties in ensuring their timely arrival. However, even if there were such difficulties there would have been no need for individuals to purchase boots from civilian sources; the standard issue boot is perfectly adequate and was used by units for the first eight years of the Northern Ireland campaign.

5. Gloves.

Until recently Northern Ireland combat gloves were issued only for units completing tours there during winter. Gloves are now issued to all units, and the system will change in September to ensure that units receive their gloves two months before deployment. Units currently receive their gloves on arrival in Northern Ireland; RHG/D received 426 pairs and QOH are receiving 450 pairs.

6. Radios.

A41 radios are not outdated. They continue to be used by some infantry battalions in BAOR. A41 radios supplemented by pocket 'phones for the Urban Dry Training Area phase of training are perfectly adequate to prepare for Northern Ireland. CLANSMAN radios are not used in Belfast, the location of both QOH and RHG/D.

/ 7. Watercannon

7. Watercannon and Nitesun.

The watercannon, which has not been used in the Province for over two years, would be operated by a specialist unit. There is no requirement for units under training to see or use it. There are three Nitesun equipments available in the BAOR area for use by units on Northern Ireland training if required.

8. Individual Weapon Sights (IWS).

Both units were issued with 30 IWS for training.

9. Baton Rounds 45 Grain.

Because of a technical fault the round has been temporarily withdrawn from training. Because of its power this round is seldom used in Northern Ireland, and then only under strictly controlled conditions.

10. Land Rovers and Riot Control Equipment.

These are not in short supply. "Pigs" are only used during the intensive final fortnight's training, which is quite adequate to practice vehicle drills. The vehicles are driven by Royal Corps of Transport drivers both on training and in Northern Ireland.

11. Tin City UDTA.

The use of the Tin City UDTA is a climax to the training for Northern Ireland. Training prior to this takes place in barracks which is as challenging and imaginative as the unit makes it. Indeed some units have found "Tin City" to be an anti-climax after their own in-house training.

12. Accommodation.

A hutted camp is available for units during the winter months and a tented camp is used during the summer. Early May was unfortunately cold this year but it did not prevent QOH completing their training.

13. Mock-Ups and Models.

Units receive large quantities of maps, air photographs, photographs and videotapes of their areas. Additionally, patrol commanders deploy at least one week early to their areas in order to familiarise themselves with the ground. Mock-ups and models are not thought to be necessary.

14. RHG/D Casualties.

Two soldiers of RHG/D were killed by terrorists. While any such casualties are to be deplored, those suffered by RHG/D are not exceptional. The infantry unit in the adjoining area lost three soldiers in the same period.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Parsonage,
17 Cyprus Avenue,
BELFAST BT5 5NT.

22nd June 1979.

The Rt. Hon. The Prime Minister,
Downing Street,
LONDON.

Sean Prime Minister,

Thank you for your note which, being a statement of facts already within my knowledge, was hardly illuminating. Neither does it reassure, either myself or the people of Northern Ireland, that their continuing plight is a matter of your urgent personal attention.

It is for this reason that I have asked to meet you; it is this request which you have ignored in your reply; and it is this request which I would now urge you to answer so that your mind may be conveyed to my electorate.

Sincerely

Ian R.K. Paisley

IAN R.K. PAISLEY.



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1
Telephone 01-~~XXXXXX~~ 218 6169

D/S of S 138/79

20th June 1979

Dear Mr Cartledge,

With your letter of 8th June to Roger Facer you enclosed a copy of one which the Prime Minister had received from a Mr P H James about the training and equipment of United Kingdom troops in Northern Ireland, and you asked for a draft reply.

Since, as you said in your letter of 11th June, the Prime Minister has said that Mr James' letter should be taken "very seriously indeed" the enclosed draft Private Secretary reply examines in detail the points which Mr James raised.

I am copying this letter to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office).

Yours sincerely,

Jill Ferguson

p.p. (D T PIPER)

Bryan Cartledge Esq.,
10 Downing Street

Prime Minister

Content that I should reply in these terms.

JH
22
6

Yes - but -
it is not
that convincing
and I remain
very unhappy about
some of the
points. But the
reason may be
lack of sufficient
resources.

mb

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you for your letter of 6th June about the training and equipment of troops in Northern Ireland. Since it would be a matter of serious concern if troops were inadequately prepared for their arduous duties in the Province I ^{sh}ould like to ^{respond} ~~deal~~ ^{to} in detail with the points which you have made ^{in some detail.}

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/ training ...

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

19 June 1979

Ireland. DS
cc NIO
FCO
MoD
Cab. Off.
Press

Dear Mr. Paisley,

Thank you for your telegram about the outcome of the elections to the European Assembly in Northern Ireland.

I understand that you have already had a discussion with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and that you were able to give him on that occasion a full account of your views on the security situation. Humphrey Atkins is, I understand, expecting to meet you again shortly and would of course be very ready to consider any further points which you may wish to make on that occasion.

*Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher*

The Reverend Ian Paisley, M.P.

tw

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Bryan Cartledge Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

18 June 1979

Dear Bryan

REV IAN PAISLEY

You wrote to Joe Pilling on 12 June asking for advice on Rev Ian Paisley's telegram to the Prime Minister asking for an urgent meeting to discuss the future security of Ulster.

My Secretary of State takes the view that it is neither necessary nor desirable for the Prime Minister to accede to this request. Were she to do so, it could well be difficult to refuse a similar facility to other Northern Ireland Party Leaders. Mr Atkins does not feel that Dr Paisley's recent success in the election to the European Parliament justifies giving him special treatment.

