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TO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON

TELEGRAM NUMBER 1958 OF 18 DECEMBER

INFO PRIORITY NIC BELFAST, BIS NEW YORK, OTTAWA

INFO SAVING CONSULATES-GENERAL/USA, CONSULATE-GENERAL TORONTO

YOUR TELEGRAM NO.3825 (NOT TO OTTAWA OR TORONTO)

PAISLEY VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES.

1. PAISLEY AND ROBINSON, ACCOMPANIED BY BURNSIDE AND ALLISTER, CALLED ON THE LORD PRIVY SEAL YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. THEY SOUGHT CLARIFICATION OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE TO THE DELEGATION'S VISIT AND WANTED TO KNOW WHAT ASSISTANCE THEY COULD OBTAIN FROM POSTS. THEY ASKED WHETHER THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD APPROACHED THE 'FOREIGN OFFICE' ON THE QUESTION OF VISAS AND WHAT THE GOVERNMENT'S ATTITUDE WOULD BE IF THEY WERE APPROACHED. THEY ASKED WHAT ROLE HMG WOULD PLAY IN SEEKING ADEQUATE SECURITY PROTECTION.
2. IN RESPONSE TO THIS QUESTION THE LORD PRIVY SEAL SAID THAT THE DELEGATION WOULD BE TREATED IN PRECISELY THE SAME WAY AS ANY OTHER DELEGATION CONSISTING OF REPRESENTATIVES OF A MINORITY PARTY IN PARLIAMENT. THE GOVERNMENT WERE NOT SPONSORING THE VISIT. (MR PAISLEY AFFIRMED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THAT THE DELEGATION DID NOT WISH TO BE SPONSORED BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WANT TO APPEAR TO BE BRITISH GOVERNMENT PROPAGANDISTS.) THE AMBASSADOR WOULD RECEIVE THEM ON ARRIVAL AND HEADS OF SUBSIDIARY POSTS WOULD ALSO RECEIVE THEM IF THEY WERE AVAILABLE. THE EMBASSY WOULD PASS ON THE GROUP'S SCHEDULE TO SUBSIDIARY POSTS. THE LORD PRIVY SEAL UNDERSTOOD THAT THE EMBASSY HAD PASSED ON TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT THE DELEGATION'S REQUESTS TO MEET MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION. IF THEY HAD NOT HE WOULD ENSURE THAT THEY DID SO. THE EMBASSY WOULD SAY THAT THE DELEGATION HAD MADE A REQUEST TO SEE A PARTICULAR PERSON AND DRAW THE STATE

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DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO WHO THE DELEGATION WERE AND WHOM THEY REPRESENTED. IT WOULD BE UP TO THOSE CONCERNED TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO RECEIVE THE DELEGATION. THE EMBASSY WOULD SPEAK IN SIMILAR TERMS IF APPROACHED FOR ADVICE BY FIGURES OUTSIDE THE ADMINISTRATION.

3. THE LORD PRIVY SEAL SAID THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD NOT APPROACHED THE FOREIGN OFFICE ON THE QUESTION OF VISAS. IF THEY DID WE WOULD DRAW THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION TO THE FACT THAT THE DELEGATION INCLUDED AN ELECTED MP, AN ELECTED MEP AND ONE WHO HAD BEEN ELECTED TO BOTH PARLIAMENTS AND ASK THEM TO TAKE THIS INTO ACCOUNT. WE WOULD NOT OFFER THEM ADVICE AND WOULD NOT EXPECT OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO OFFER US ADVICE IN A SIMILAR SITUATION. WE WOULD NOT TAKE THE INITIATIVE IN APPROACHING THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

4. ON SECURITY THE LORD PRIVY SEAL SAID THAT IT WAS FOR THE AMERICANS TO ASSESS THE THREAT AND MAKE APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS. THE EMBASSY HAD ALREADY SPOKEN TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT ABOUT THIS. WE WOULD CERTAINLY MAKE IT KNOWN TO THE US AUTHORITIES THAT THE THREE PARLIAMENTARIANS HAD BODYGUARD PROTECTION: PAISLEY THROUGHOUT THE UNITED KINGDOM AND WHENEVER HE TRAVELLED IN EUROPE, ROBINSON AND TAYLOR ONLY IN NORTHERN IRELAND, ALTHOUGH TAYLOR SOMETIMES ALSO RECEIVED PROTECTION IN EUROPE. PAISLEY SAID THAT IF THE AUTHORITIES DID NOT GIVE PROTECTION THEN THE DELEGATION WOULD HAVE TO MAKE THEIR OWN ARRANGEMENTS AND THEY WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO KNOW BEFORE THEY LEFT WHETHER PROTECTION WOULD BE PROVIDED AND WHETHER IT WOULD BE PROVIDED IN ALL TOWNS. THE LORD PRIVY SEAL SAID THAT ONCE IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE VISIT WOULD BE ABLE TO GO AHEAD IT WOULD BE PROPER FOR US TO SEEK TO DISCOVER WHAT LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE WAS TO BE PROVIDED AND PASS ON WHATEVER INFORMATION WE COULD OBTAIN, ALTHOUGH SINCE PROTECTION WOULD BE PROVIDED AT STATE AND CITY LEVEL IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO PROVIDE THE GROUP WITH PRECISE DETAILS.

5. FULL RECORD AND COPY OF THE GROUP'S SCHEDULE FOLLOW BY BAG.

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