

SECRET AND PERSONAL

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

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NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

GREAT GEORGE STREET,

LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Clive Whitmore Esq
No. 10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

6 July 1981

Dear Clive,

HUNGER STRIKE

I mentioned on the telephone a document describing the course of the various conversations which took place over the weekend with our channel.

I believe you received the gist of them from Mike Pattison last night, after he had spoken to *~~~~~* Their conversation, however, preceded the eighth in the series of calls which is described in paragraphs 40 - 42 of the attached document. This call, and in particular the statement in paragraph 41, is very relevant to the discussion we expect to take place later today.

I should emphasise, however, that this document simply records what has taken place and does not seek to provide an assessment of it; this is especially important as far as paragraph 41 is concerned.

Yours,
S W Boys Smith

S W BOYS SMITH

~ Name deleted and retained under Section 3(4).

Orwayland.

27 October 2011

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ORIG: AO P 31/B

INFO: C/UK SBO/6 ACSS SECT

FILE: YP/30614

S E C R E T

IN DECADEL SECRET AND PERSONAL FOR DCI AND HAG

IN SNUFFBOX SECRET AND PERSONAL FOR DIRECTOR F

SOON

1. OVER THE WEEKEND 4 TO 6 JULY, THERE HAVE BEEN EIGHT TELEPHONE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN SOON AND P 31/B (810996) IN ADDITION TO THAT COVERED BY LONDON'S TELS TO DECADEL 226 AND 227 OF 4 JULY: THE FULL DETAIL OF THESE CALLS HAS BEEN PASSED THROUGHOUT THE WEEKEND TO HAG, AND PARTS TO DCI, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF CALL NUMBER EIGHT. THE FOLLOWING REPRESENTS A DETAILED ACCOUNT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THESE EIGHT CALLS.

BEGINS

CALL NO 1 - 2200-2312, 4 JULY

2. SOON REPORTED THAT A GREAT DEAL OF CONFUSION HAS ARISEN IN PROVISIONAL CIRCLES FROM THE IMPRESSION GIVEN BY THE ICJP /WHAT...

THAT THERE IS EVERY INDICATION OF MOVEMENT BY HMG. SINCE NO CONFIRMATION HAS BEEN ISSUED ON THE SOON CHANNEL, THE PROVISIONALS TEND NOT TO ACCEPT THIS.

3. SOON THEN DESCRIBED THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE ISSUE OF THE PRISONERS' STATEMENT OF 4 JULY. HE SAID THAT THE STATEMENT HAD BEEN ISSUED INDEPENDENTLY BY THE PRISONERS IN THE MAZE AND THE TIMING CAME AS A SURPRISE TO SENIOR PROVISIONALS OUTSIDE. THE CONTENT OF THE STATEMENT REPRESENTED A LINE PREVIOUSLY AGREED BETWEEN THE PRISONERS AND THE PROVISIONALS.

4. UNFORTUNATELY, THE TIMING OF THE RELEASE OF THE STATEMENT HAD CAUGHT THE PROVISIONALS UNAWARE. THE SENIOR MEMBERS, AND SOON CLAIMED THERE WERE EIGHT, WERE WIDELY DISPERSED. ONLY ADAMS AND O'BRADY WERE READILY AVAILABLE. THEY WERE REGROUPING AND SOON'S PROVISIONAL CONTACT HAD INSTRUCTED HIM TO STAND BY.

5. SOON SAW TWO IMMEDIATE PROBLEMS. FIRSTLY, IN THE PERIOD FROM SATURDAY AFTERNOON TO MONDAY MORNING, THE PROVISIONALS WERE OUT OF CONTACT WITH THE PRISONERS. NORMALLY THIS WOULD NOT MATTER, BUT IT BECOMES IMPORTANT WHEN RAPID ACTION IS REQUIRED. SECONDLY, IF THE PROVISIONALS MAKE CONTACT THROUGH THE SOON CHANNEL, IT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR A GENERALISED RESPONSE TO BE AVAILABLE.

6. SOON HAD RUNG PRIOR TO A REQUEST FROM THE PROVISIONALS TO DO SO IN ORDER TO PREPARE HMG FOR THIS SITUATION. FIRSTLY, HE ASKED WHETHER ANY WAY COULD BE FOUND OF GETTING COMMUNICATIONS IN AND OUT OF THE PRISON IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN SATURDAY /AFTERNOON ...