Dr Paisley has already had one talk with my Secretary of State, at which he made a number of comments on the security situation; but the Prime Minister may like to indicate in her reply that Mr Atkins will of course soon be seeing him again and will listen to any further points which Dr Paisley may wish to make.

I am sending copies of this letter to Paul Lever (FCO), Roger Facer (MOD) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely
Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS



18 JUN 1979

From APs/As (B)
Speech by PSE Vice-President Gerry ADAMS at Bodinstown Churchyard
Cereemony - 17 June 1979

MDUKTON
Mr Marshall
PUS/ 7416/ 21 JUN 1979
PUS/ 7051 1 JUN 1979
N.I.O. LQM 'O' BELFAST

PIRA
File
280/288/05
Please

14
22 JUN 1979

Refer to Clifu minute 18/6/79.

BODINSTOWN SPEECH

"I am very proud to be speaking to you here today at the grave of Theobald Wolfe Tone, in this the tenth year of our phase of this struggle. I would like to take this opportunity to salute you all and to salute those who you represent by your presence here in Bodinstown churchyard. To Republican POW's in Free State and British gaols, to friends at home and abroad and especially to the heroic Blanket-men and their comrades on protest in Armagh Women's Prison I extend our warmest salutations.

This year is a special year for Republicans. It is the year in which Pearse is commemorated, the year in which we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the 1st Dail, the centenary of the founding of the Land League, and a year which sees a decade of unremitting and uninterrupted struggle. The twelve months past have been eventful ones. We buried yet more of our comrades, while enemy forces suffered also, yet again, at the hands of the IRA.

War spurred on by British stupidity and created by the British presence, continues.

This year also saw the public failure of Brit efforts to 'criminalise' captured Republicans with the release of the first victorious Blanket-Men, and British Government predictions of an imminent Republican defeat were flatly contradicted by IRA activity and by the publication, only last month, of Secret Document 37. It was also the year in which the British electorate exchanged Tweedle Dum for Tweedle Dee and someone called Atkins was sent across to take care of Northerners, while in this part of our country Lynch's incompetent and conservative regime has proved, as we predicted, to be no different from the Coalition parties.

For the future? Well, the Tories promise us hanging and internment on top of all the other social evils which the

/...

British connection entails. And Fianna Fail promises everything and delivers nothing except more sell outs on national, social, cultural and economic issues. All in all - within both partitioned regimes - nothing has changed. The Haves, both foreign and domestic, continue to control our destinies while the have-nots, the unemployed and poorer workers, are obstructed in their search for happiness, for democratic rights and national freedom. It is fitting therefore, if only for this reason, that we gather here at Tone's grave and examine the part we played - collectively and as individuals, in the past twelve months of struggle.

How do we stand and how does our Movement stand after ten years of war?

Insofar as we remain determined, organised and unbeaten it is relatively true to declare that we are winning. Perhaps if our struggle was merely to secure a British withdrawal or to annex 6 with 26 Counties we could also confidently predict that a continuation of the IRA's War Effort would be sufficient to secure victory for the rest of us. However, as should be well known, the task we, as Republicans, have set ourselves and the ills affecting our people and our country are too complex to be satisfied merely by a British withdrawal or the establishment of a 32-County neo-colonial Free State.

We are not, and have never been, merely a Brits-Out Movement. We seek, as did Tone, to break the British connection because that connection is the never failing source of all our political evils, and we see the breaking of that connection as the necessary first step towards the realisation of national rights and freedom. As Republicans we assert that the realisation of these rights and freedom entails the securing by our people of the control of the means of production, distribution and exchange. We strive, as stated by the 1st Dail, for an Ireland where the Nation's sovereignty extends to all the material possession of the nation, the nation's soil and all its resources, all wealth and all wealth producing processes within the Nation. As Republicans we stand

/...

with the Have-nots against the Haves. We stand with the under-privileged, the unemployed, the workers - the people of no property. We are for the ownership of Ireland by the people of Ireland and we believe that national freedom entails economic and cultural Independence and that one without the other is useless.

We are opposed to big business, to multi-nationalism, to gombeenism, to sectarianism and to the maintenance of a privileged class. We are opposed to all forms and all manifestations of imperialism and capitalism. We stand for an Ireland free, united, socialist and Gaelic. The realisation of these objectives, the solution to our many problems, lies within the re-establishment of the Republic declared in 1916. It cannot be fully re-established solely by military means, for while obstructions and obstacles may be cleared militarily and gains made may be protected militarily the establishment of the Republic we seek needs more than a military alternative to the Establishment's war machine.

For these reasons we need to commence the building of our society now. Within our own movement we need to be continually analysing our weaknesses and building upon our strong points. Our movement needs constructive and thoughtful self-criticism. We also require strong links with those oppressed by economic and social pressures. [Today's circumstances and our objectives dictate the need for the building of an agitational struggle in the 26-Counties, an economic resistance movement, linking up Republicans with other sections of the working class. It needs to be done now.]

It needs to be done now because our most glaring weakness to date, lies in our failure to develop revolutionary politics and to build a strong political alternative to so-called constitutional politics. No amount of rhetoric can hide that fact nor the fact that such a development will come only through a conscious commitment to our objectives, strong discipline and the proper application of correct policies. Such work needs to begin immediately because *mar a dtear i ngeailge Tus maith leath na heibre.*

For example, because of the compromising stance of trade union leaderships we must encourage the independent mobilisation of workers. [The Free State does not hesitate to move against pickets or to use its resources in strike-breaking and black-legging activities. Republicans must never be reluctant to highlight such activities and to support the workers so repressed.] We must ensure that the cause of Ireland becomes the cause of labour, a task neglected since Connolly's time, and we must also ensure that the cause of labour becomes the cause of Ireland.

