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FM DUBLIN 101835Z DEC 81

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 433 OF 10 DECEMBER 1981

REPEATED FOR INFO TO IMMEDIATE NIO (B), PRIORITY WASHINGTON AND  
BIS NEW YORK

NORTHERN IRELAND: STATEMENT BY TAOISEACH

1. THE TAOISEACH, DR FITZGERALD, DELIVERED AN IMPORTANT STATEMENT ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND, ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS AND HIS CRUSADE TO AMEND THE CONSTITUTION AT A MEETING OF HIS CONSTITUENCY PARTY IN DUBLIN ON 9 DECEMBER.

2. THE TAOISEACH SPOKE OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA "CARRYING OUT A CAMPAIGN OF SECTARIAN GENOCIDE" AGAINST PROTESTANTS IN ORDER TO "STOP THE POSSIBILITY OF PEACEFUL POLITICAL PROGRESS BY CONSENT. UNITY BY CONSENT WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO THEM BECAUSE THEY WOULD THEREBY ACHIEVE THEIR AMBITION WHICH THEY DO NOT ALWAYS CONCEAL I.E. TOTAL POWER NORTH AND SOUTH ACHIEVED BY TERROR". HE THEN WENT ON TO ACCUSE MR PAISLEY OF CREATING HYSTERIA AND DELIBERATELY MISREPRESENTING THE AIM OF THE ANGLO IRISH SUMMIT.

3. AFTER PRAISING THE WAY IN WHICH HMG HAD HANDLED THE CHALLENGES FROM THE PROVISIONALS AND SOME LOYALIST EXTREMISTS, DR FITZGERALD SAID THAT THE ORIGINAL OBJECTIVES OF THE ANGLO-IRISH STRATEGY HAD BECOME "GROTESQUELY INVERTED IN THE PUBLIC DEBATE. FROM A SYSTEM OF CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES IN RELATION TO UNIONISTS, THE ANGLO-IRISH APPROACH BECAME AN AREA OF POLITICAL CONTEST IN DUBLIN IN TERMS OF NATIONALIST ACHIEVEMENT....." THERE WAS ALSO A POLITICAL CONTEST IN THE NORTH BETWEEN THE OUP AND DUP, WHO WERE "VYING WITH EACH OTHER IN THEIR CONDEMNATIONS OF THE ANGLO-IRISH INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH ON THE GROUNDS OF ITS ALLEGED EROSION OF THE UNION."

4. THE TAOISEACH SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT SHARED WITH MOST PEOPLE IN THE STATE "A STRONG COMMITMENT TO THE ASPIRATION OF UNITY TO BE ACHIEVED BY CONSENT AND ONLY BY CONSENT." HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS MEANT THAT "AS LONG A CONSENT IS NOT AVAILABLE - HOWEVER LONG THAT MAY BE - WE ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THAT DECISION." HE THEN ARGUED THAT ARTICLES 2 AND 3 OF THE CONSTITUTION WHICH IN HIS VIEW LAID CLAIM TO THE TERRITORY OF NORTHERN IRELAND SHOULD BE RE-STATE: "IN TERMS THAT WOULD UNAMBIGUOUSLY AND ACCEPTABLY STATE OUR UNOBJECTIONABLE AND INALIENABLE ASPIRATION TO IRISH UNITY TO BE ACHIEVED BY CONSENT AND PEACEFULLY." DR FITZGERALD CLOSED BY CRITICISING FIANNA FAIL'S OPPOSITION TO THE CRUSADE, AND IN PARTICULAR, MR HAUGHEY'S REFUSAL TO ALLOW FIANNA FAIL REPRESENTATIVES TO SIT ON AN ALL-PARTY COMMITTEE TO BE SET UP TO EXAMINE THE CONSTITUTION.

5. COPIES OF THE STATEMENT FOLLOW BY BAG.

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NORTHERN IRELAND