AFTERNOON AND MONDAY MORNING. SECONDLY, HE STATED THAT A MEETING OF THE SENIOR PROVISIONALS HAD TAKEN PLACE ON 28 JUNE AT WHICH WHAT THEY CONSIDERED REALISTIC CONDITIONS FOR THE ENDING OF THE HUNGER STRIKE HAD BEEN DISCUSSED. SOON BELIEVED THAT THE THINKING OF THE PROVISIONAL LEADERSHIP WAS AS FOLLOWS.

7. IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE ENDING OF THE HUNGER STRIKE, CONCESSIONS WOULD BE REQUIRED ON OWN CLOTHES, PARCELS AND VISITS. THIS, HE SAID, WOULD PROVIDE THE PROVISIONALS WITH A FACE SAVING WAY OUT. THE REMAINING DEMANDS DEALING WITH WORK AND ASSOCIATION COULD BE SUBJECT TO A SERIES OF DISCUSSIONS AFTER THE ENDING OF THE HUNGER STRIKE. HE STRESSED THAT THE PROVISIONALS' POSITION WAS, IN HIS OPINION, REPRESENTED BY THE PRISONERS' STATEMENT. THUS, IF THE ARRANGEMENTS DETAILED IN THIS STATEMENT WERE ACCEPTABLE TO HMG AND IMMEDIATE CONCESSIONS COULD BE MADE ON CLOTHING, PARCELS AND VISIT, HE WAS OPTIMISTIC.

8. SINCE THE STATEMENT HAD CAUGHT THE PROVISIONALS ON THE HOP, THEY WOULD BE SUSPICIOUS THAT THIS HAD BEEN ARRANGED IN SOME WAY OVER THE WEEKEND TO AGGRAVATE THE POSITION. HE SAID THAT THE PROVISIONALS WOULD RING AND ASK FOR CLARIFICATION AND THAT IF NO ANSWER WAS AVAILABLE THIS WOULD HEIGHTEN THEIR SUSPICIONS.

9. HE LEFT US WITH TWO QUESTIONS. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR A VISIT TO BE ARRANGED TO THE PRISON BY THE PROVISIONALS OVER THE WEEKEND, AND WHY HAD THE SOON CHANNEL NOT BEEN ACTIVATED TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION?

/10. ...

CALL NO 2 - 0230-0500, 5 JULY

10. SOON BEGAN BY RESTATING THE PROVISIONALS' DISORGANISED POSITION. HE POINTED OUT THAT TO TAKE A DECISION OF THIS MAGNITUDE REQUIRED THE PRESENCE OF ALL EIGHT MEMBERS. THEY WOULD BE UNWILLING TO TAKE ANY DECISION WITHOUT A FULL COMPLEMENT.

11. THE ISSUE OF CLOTHING WOULD BE THE ONE AREA WHERE TESTING OF HMG'S INTENTIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE. THE MAJORITY OF THE REMAINDER OF THE CONVERSATION WAS TAKEN UP WITH HIS VIEWS ON HOW THE MECHANISM FOR ISSUING OF CLOTHING SHOULD OCCUR. HE PRODUCED TWO OR THREE SCENARIOS OVER A PERIOD OF AN HOUR, NONE OF WHICH WERE COMPATIBLE WITH THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE HUNGER STRIKE MUST BE CALLED OFF BEFORE ANY ACTION COULD BE EXPECTED. WE REPEATEDLY STRESSED THIS POINT. AFTER A LONG AND GENERALLY UNREWARDING DISCUSSION OVER THE MINUTE DETAILS OF THE ISSUE OF CLOTHING, WE SUGGESTED THAT THE PROBABLE LINE WOULD BE THAT THE EIGHT HUNGER STRIKERS WOULD BE ISSUED WITH THEIR OWN CLOTHES IMMEDIATELY ON TERMINATING THEIR PROTEST. THE REMAINING PROTESTING PRISONERS WOULD RECEIVE THEIR CLOTHES AT SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE.