Abroad we need to continue building up a strong solidarity movement - in America for example, we must continue pointing out that human rights are withheld from us only because national rights are denied to us and that human rights in Ireland will only be achieved when national rights are secured. In Britain the need for the population there to realise that their government has no rights in our country or to our countrymen, is obvious.

These then are the targets we must set ourselves in the year ahead. The IRA has shown its ability to sustain a protracted and hard hitting campaign. That the British military forces face inevitable defeat is obvious. To ensure that that defeat is meaningful we must commence now to educate, agitate and organise. We must mobilise our people on all fronts against the establishment.

The teachings of Lalor, Connolly, Mac Swiney, Mellows and Pearse and Theobald Wolfe Tone, updated if needs be to suit today's conditions, are the teachings of the Republican Movement.

Let us implement these teachings. There is still much work to be done. Let us do it. Then we will have real reason to say - VICTORY TO THE PEOPLE!"

Ireland

PRIME MINISTER

Humphrey Atkins has asked whether he could come to see you for half an hour or so in the fairly near future to give you his personal assessment of the Northern Ireland situation in the light of his consultations so far. He makes it clear that he will not seek any decisions or approval for policies, nor even propose policies at this stage, but he does think it important that he should give you a first-hand account of what he finds. If you agree to this, and it seems a sensible proposition, then I think you would want to see him before the discussion of Northern Ireland policy at OD which is scheduled to take place on 4 July, probably.

Handwritten signature

KRS.

before the meeting on 4 July

Arranged for Wednesday
4 July at 17.00.
No. 10.

14 June 1979



628

Ireland

24

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 June 1979

S/F 15-6-79

THE REVEREND IAN PAISLEY

I enclose a copy of a telegram which has been addressed to the Prime Minister by the Reverend Ian Paisley, asking for an urgent meeting with the Prime Minister and your Secretary of State to discuss the future security of Ulster.

I should be grateful for early advice on how the Prime Minister might respond to Mr. Paisley's message.

I am sending a copy of this letter and enclosure to Paul Lever (FCO), Roger Facer (MOD) and Martin Vile (Cabinet Office).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

J. G. Pilling, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

263681 PO TS G
74581 ITOBE G

11 JUN 79 0630

BT0017 PF0055
BELFAST 75 11 2132



R 12/6

OVERNIGHT
PRIME MINISTER
10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON

HAVING RECEIVED TODAY AN UNDISPUTED MANDATE AS THE LEADER OF ULSTER,
MORE VOTES BEING CAST FOR ME THAN FOR THE OFFICIAL UNIONIST AND ALL
OTHER UNIONIST CANDIDATES PUT TOGETHER I ASK FOR AN URGENT MEETING
WITH YOU AND YOUR SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND TO
DISCUSS THE FUTURE SECURITY OF ULSTER AND THE DEFEAT OF THE IRA.
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH AS FAR AS ULSTER IS CONCERNED
IAN PAISLEY

~~COL 10~~

74581 ITOBE G



Ireland,
file 16

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 June 1979

I sent you, with my letter of 8 June, a copy of a letter which had been addressed to the Prime Minister by Mr. Philip James about the training and equipment of British troops in Northern Ireland.

The Prime Minister has now seen Mr. James' letter and has commented:

"We must take this very seriously indeed."

I am sending a copy of this letter to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

R. L. L. Facer, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

file 16



me VS
~~B/F 20.6.79.~~

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

8 June 1979

I enclose a copy of a letter, and its enclosure, which has been addressed to the Prime Minister by a Mr. P.H. James about the training and equipment of UK troops in Northern Ireland.

I believe that the Prime Minister will wish a reply to go from No. 10, and I should be grateful for a draft suitable either for her signature or for a Private Secretary to send on her behalf. It would be helpful if the draft could reach me not later than 20 June.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Joe Pilling (Northern Ireland Office).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

Roger Facer, Esq.,
Ministry of Defence.

209

8 June 1979

I am writing on the Prime Minister's behalf to thank you for your letter of 6 June about the training and equipment of British troops serving in Northern Ireland.

Your letter is being given attention and a reply will be sent to you as soon as possible.

BGC

P.H. James, Esq.

2



10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

Troops in Northern
Ireland

You will wish to see this letter, which I have acknowledged. I am seeking urgent advice from the MOD and Northern Ireland Office.

BM.
Wa *miss* *take this*
very *seriously* *indeed.*
AM.

8 June 1979

STREETE COURT SCHOOL,
ROOKS NEST, GODSTONE,
SURREY, RH9 8BZ

CONFIDENTIAL

TEL. GODSTONE ⁸⁴/2358.

The Rt. Hon.
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Westminster
London SW1

6th June 1979

Dear Prime Minister,

It appears that some of our troops are being sent to Northern Ireland inadequately trained and ill equipped to combat experienced and well armed I.R.A. terrorists. It seems possible that some of our young soldiers are being maimed and killed through lack of sufficient preparation for their demanding role in Ireland.

After so many years of experience Britain should be in a position to produce the right equipment, training and facilities, but apparently in some instances we are not doing so. This is a disturbing premise.

