

RESTRICTED

FM WASHINGTON 062200Z MAY 81  
 TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
 TELEGRAM NUMBER 1409 OF 6 MAY  
 AND TO NIO BELFAST, NIO LONDON.  
 INFO PRIORITY DUBLIN, BIS NEW YORK.  
 INFO SAVING ALL CG'S IN U.S.

*I will have a draft  
 reply in the weekend box.*

*MS Paul*

## NORTHERN IRELAND HUNGER STRIKE

1. KALICKI (SENATOR KENNEDY'S OFFICE) HAS GIVEN US THE TEXT OF A MESSAGE WHICH THE FOUR HORSEMEN HAVE TELEGRAPHED TO THE PRIME MINISTER (TEXT IN M I F T). THE MESSAGE HAS BEEN RELEASED BY THEM TO THE PRESS HERE.

2. KALICKI EMPHASISED THAT THE MESSAGE REFLECTED THE GENUINE CONCERN OF THE FOUR HORSEMEN AND THAT THEY HAD MADE A REAL EFFORT TO STRIKE A BALANCE. HE URGED US TO NOTE THEIR CONDEMNATION OF VIOLENCE WHICH HE CLAIMED WOULD BE VERY UNPOPULAR WITH THE IRISH AMERICAN COMMUNITY WHO WERE EXERTING ENORMOUS PRESSURE. KALICKI CLAIMED THAT THE MESSAGE WAS MORE MODERATE THAN MOST IRISH AMERICAN REACTION TO SANDS' DEATH. HE ADDED THAT SENATOR KENNEDY AND HIS COLLEAGUES FELT THAT SOME FURTHER CONCESSIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND ON, FOR EXAMPLE, CLOTHING, SUCH AS HAD HELPED TO SETTLE THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE, COULD NOW BE MADE.

3. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT WE ARE DOING OUR BEST HERE, IN NEW YORK AND IN OTHER PARTS OF THE U.S., THROUGH ALL MEANS AT OUR DISPOSAL, TO REFUTE THE VIEW WIDELY HELD IN THE U.S. AND REFLECTED IN THE FOUR HORSEMEN'S MESSAGE THAT THE ISSUE IS ONE OF PRISON DRESS OR PRISON ADMINISTRATION. WE ARE POINTING OUT THAT WHAT IS AT STAKE IS WHETHER SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME OF TERRORISM HAS THE RIGHT TO BE GIVEN SPECIAL TREATMENT AS THOUGHT HE HAD SIMPLY BEEN INVOLVED IN A POLITICAL MOVEMENT: WE ARE RUBBING IT HOME THAT WE DO NOT HAVE POLITICAL PRISONERS ANY MORE THAN DOES THE U S A, WHICH DOES NOT REGARD SOMEONE CONVICTED SAY OF ASSASSINATION OR THE ATTEMPT OF ASSASSINATION AS OTHER THAN A CRIMINAL.

HENDERSON

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