12. THIS LED SOON TO POINT OUT WHAT HE CONSIDERED TO BE A GENUINE MISUNDERSTANDING BY HMG. HE SAID THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO SEPARATE THE HUNGER STRIKERS FROM THE REMAINING PROTESTING PRISONERS. HE SAID THERE WAS AN AGREEMENT THAT THE HUNGER STRIKERS ARE STANDING AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TOTAL PRISONER STRENGTH AND THAT THEY SHOULD NOT RECEIVE PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT. IF IT WAS ONLY PRACTICAL TO ISSUE CLOTHING TO A SMALL GROUP AT FIRST, THIS SHOULD NOT BE TOTALLY COMPRISED OF HUNGER STRIKERS.

/13.

13. HE SAID THAT ONE OF THE MAJOR DIFFICULTIES OVER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT AT THE END OF THE LAST HUNGER STRIKE HAD BEEN THE ATTITUDE OF SOME OF THE PRISON OFFICERS. HE SAID THAT THE PROVISIONALS BELIEVED THAT HMG HAD BEEN SINCERE IN TRYING TO IMPLEMENT THEIR SIDE OF THE AGREEMENT. THE BREAKDOWN HAD OCCURRED BECAUSE SOME OF THE PRISONERS HAD BEEN HARASSED BY SOME OF THE PRISON OFFICERS. HE, THEREFORE, REQUESTED THAT IN HMG'S PROPOSALS SHOULD BE INCLUDED AN INSTRUCTION TO THE GOVERNOR OF THE PRISON TO ENCOURAGE FLEXIBILITY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ANY AGREEMENT. IN RESPONSE TO HIS TWO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS RAISED IN THE FIRST PHONE CALL, WE SAID THAT HMG WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO A VISIT TO THE PRISON BUT THAT WE HOPED THAT THE PROVISIONALS WOULD PROPOSE A REPRESENTATIVE WHO WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. IN RESPONSE TO HIS QUESTION ABOUT COMMUNICATIONS ON THE SOON CHANNEL WE EXPLAINED THAT WE HAD ONLY EVER INITIATED CALLS IN RESPONSE TO QUERIES OR REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION.

CALL NO 3 - 1045-1125, 5 JULY

14. SOON RANG TO SAY THAT THE PROVISIONALS WERE RAPIDLY REGROUPING AND THAT HE EXPECTED THAT THEY WOULD MEET BETWEEN 1200 AND 1500 THAT AFTERNOON.

15. HE THEN RETURNED TO THE SUBJECT OF THE PRISON VISIT. HE SAID THAT THE NUMBER OF SENIOR PROVISIONALS WITH A FULL GRASP OF THE SITUATION INCLUDING KNOWLEDGE OF THE SOON CHANNEL AND THE STATUS TO ENABLE THEM TO ACT AUTHORITATIVELY WAS VERY LIMITED. HE SAID THAT IF THE KEY TO ACCEPTING ANY AGREEMENT WAS PERSUASION, EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE, THEN THAT IS NOT AVAILABLE OUTSIDE THE VERY UPPER ECHELONS OF THE PROVISIONAL

MOVEMENT. IT IS NOT EVEN AVAILABLE AS OF RIGHT TO THE ENTIRE PSF LEADERSHIP. HE SAID THAT THIS POSES A PROBLEM. IN RESPONSE TO OUR REQUEST FOR SUGGESTIONS OF PROVISIONALS WHO WOULD FIT THIS DESCRIPTION, SOON PRODUCED MORRISON, ADAMS AND MCGUINNESS AS THE ONLY THREE CANDIDATES. AFTER CONSULTATION WITH HAG, WE SAID THAT WE WOULD ACCEPT MORRISON BUT WOULD ON NO ACCOUNT ACCEPT EITHER ADAMS OR MCGUINNESS. SOON SAID THAT THIS WAS UNDERSTOOD BUT THAT A PROBLEM WITH THIS WAS THAT MORRISON WAS RUMOURED TO BE IN THE USA. THE PROVISIONALS WERE, HOWEVER, TAKING STEPS TO TRY AND FIND HIM.

16. SOON THEN PROCEEDED TO OFFER THE PROVISIONALS' VIEW OF THE ICJP. HE SAID THAT DETERMINATION STILL EXISTED NOT TO LET THE ICJP ACT AS MEDIATOR. AS A CONSEQUENCE, THERE WAS A BODY OF OPINION WITHIN THE PROVISIONAL LEADERSHIP, WHICH WAS UNAWARE OF THE SOON CHANNEL AND, THEREFORE, TOOK A DESTRUCTIVE VIEW TOWARDS ANY CURRENT PROPOSALS SINCE THEY BELIEVED THESE WOULD INVOLVE THE ICJP.

