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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,

1
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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.

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