I do not know if the situation described in the Appendix to this letter is common to a number of units serving in an infantry role in Northern Ireland, but the evidence suggests that this may be so.

I have respected the possible political sensitivity of this information. Please respect those who unknowingly provided it and also the integrity of the regiments concerned. None of the information is classified material and much of it must already be known to any competent representative of the I.R.A. resident in Germany.

/The

The Prime Minister's Office would seem to be a more secure and effective agency than any other for rectifying a situation of this nature. I trust that I have not made an error of judgment in seeking your help in preference to other means.

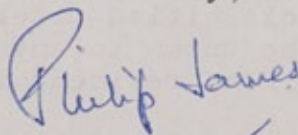
My sole concern in writing this letter is to ensure that our Forces in Northern Ireland receive in the future the best possible training and the right equipment for their most unpleasant role in that unhappy land.

Those of us who have sons, brothers, husbands or close friends serving in Northern Ireland have a very personal interest in our Forces over there.

If quick verification of my integrity is required, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Sir John & Lady Tilney or Sir Gerald Duke have some personal knowledge of my home and family. None of them has any knowledge whatsoever of this letter or of its contents.

No reply is required or expected.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Philip James". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "P".

P. H. James

TRAINING AND EQUIPMENT FOR FORCES IN NORTHERN IRELAND .

An armoured regiment is not trained, equipped or organized to operate in a specialist infantry role in an Urban area; nor are Gunner or Sapper regiments and squadrons. These soldiers are all skilled specialists in their individual spheres and they require considerable re-training and reorganization in order to operate effectively with minimum casualties in a very specialized anti-terrorist and crowd control assignment in Northern Ireland.

Even when a number of Officers and NCOs have had previous experience in Northern Ireland the majority of the soldiers in such units are young and very inexperienced. Eight weeks' "Northern Ireland training", with shortages of equipment and facilities, seems inadequate in times of peace.

The Northern Ireland Training Advisory Team does its best with the facilities and equipment which are made available to it, as do all the regimental Officers and NCOs of every unit under training for Northern Ireland. Thus it was disturbing, for example, to learn that the situation in the Queen's Own Hussars, on first arrival in Northern Ireland, was apparently as follows:

1. The rifles (SLRs) issued to the regiment during their eight weeks' Northern Ireland training were relatively old and very well used weapons. Several had to be exchanged immediately on issue, as being beyond unit repair. When fired on ranges, gas stoppages were frequent (20%) and many rifles had to be set on very low gas aperture settings to enable them to fire at all on semi-automatic. These weapons were issued for subsequent use in Northern Ireland where a fractional delay in firing could well be critical.
2. The basic training course for Armoured Corps recruits does not include training on the SLR rifle. Some soldiers joining the regiment in the weeks preceding departure for Ireland will have been in possession of SLRs for only three or four weeks before having to patrol the streets of Belfast in action against skilled and efficient I.R.A. terrorists. The SLR is a very dangerous weapon, to friend and foe alike, when in the hands of a relatively unskilled and untrained infantry soldier.
3. Almost one third of the soldiers purchased the equivalent of Northern Ireland patrol boots from civilian sources, out of their own pay, to make good deficiencies in the supply of these vital boots through the Army.
4. The Blues & Royals, who have just left Ireland after a full tour, were, shortly before their departure, still not fully equipped with these invaluable issue boots.
5. "Northern Ireland" gloves, also invaluable in riot control duties and on night patrols, were unavailable. Many soldiers purchased civilian equivalents, from their pay, when they were unable to obtain the gloves through the Army before departure from Germany.

6. Soldiers had to use A.41 wireless sets (out-dated and no longer used by the infantry in BAOR) throughout most of their training period. No-one had used the modern wireless sets which are so vital in street communication in Ireland. Even the standard infantry range of 'Clansmen' sets were not available during their training.
7. The soldiers had not practised with, nor seen a demonstration of, Water Cannon or helicopter 'Nitesun' in training.
8. Individual Weapon Sights (image intensified night sights), essential on night patrols, had not been issued, zeroed or used on ranges during training.
9. Soldiers had fired a few baton rounds with 25 grain PVC (rubber bullets), but none had apparently fired the heavier charge 45 grain PVC. Accuracy with these specialist weapons requires considerable practice and the troops have not had this degree of practice.
10. Landrovers, riot shields, riot control equipment, radios, and the invaluable 'Pig' (vehicle) were 'in short supply' throughout the training period. 'Pigs' were only available in the final fortnight.
11. The final fortnight spent in 'Tin City' (Sennelager Training Area) gave the soldiers the only opportunity of practising, patrolling and reacting to incidents in a realistic setting in a simulated Urban situation. Thus, sub units finally had only four days of real preparation for coping with a typical Northern Ireland type situation in a built up area. The next occasion on which these young soldiers have to react may well be under fire with the bare minimum of knowledge and experience.
12. Even after many years of training for Northern Ireland, troops were still housed under canvas, at times with snow on the ground, during the final fortnight of training. Hutted accommodation was 'not available'.
13. No mock-ups or models of the area into which the regiment was due to move on arrival in Ireland were available for briefing or discussion of tactics with junior leaders.
14. If the Blues & Royals received a similar inadequate form of training before their tour in Northern Ireland it is hardly surprising that they suffered casualties in the process of developing into an effective specialist infantry unit. The I.R.A. is all too aware which regiments are highly trained to react vigorously and swiftly, and which may be caught off guard on occasions.