17. SOON'S PROVISIONAL CONTACT HAD LED HIM TO BELIEVE THAT THE PROVISIONALS WOULD COMPARE THE STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE PRISONERS TO FIND COMMON GROUND. THERE WOULD THEN NEED TO BE CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION GIVEN TO DETAIL, AND SOON SAID THAT THIS WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT THROUGH HIS CHANNEL BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE COMMUNICATIONS. HE SAID THAT IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO CONSIDER WAYS ROUND THIS EITHER VIA SOME WRITTEN COMMUNICATION DELIVERED TO SOON OR VIA A MEETING.

18. SOON SAID THAT AT 0800 THAT MORNING HE WAS FACED WITH THE STATEMENT BY THE PROVISIONALS THAT HMG WAS INSINCERE. HE HAD /REPLIED ...

PAGE SEVEN ADDRESSEE ONLY S E C R E T

REPLIED THAT UNLESS THAT BELIEF WAS TOTALLY DISPELLED, HE WAS GOING ON HOLIDAY. HE ADDED THAT IF HE HAD NOT MAINTAINED HIS INDEPENDENCE FROM THE PROVISIONALS, THIS WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE. THE STRENGTH OF HIS REPLY HAD, HE SAID, WON THE DAY.

19. HE CONCLUDED BY SAYING THAT THE NEXT CONTACT WOULD BE BETWEEN 1600 AND 1800 THAT DAY AT THE EARLIEST AND THIS WOULD BE FOR PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ONLY.

CALL NO 4 - 1400-1405, 5 JULY

20. SOON MADE A SHORT CALL TO SAY THAT MORRISON HAD BEEN LOCATED AND HAD AGREED TO VISIT THE PRISON, BUT THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT THIS SHOULD TAKE PLACE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE. SOON ALSO SAID THAT IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT MORRISON SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO SEE THE HUNGER STRIKERS, MACFARLANE AND ANY OTHER PRISONERS.

21. AFTER RAPID CONSULTATION WITH HAG, WE RANG BACK AT 1430 TO SAY THAT THIS WAS ACCEPTABLE PROVIDED THAT MORRISON UNDERSTOOD THAT HE WOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO SEE MACFARLANE AND THE HUNGER STRIKERS TOGETHER. THIS WAS AGREED.

22. SOON THEN INDICATED THAT MCGUINNESS HAD JUST ARRIVED. HE SAID THAT TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE AND ASKED WHAT THE CURRENT HMG POSITION WAS. WE EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS IMPORTANT, BEFORE DRAFTING ANY DOCUMENT FOR CONSIDERATION BY MINISTERS, THAT WE SHOULD POSSESS THE PROVISIONALS' VIEW. SOON THEN UNDERTOOK TO SEEK CLEAR VIEWS ON THEIR POSITION, WHICH WOULD BE RELAYED TO US LATER AFTER DISCUSSION IN THE LIGHT OF MORRISON'S VISIT.

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CALL NO 5 - 1500-1620, 5 JULY

23. IN THE MIDDLE OF A DISCUSSION WITH HAG, CONCERNING THE CLASH OF VISITS BY MORRISON AND THE ICJP TO THE MAZE, SOON RANG BACK. WE BEGAN BY TRYING TO GET HIM TO DELAY MORRISON BUT HE SAID THAT IT WAS NOW TOO LATE TO DO SO. HE MADE THE POINT THAT HMG WERE CONSIDERED AS HAVING BEEN VERY, VERY HELPFUL IN ALLOWING THE VISIT.

24. SOON THEN SAID THAT IN THE OPINION OF HIS PROVISIONAL CONTACT, THE PROVISIONALS WOULD BE WORKING FROM THE PRISONERS' STATEMENT IN TERMS OF ASSOCIATION, REMISSION, VISITS, PARCELS AND WORK. IT WILL BE ALL IMPORTANT, HE SAID, TO GET THE CLOTHING AND TIMING RIGHT.

25. SOON BELIEVED THAT HE HAD NOW BEEN ABLE TO PERSUADE THE PROVISIONALS THAT HMG IS NOT INTERESTED IN ANY SETTLEMENT UNLESS THE HUNGER STRIKE IS CALLED OFF FIRST. HE WAS FAIRLY CONFIDENT THAT THIS WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT A MAJOR PROBLEM WAS THAT IF PANIC SETS IN, THIS WILL BE THE FIRST POINT TO BE ABANDONED. THEREFORE, IT WAS ESSENTIAL THAT THERE SHOULD BE BACKUP SYSTEMS.

