

Ireland  
Hunger

GR 330  
CONFIDENTIAL  
DESKBY 160830Z  
FM WASHINGTON 152325Z JUL 81  
TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 2162 OF 15 JULY  
INFO IMMEDIATE UKMIS NEW YORK, NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST, PRIORITY  
DUBLIN.

CONFIDENTIAL

ms

YOUR TELEGRAM NO 1059: NORTHERN IRELAND HUNGER STRIKERS.  
1. WE HAVE TELEPHONED OUR PRINCIPAL CONTACTS WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION AND IN CONGRESS TO INFORM THEM OF MR ATKINS'S STATEMENT. THE IMMEDIATE REACTION HAS BEEN ONE OF RELIEF THAT WE HAVE FOUND A WAY OF INVOLVING A REPUTABLE BODY WHICH COULD HELP BRING THE HUNGER STRIKE TO AN END.

2. OUR INITIATIVE WITH THE RED CROSS WILL HELP HERE. BUT CONGRESS WILL CONTINUE TO SEE THE HUNGER STRIKE ESSENTIALLY AS A PROBLEM WHICH IS UP TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE, EVEN IF WE INVOKE THE AID OF AN OUTSIDE BODY TO HELP US DO SO. THIS MEANS THAT IF THE HUNGER STRIKE IS NOT SETTLED BEFORE THE NEXT DEATH OCCURS OUR ACTION IN BRINGING IN THE ICRC MAY BE TURNED AGAINST US AND PRESENTED BY THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND AND OTHERS AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF PREVARICATION ON OUR PART AND OF UNWILLINGNESS TO MOVE QUICKLY AND DECISIVELY TO SAVE HUMAN LIFE FOR FEAR OF LOSING FACE. AS FAR AS U.S. OPINION IS CONCERNED, THE EXPECTED DATE OF THE NEXT DEATH (AT THE WEEK-END) DOES THEREFORE SET AN UNCOMFORTABLY CLOSE DEADLINE FOR THE ICRC'S ACTIVITIES AND FOR OUR ABILITY TO MAKE THE WHOLLY POSITIVE USE OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT WHICH WE ARE DOING AT THE MOMENT.

3. AS FOR THE GENERAL MOOD HERE, THERE IS NO SIGN OF WEAKENING IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S DESIRE NOT TO INTERVENE, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE COMING UNDER INCREASED PRESSURE TO DO SO. OUR PRINCIPAL DIFFICULTY (APART FROM HARRASSMENT OF OUR STAFF, PARTICULARLY IN NEW YORK AND BOSTON, WHICH IS A GROWING PROBLEM) REMAINS THE ENHANCED STANDING OF NORAID AND THE ATTITUDE OF CONGRESS. IRISH-AMERICAN POLITITICIANS ARE NOT JUST ANGRY WITH US BECAUSE THEY THEMSELVES ARE UNDER PRESSURE (O'NEILL HAS HAD A SIT-IN AT HIS OFFICE IN BOSTON AND KENNEDY IS ALSO BEING BARRACKED.) A NUMBER OF THEM SEEM TO FEEL THAT THEY MUST TAKE SOME ACTION WHICH WILL HURT US IN ORDER TO MAKE US PAY HEED TO THEIR POINT OF VIEW. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY ONE MEMBER OF ZABLOCKI'S STAFF (CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE) THAT SUCH ACTION COULD TAKE THE FORM OF AN ATTEMPT TO BLOCK THE ANNUAL RENEWAL OF CERTAIN GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT DEFENCE CONTRACTS.  
HENDERSON

NORTHERN IRELAND LIMITED

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION  
NORTHERN IRELAND

RID	PS/MR RIDLEY
NAD	
INFORMATION DEPT	PS/PUS
WED	SIR A ACLAND
MAED	CHIEF CLERK
NEWS DEPT	MR ADAMS
SECURITY DEPT	MR BULLARD
PUSD	MR FERGUSSON
PS	LORD N G LENNOY
PS/LPS	MR BRAITHWAITE
PS/MR HURD	

CONFIDENTIAL