I must stress that no member of the Queen's Own Hussars or the Blues & Royals, nor any serving soldier, was aware of my intention subsequently to record a series of conversations which covered some of the foregoing points; nor were they aware during private conversations, when they answered occasional general questions, that I had become interested in specific information.

Even if some of these points are not completely accurate in every detail (for they are extracts from social conversations) they do suggest that Armoured regiments, and perhaps other regiments too, need a more thorough training in their new role before being despatched on infantry operations in Northern Ireland.

The re-equipment of such units also deserves special consideration in the future, if we intend to maintain faith with our Forces and our commitments in Ireland.

I consider the preparation of some of the young soldiers of the Queen's Own Hussars for service as infantry in Northern Ireland to have been perilously negligent and cursory by normal professional military standards, but that is a personal opinion based on very limited information.

I have written in confidence. Please do not betray that confidence by permitting anything which I have been privileged to hear, through my position as a Headmaster and as a long retired Regular soldier, to rebound on the officers or soldiers in these splendid regiments.

The Queen's Own Hussars and the Blues & Royals are among the finest cavalry regiments in the British Army. The morale and loyalty of all ranks is excellent.

SECRET

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E.R.

NIOM (79)3

COPY NO. 1 of 53

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE ON
FRIDAY 1 JUNE 1979. (MR JANES IN THE CHAIR)

Mr. Howe
[Signature]

POLITICS

The Chairman said that the new Ministerial team were in the process of settling in. The Secretary of State had already met the main political parties in Northern Ireland and had been generally welcomed by them, including the SDLP, although Mr Fitt now seemed to be looking for early grounds for complaint. The parties' attitude during the talks had been coloured by the election results. The DUP had increased their number of seats, although the size of their vote had remained the same as in the 1974 election. The total Unionist vote was virtually unchanged. The SDLP and the Republican Clubs had both lost votes to the IIP, but the Alliance Party, who generally did better in local elections than in general elections, had slightly improved their vote.

The Secretary of State's approach had been to listen rather than talk, and he had indicated quite firmly that he wished to move quietly and that he was not looking for dramatic solutions. It was expected that low-key discussions would continue, and that the Secretary of State would wish to maintain room for manoeuvre until at least the Autumn. His style suggested that he would lean towards the development of a personal rapport with individuals rather than discussions with larger groups.

The next step would probably be a visit to Dublin to meet Mr O'Kennedy. Although it was expected that the Secretary of State would follow his pattern of listening to what others had to say at this early stage, there may also be an opening message for him to deliver. MOD suggested that this might be an opportunity to put down certain markers, for example on cross-border security (see below). The Chairman said that, on the general question, the signs were that the Irish and the Four Horsemen in the USA were prepared to give the new Secretary of State a reasonable honeymoon period and that this had certainly been the conclusion from the Secretary of State's meeting with Mr Moynihan on 31 May.

SECURITY

The Chairman said that the recent period of increased terrorist activity was roughly comparable to that at the beginning of last year, although rather fewer casualties had been sustained on this round. Nevertheless the number of security force casualties in April had been the highest in one month for some years. The situation was quieter now but it remained to be seen how far it would settle down. The possibility of Loyalist reaction had caused some slight concern, but the prospect seemed to have receded for the moment.

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TROOP LEVELS

The Chairman said that discussions were continuing on the question of troop reductions, but that attitudes had inevitably been coloured by the events of the past two months. The GOC had expressed to the Secretary of State grave doubts about the withdrawal of a unit from Belfast, and the RUC had also expressed some reservations. MOD said that their impression from the Defence Secretary's recent visit to Belfast and his briefing by the GOC was that the withdrawal of one unit was likely to be a significant hurdle for both Secretaries of State at this stage in their period of office, and that while the Army Board would no doubt continue to press for a reduction in troop levels, there must be some doubt about the ability to adduce convincing arguments in favour of withdrawal of a unit in September. It should nevertheless be noted that the main reason why units posted to Northern Ireland tended to be understrength was the "turbulence" arising from the heavy manpower commitment imposed by Northern Ireland.

As one of the other factors to be taken into account, the Chairman noted that the marching season was approaching and he recalled that Spearhead had on occasion been deployed for a few days. MOD said that, unlike last year, the arms plot currently provided for an overlap of roulement units in both July and August. More generally, the Chairman said that the public perception of the security situation would also need to be considered; even if the public's appreciation was incorrect, withdrawal of a unit against their judgement would be a difficult political decision. MOD added that the GOC had emphasised to the Defence Secretary that careful account needed to be taken of the way in which troops were used; for example, a greater or lesser degree of co-operation with the South would clearly have implications for troop deployments and the numbers required. It was recalled that improved co-ordination between Intelligence and Operations had been established in Belfast and a study was now proceeding in other areas. It was important to make the most effective use of the security forces and continuing development was needed.