26. WHEN WE QUERIED WHAT THIS MEANT, HE SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT IF A FURTHER STATEMENT WAS TO BE PRODUCED, IT WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IF THE PROVISIONALS COULD SEE IT BEFORE PUBLICATION. HE SUGGESTED THAT THIS COULD BEST BE ACHIEVED BY A HANDOVER AT A MEETING BETWEEN THE TWO ENDS OF THE SCON CHANNEL. HE SAID THAT GIVEN THE PROVISIONALS' WARINESS OF HMG'S POSITION, EVEN TRIVIAL SETBACKS COULD RESULT IN MAJOR DISASTERS. HE ASKED WHAT CONTINGENCIES WERE BEING CONSIDERED /ABOUT ...

ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLOTHING AFTER THE HUNGER STRIKE IS CALLED OFF. WE REPLIED THAT ALTHOUGH IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE SOME IDEA OF WHAT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PROVISIONALS, THERE WAS LITTLE POINT IN CONSIDERING THIS WHILE THEIR VIEW ON THE NATURE OF A SETTLEMENT WAS UNCLEAR. NEVERTHELESS, SOON INSISTED ON SUGGESTING THE FOLLOWING POSSIBILITY.

27. WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE FOR A SMALL NUMBER SUCH AS TEN TO TWENTY PARCELS OF CLOTHES TO BE DELIVERED TO THE PRISON IN ADVANCE AND STORED BY PRISON OFFICIALS SO THAT WHEN THE HUNGER STRIKE WAS CALLED OFF THESE COULD BE IMMEDIATELY ISSUED TO AN APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF PRISONERS. HE SAID THAT IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CLOTHING SHOULD BE SEEN TO BE OPERATING AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE HUNGER STRIKE WAS ENDED.

28. IN THIS WAY, THE PROVISIONALS AND THE PRISONERS WOULD BE REASSURED OF HMG'S MOTIVES AND THIS WOULD PREVENT DISILLUSIONMENT AT AN EARLY STAGE.

29. SOON THEN SAID THAT IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL IF THERE COULD BE SOME MENTION IN HMG'S PROPOSALS OF THE PRISON AUTHORITIES ALLOWING A GRADUAL RETURN TO NORMAL CONDITIONS. HE REFERRED AGAIN TO THE HARASSMENT OF PRISONERS MENTIONED IN PARAGRAPHE 13.

CALL NO 6 - 1750-1817, 5 JULY

30. AT THE OUTSET SOON INDICATED BY A PREARRANGED CODE THAT HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PROVISIONALS. HE HAD PREVIOUSLY SUGGESTED THAT IN THIS SITUATION WE SHOULD /ADOPT ...

ADOPT A HARD LINE.

31. HE SAID THAT A MAJOR PROBLEM HAS BEEN THE MONITORING OF THE POSITION IN THE PRISON CURRENTLY BEING CARRIED OUT BY MORRISON. HE EXPLAINED THAT SINCE THE PROVISIONALS' REPRESENTATIVES WERE TRYING TO CONVINCING THE PRISONERS, THE PROVISIONALS SUPPORTERS AND THE RELATIVES, THIS COULD CAUSE PROBLEMS WHEN DELEGATED TO ONE MAN ALONE. IN ORDER TO EASE THIS SITUATION AND TO ENABLE ALL PARTIES TO BE SURE THAT THE POSITION TAKEN BY MORRISON WAS CORRECT AND PROPERLY INTERPRETED, HE CONSIDERED IT IMPORTANT THAT A SECOND REPRESENTATIVE SHOULD ACCOMPANY MORRISON.

32. WE SAID WE WOULD HAVE TO CONSULT ON THIS MATTER AND WE ASKED WHO THE PROVISIONALS HAD IN MIND. SOON IMMEDIATELY REPLIED THAT MCGUINNESS SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE PRISON. WE SAID THAT WE WERE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THAT THE POSITION OF HMG WOULD BE THAT THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. WE POINTED OUT THAT THEY HAD BEEN AS HELPFUL AS POSSIBLE AT SHORT NOTICE TO ALLOW MORRISON TO ENTER AND WE EXPLAINED TO SOON THAT WHILE SENIOR PROVISIONAL PERSONALITIES COULD BE ACCEPTABLE, THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO CHANCE OF SENIOR PIRA PERSONALITIES BEING ALLOWED ACCESS.

33. THIS WAS NOT RECEIVED WELL. AFTER ESTABLISHING THAT IF A SECOND REPRESENTATIVE WERE TO BE ALLOWED THIS WOULD NOT APPLY TO THE VISIT TAKING PLACE THAT AFTERNOON, WE ALLOWED SOON SEVERAL MINUTES TO CONSULT WITH MCGUINNESS. TO HIS CREDIT, HE MANAGED TO PERSUADE MCGUINNESS OF OUR POINT OF VIEW AND RANG BACK WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT THE SECOND PERSON SHOULD BE EDWARD HOWELL: WE SAID THAT THERE WAS NO URGENCY INVOLVED ...

INVOLVED AND THAT WE WOULD CONSULT THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES.

CALL NO 7 - 2300-2400, 5 JULY

34. SOON RANG TO SAY THAT THERE HAD BEEN A SERIES OF ALARMING REPORTS RELAYED BY MORRISON FROM THE PRISON. HE SAID THAT THE SITUATION WAS NOW SO BAD THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF ANY SETTLEMENT WAS SERIOUSLY IN DOUBT. THERE WAS A COMPLETE FEELING OF HOSTILITY AMONG THE PRISONERS TOWARDS THE ICJP WHO HAD BEEN IN AND OUT OF THE PRISON DURING THE DAY. THE ROLE OF THE ICJP HAD CREATED AN ALARMIST VIEW OF THE SINCERITY OF HMG, AND EVERY TYPE OF NEUROSIS IMAGINABLE WAS SURFACING WITHIN THE PROVISIONALS' LEADERSHIP. WE ASKED WHAT HAD CAUSED THIS SUDDEN DETERIORATION IN THE POSITION.

35. FROM AN APPARENTLY ENTHUSIASTIC POSITION, SOON HAD BEEN CALLED INTO AN ANGRY AND HOSTILE MEETING OF THE PROVISIONALS ALMOST VERGING ON A COMPLETE BREAKDOWN. THE PROVISIONALS' VIEW OF THE SITUATION IS THAT THE PRISONERS' STATEMENT HAD BEEN TOTALLY IGNORED BY THE ICJP. THERE HAD THEN BEEN MANY INCOHERENT ABUSES AIMED AT THE SOON CHANNEL, WITH THE IMPLICATION THAT THE TIME SPENT IN DISCUSSION ON THE SOON CHANNEL HAD BEEN A FRONT BY HMG TO ENABLE THE ICJP TO MANOEUVRE THE PRISONERS INTO AN IMPOSSIBLE POSITION.

36. WHEN SOON ASKED THE PROVISIONALS WHAT THEIR POSITION WAS HE WAS TOLD THAT ALL CONSIDERATION OF WORK AND ASSOCIATION WAS BEING IGNORED. THERE WAS A DEEP RESENTMENT IN THE PROVISIONAL LEADERSHIP AT WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF AS THE PRESSURING OF THE PRISONERS BY THE ICJP. SOON WAS TOLD THAT THE PRISONERS WOULD GIVE A VERY FIRM "NO" TO THE ICJP PROPOSALS AND THAT THE /ABUSE ...

PAGE TWELVE S E C R E T ADDRESSEE ONLY

ABUSE OF THE CHANNEL HAD CREATED A PREDISPOSITION TO DIS-BELIEVE ANYTHING THAT SOON SAID.

37. SOON HAD, THEREFORE, BEEN TOLD THAT THE PROVISIONALS' VIEW WAS NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE THEY WERE EXTREMELY UPSET AT THE "BULLY BOY" TACTICS OF THE ICJP. WE POINTED OUT THAT THE ICJP HAD VOLUNTEERED THEIR SERVICES INDEPENDENTLY AND THAT THEY HAD MET THE PROVISIONALS, THE DUBLIN GOVERNMENT, THE PRISONERS AND THEIR RELATIVES AS WELL AS HMG. WE ASKED WHY HMG WAS NOW BEING ASKED TO SHOULDER ALL THE BLAME FOR THE ICJP'S PROPOSAL? NO ANSWER WAS PROVIDED.