BORDER SECURITY

MOD said that one of the matters about which the Defence Secretary had expressed particular concern following his visit to Northern Ireland was the continuing exploitation of the border by the terrorists, and they had it in mind to propose inter-departmental discussions of officials with a view to putting proposals before Ministers. The Chairman recalled that shortly before the election, and in the light of a series of incidents in which the border had played a part, a message had been sent to the Government of the Republic containing two specific proposals from the Chief Constable. These were the establishment of a specialised crime squad in the South, modelled on the Regional Crime Squads in the North, dedicated to the pursuit of terrorists, and the commencement of joint patrolling on both sides of the border by uniformed police units. The idea had been to take these proposals out of the RUC/Garda net and raise them to Government level; the message had noted that additional resources would be required in the South and that this was a matter for the Irish Government, and had expressed the hope that the Irish would give the proposals serious consideration. To date, however, there had been no response from the Irish. While the Irish could no doubt point to the difficulties which we encountered in the North and contend that we could hardly expect

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them to do better with demonstrably fewer resources, this argument failed to take account of the fact that operations in the North centred on hit and run terrorists while the task in the South was to locate terrorist bases. It was nevertheless clear that little was gained by generalised approaches to the Irish and that it was necessary to be specific on what action we should like the Garda to take. It was for this reason that, as indicated in a recent letter from PUS to the Chief Constable and the GOC, NIO(B) were currently preparing, in discussion with the respective police and military staffs, a detailed assessment of the co-operation obtained from the Garda and what more they might realistically be asked to do, with particular reference to the practical measures flowing from the two proposals mentioned above. As an adjunct to this, and since it was recognised by both NIO and MOD that there was unlikely to be any significant progress on the question of Army to Army communications, the extent to which the Army were apprised of developments in the RUC/Garda panel merited consideration. The NIO impression was that the Army had neither the opportunity to feed in matters prior to meetings of the JCC nor were they briefed on what took place; indeed, it was difficult for NIO themselves to discover what had occurred because of the police sensitivity that these police to police discussions might be jeopardised by a political interest. It was nevertheless a possibility that part of the problem as perceived by the Army would disappear if they knew more of what took place on operational cross border discussions.

It would be reasonable for the Secretary of State to touch upon border security at the planned meeting with Mr O'Kennedy on 15 June, but without going into specifics at this stage and in the expected absence of the Minister for Justice.

ARMS FOR THE RUC

The Chairman reported that a critical article had appeared in the New York Daily News about the supply of American weapons to the RUC, and that Tip O'Neill had commented that it was an intolerable double standard for the US Government to supply these weapons while condemning the raising of funds which went to supply arms to terrorist organisations. News was now coming in that Mr O'Kennedy, the Foreign Minister in the Irish Republic, had expressed agreement with Mr O'Neill's views.

EXTRADITION OF PETER McMULLEN

The FCO said that the Magistrate hearing the case had found that McMullen's crime was one of a political nature and that he should not therefore be extradited. Discussions were continuing on whether or not there should be an appeal, but to the extent that the American legal view was that it would be necessary to prove that the crime was not politically motivated, and that if the appeal failed the case would form a legal precedent, there was little cause for optimism.

SECRET

NI (EMERGENCY PROVISIONS) ACT 1978

A submission to the Secretary of State was being prepared on the renewal of the emergency provisions legislation, covering, inter alia, the recommendations for change from the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights.

THE FARRELL CASE

MOD reported that their Minister of State had written to the Attorney General in favour of an appeal to the House of Lords, and that the Home Secretary had written a personal letter expressing the same view. They asked whether the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland would write in support. The Chairman undertook to consider this.

CRATERING OF ROADS

Counsel's Opinion on the question of damage to property in the Republic arising from cratering operations on the border had now been received, and F&CO had it in mind to call a meeting of the interested departments to discuss next steps. The indications were however that there was a clear liability on HMG in international law, and that there was little option but to pay.

E.R.

Present

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----|
| Mr Janes (in the Chair) |) | |
| Mr Marshall |) | |
| Miss Kelley |) | |
| Mr Buxton |) | NIO |
| Mr Jones |) | |
| Mr Houghton |) | |
| Miss Johnston |) | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|-----|
| Mr Stephen |) | |
| Mr Jackling |) | |
| Mr Rotheram |) | |
| Lt Col Sneyd (DINI) |) | MOD |
| Major Hunt (MO4) |) | |
| Major Pheysey (Army PR) |) | |

| | | |
|--------------|--|------|
| Mr Newington | | F&CO |
|--------------|--|------|

CONFIDENTIAL and PERSONAL



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Principal Private Secretary

29 May 1979

Ireland, file

*cc HO
FCO
CAB. OFF.*

*Subject copy in
PMS meeting with
Cardinal Hume.*

May 79

*Copied also
to master set.*

Visit by Cardinal Hume

Cardinal Hume called on the Prime Minister on Friday afternoon for a personal and informal talk. The Prime Minister would like your Secretary of State to be aware of the main points that arose from the conversation.

Cardinal Hume referred initially to the request which Archbishop O'Fiaich had asked him to make for an interview with the former Prime Minister, Mr. Callaghan. He said he had then advised Archbishop O'Fiaich that any such meeting would be inappropriate during the election period, and that even if it were desirable afterwards, it could only be on the basis that the Archbishop had something specific to say or discuss and that the Prime Minister was given advance warning of it. The Cardinal asked whether Mrs. Thatcher would agree to see Archbishop O'Fiaich on this basis if he renewed his request. The Prime Minister agreed that it was pointless his seeking a meeting without being specific as to its purpose and said that, of course, she could not commit herself until she knew what that purpose was. She wholly agreed however that Cardinal Hume should repeat to Archbishop O'Fiaich what he had already said to him on this matter about the basis of any approach.