38. IN ORDER TO ATTEMPT TO BRIGHTEN WHAT WE SAW AS A DEPRESSING SITUATION, WE REVERTED TO THE QUESTION OF WHETHER A SECOND REPRESENTATIVE WOULD BE ALLOWED INTO THE MAZE. WE SAID THAT WE HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO GET AUTHORISATION FOR THIS, BUT WE HOPED THAT, GIVEN HOWELL'S NON-PIRA CONNECTIONS, THIS WOULD BE APPROVED. WE SUGGESTED THAT IF A SECOND VISIT WAS REQUESTED THE PROVISIONALS SHOULD APPLY FOR BOTH MORRISON AND HOWELL TO BE ALLOWED IN. SOON SAID THAT HE WOULD KEEP THIS IN RESERVE FOR THE TIME BEING.

39. AT THIS POINT SOON INDICATED THAT A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF PROVISIONALS HAD ARRIVED. WE SAID THAT TIME WAS PRESSING AND IT WAS NOW IMPERATIVE THAT WE HAVE A STATEMENT OF THE PROVISIONALS' POSITION. SOON UNDERTOOK TO TRY AND OBTAIN THIS AND RANG OFF.

CALL NO 8 - 0100-2117, 6 JULY

40. SOON RANG BACK TO SAY THAT HE HAD MANAGED TO PERSUADE THE PROVISIONALS TO PROVIDE THEIR VIEW, WHICH HE THEN DICTATED.

/IT ...

PAGE THIRTEEN S E C R E T ADDRESSEE ONLY

IT IS AS FOLLOWS.

41. "THE PROVISIONALS FULLY ACCEPT THE POSITION AS STATED BY THE PRISONERS, AND THAT IS THE ONLY BASIS FOR A SUCCESSFUL DRAFT PROPOSAL BY HMG. WHEN HMG PRODUCES SUCH A DRAFT PROPOSAL IT IS ESSENTIAL (LAST WORD UNDERLINED) THAT A COPY BE IN THE PROVISIONALS' HANDS BEFORE IT IS MADE PUBLIC. THIS IS TO ENABLE THE PROVISIONALS EITHER TO APPROVE IT OR TO POINT OUT ANY DIFFICULTIES BEFORE PUBLICATION. IF IT WERE PUBLISHED WITHOUT PRIOR SIGHT AND AGREEMENT THEY WOULD HAVE TO DISAPPROVE IT".

42. HAVING DELIVERED THIS, SOON SAID THAT THE PROVISIONALS WERE VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE TIME SCALE NOW INVOLVED. HE SAID THAT THE SITUATION WOULD BE IRREPARABLY DAMAGED IF A HUNGER STRIKER DIED AND HE URGED HMG TO ACT WITH THE UTMOST HASTE.

ENDS

COMMENT

43. WE APOLOGISE FOR THIS RATHER LENGTHY ACCOUNT OF THE WEEKEND'S ACTIVITY WHICH HAS BEEN DRAFTED QUICKLY. WE BELIEVE THAT ALL THE MAJOR POINTS HAVE BEEN INCLUDED AND THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO HAVE A COMPLETE RECORD. WE HAVE RETAINED OUR NOTES, AND WILL BE AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS WITH HAG ANY DISCREPANCIES.

44. WHILE WE APPRECIATE THAT IT HAS TAKEN A LONG TIME TO OBTAIN THE PROVISIONALS' VIEW WE ARE CONVINCED THAT SOON HAS /PERFORMED ...

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PERFORMED HIS TASK AS WELL AS POSSIBLE. WE WOULD ALSO POINT OUT THAT THERE IS LITTLE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FINAL VIEW AND THAT WHICH SOON PREDICTED EARLIER IN THE WEEKEND.

45. SOON STRESSED THAT TIME WAS RUNNING SHORT. WE BELIEVE THAT HE WILL PROBABLY RING SOME TIME IN THE NIGHT OF 6 JULY FOR, AT LEAST, A PROGRESS REPORT. WE WILL AWAIT FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS.

46. COPIES OF THIS TELEGRAM AND OF LONDON TELS TO DECADEL 226 AND 227 WILL BE GIVEN TO DCI IN LONDON AT 0900 HRS TODAY.

GRS3000

NNNN