Cardinal Hume then referred to his general concern over the Northern Ireland problem, with particular reference to his own involvement with all sorts of people who were interested in Northern Ireland and, in particular, with the large Irish community in London. He expressed particular anxiety on three aspects:

- a. he echoed the worry that had already been expressed about the policy vacuum that had been created by a General Election which had been imminent for so long;
- b. he was concerned about the impact on moderate opinion of reports like the Bennett Report because they seemed to give ground for disquiet among moderate opinion because of alleged (and he emphasised that it was only alleged) ill-treatment and misdemeanour; and

/c. he was

c. he was personally worried in his conscience about certain persons now convicted and in jail because he had doubts about their guilt.

He referred in particular to four IRA prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs who told him that two of their compatriots who were allegedly involved in United Kingdom bombings were, in fact, innocent. His own concern in these cases was that the United Kingdom Government could get into a false position with regard to its policy on human rights if these allegations were true. He had in mind one man in particular who now had T.B., and with a 12-year sentence before him would certainly die in prison, although the Cardinal was morally satisfied of his innocence. The Cardinal emphasised that he was not attacking the Judiciary, nor seeking to "unpick" the Court's verdict, but he thought that a Royal Pardon might be appropriate in such a case. He suggested that he ought to take these matters up again with the Home Secretary.

The Prime Minister said that the Cardinal should certainly take up these cases with Mr. Whitelaw. What the Cardinal said had bothered her but she wondered whether it really was possible to find out the truth in these cases; one guilty man might well plead guilty to other crimes in order to secure an escape for one of his partners. Cardinal Hume emphasised that on all these matters he was only expressing a widespread anxiety: he fully accepted that one could not tamper with the Judiciary, and all that he was saying was that one case led him to be very uneasy.

On Northern Ireland policy generally, the Prime Minister said that it was certainly the Government's intention to make constructive proposals but she was very well aware of all the obstacles that lay before them. She emphasised that it had been necessary to create a new structure of local government in the hope that this would use some of the political energy of the various political groups in Ulster, but it had not worked out that way. It was a problem of will: there were plenty of solutions to all the problems but there was no will, so there was no solution. The Prime Minister reiterated that if Archbishop O'Fiaich wished to come across and talk to her about these matters she would see him either alone or with the Bishop of Derry. The Prime Minister's final comment on the general situation was that if there were no move to a political solution, her fear was that the Province would explode in violence, but it might be that only such an explosion would in fact secure a solution. Cardinal Hume responded by saying that tough measures might be necessary to change the situation but the IRA were very clever at exploiting a situation which they did not wish to see changed.

After the meeting with Cardinal Hume the Prime Minister said that she was concerned that the Cardinal seemed to have been impressed by the line that had been put to him by the IRA prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs about the innocence of their compatriots. She hoped that the Home Secretary would see the Cardinal in response to any approach he made, rather than write to him, and she suggested that it might well be desirable to let the Cardinal see the transcript of evidence on which the persons about whom he was concerned (whom he did not name) had been convicted.

/As regards

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- 3 -

As regards an approach from Archbishop O'Fiaich, the ball now lies in Cardinal Hume's court. If an approach is made, the Prime Minister will, of course, want your Secretary of State's advice on how it should be dealt with.

I am copying this letter to John Chilcot (Home Office), George Walden (Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and to Sir John Hunt.

KRS

Joe Pilling, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

CONFIDENTIAL



Original in GPK
c. PRESS *Ireland*
· Constituent

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

25 May 1979

Thank you for your letter of 22 May, with which you sent a paper from your constituent Mr. Hughes of Melton Mowbray. I was interested to see his views.

As I said in my speech in the House of Commons on 15 May, our most urgent task in Northern Ireland is to find a way to restore to democratically elected representatives of the people of Northern Ireland a substantial measure of control over their own affairs. I also made it clear in that speech that there could be no question of an amnesty for convicted terrorists and that we would give the strongest possible support to the security forces in Northern Ireland in combatting terrorism.

(SGD) MARGARET THATCHER

Michael Latham, Esq., M.P.

VS

Ireland

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Ref. A09455

PRIME MINISTER

Pa. G.M.
95

Northern Ireland

Note
P.M.M.

Northern Ireland is likely to become a more urgent political problem following the Election than it has been for many months past. Though the previous Administration tried to make progress with the Northern Ireland Parties with its so-called "framework" proposals, in practice everybody was marking time in the months before the Election. Both the Unionists and the SDLP believed that they stood to gain more after the Election than before, and so neither was prepared to move off its entrenched positions. The Unionists want to return to full devolved government of the pre-1972 Stormont kind. They are firmly opposed to any kind of power-sharing in government with the minority. The SDLP seek to participate in the government of Northern Ireland and they will resist any moves which, in their view, will make it more difficult for them to achieve their long-term aim of a united Ireland. The impression has built up in Northern Ireland that the period of political inactivity before the Election was a prelude to some new initiative by an incoming Government with the authority of a fresh mandate.

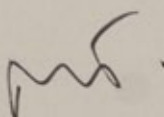
2. Expectations are also high in Dublin and the United States. The Irish Republic Government have in general been reasonably helpful to us over Northern Ireland in the recent past, but they are under constant pressure to take a tougher, more nationalist line. One source of that pressure is from the Irish lobby in the United States. The United States Government come under similar pressure from the same direction. The approach of election year in the United States will add to this pressure; recent speeches by Speaker O'Neill and Governor Carey are a foretaste. So far they too have been helpful in their approach to Northern Ireland. But if we are not seen to be taking some early and positive steps to bring about some progress, it will be increasingly difficult for both the Irish and American Governments not to become more critical in private and in public. This would encourage the SDLP to make more extreme demands; and the Unionists would take fright and in turn become even less disposed to compromise.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

3. There is therefore a clear need for the Government to move into a higher gear. But however high the expectations of a new approach by the Government may be, the reality is that the room for manoeuvre is very tightly constrained. The Northern Ireland Office do not have a new blueprint ready to put to the Parties which is likely to solve everything. They have a number of ideas. Some of these are similar to initiatives that have been tried before and failed: others are more imaginative but more risky, and we may well have to consider these. In this situation the role of the person you choose as Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will be crucial. There will be a short period after he takes office when he will have a stock of political credit. If we are to make any progress, he must use this to the best advantage before the sheer pressure of events compromises him in the eyes of one side or the other.

4. I think this means that the Secretary of State should make rapid contact with the Parties and with the Irish Government. He will need to be firm on law and order but to gain the confidence of both communities: this means that he must be seen to be open-minded and without bias in one direction or the other, while at the same time capable of having ideas of his own. He will need to be highly active in private but ready, at least initially, to take a restrained line in public. If he succeeds in getting things off the ground, he will have to handle complex and possibly protracted negotiations.

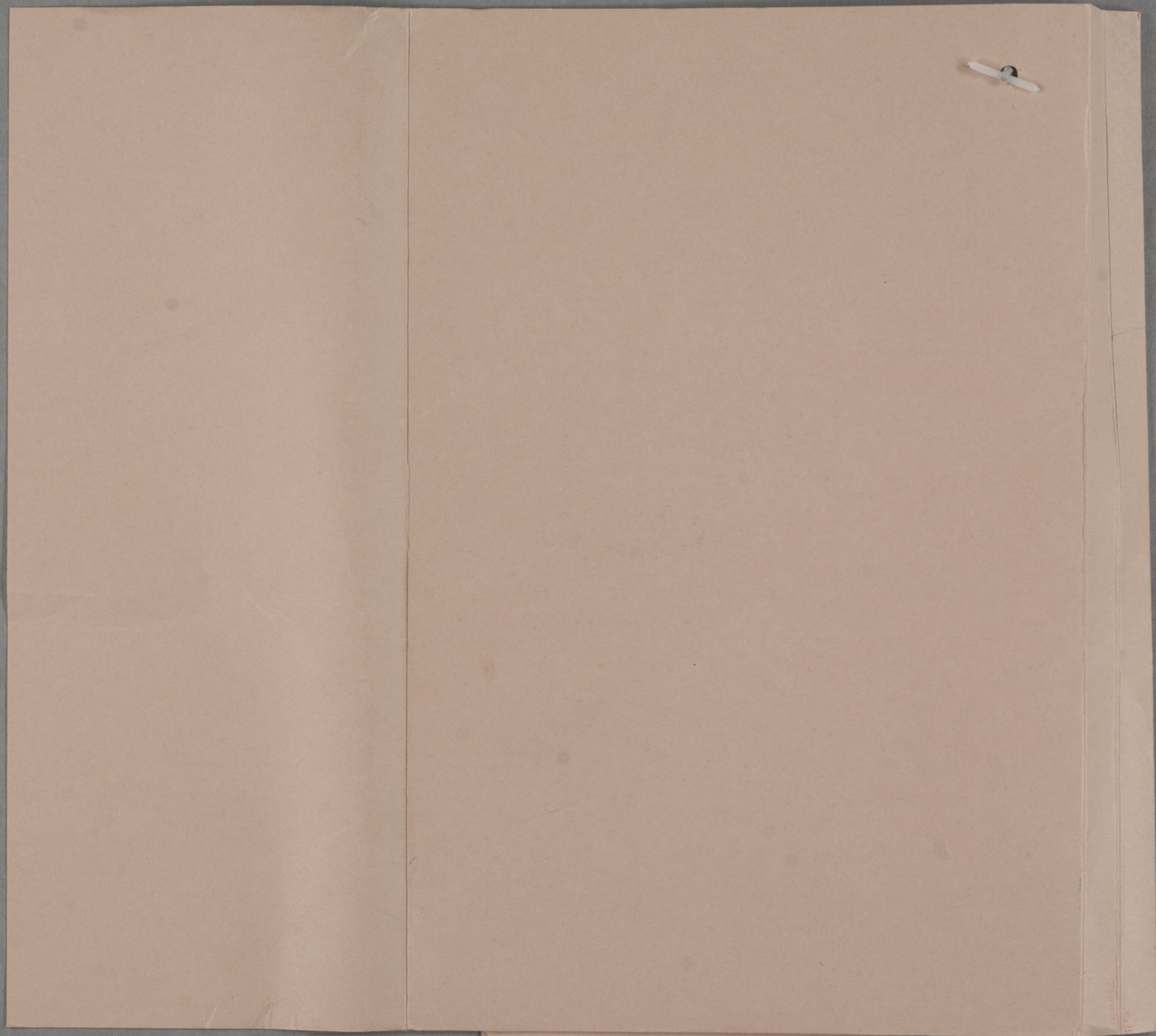
5. When he has completed his initial round of contacts with the parties, the Secretary of State will need to seek your approval for the way he proposes to try to make progress since it will be essential for him to have a clear objective and to be seen to have the full backing of the Cabinet. Because of the nature of the problem he will necessarily have to operate rather more on his own than most Ministers do; and experience shows that Secretaries of State for Northern Ireland can easily get out of touch with their colleagues.



John Hunt
4/5
John Hunt

2nd May 1979





END

Filmed at the National
Archives (TNA) in London

February 2010