

NORTHERN IRELAND: ADVANCE COPIES 18

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DIO

... ..

NO 10 DOWNING STREET

... ..

RESIDENT CLERK

IMMEDIATE

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM DUBLIN 061700Z JANUARY 1982.

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 002 OF 06 JANUARY.

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O BELFAST

ADVANCE COPY

PROFESSOR DOOGE: VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND.

1. THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS TOLD COUNSELLOR THIS AFTERNOON THAT THEIR MINISTER IS CONSIDERING A VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND ON 20/21 JANUARY. HE WOULD GO TO LONDONDERRY AND BELFAST BY CAR TO MEET LOCAL POLITICIANS AND CHURCH LEADERS. HE WOULD ALSO VISIT HIS WIFE'S FAMILY IN BELFAST. THE DEPARTMENT SAID THAT IRISH MINISTERS DID NOT NORMALLY VISIT STORMONT ON THIS SORT OF TRIP AND PROFESSOR DOOGE HOPED TO SEE MR PRIOR IN LONDON ON 29 JANUARY. PROFESSOR DOOGE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE AND BY DONLON OR NELIGAN PLUS A COUPLE OF JUNIOR DFA OFFICIALS.

2. SECURITY AND DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE HANDLED BY THE GARDA/RUC NET. I AM SLIGHTLY SURPRISED BY THIS NEWS BECAUSE WHEN I DISCUSSED THE DATE OF THE MEETING FIXED FOR THE 29 JANUARY WITH PROFESSOR DOOGE I HAD EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS TOO SOON FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW TO THINK OF BELFAST AS A MEETING PLACE.

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3. ALTHOUGH THE DFA WERE NOT ASKING FOR OUR APPROVAL HE MIGHT BE WILLING TO POSTPONE HIS VISIT IF YOU OR THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND CONSIDERED THIS DESIRABLE. IF SO, WE SHOULD ACT BEFORE PLANS BECOME ANY FIRMER. IF I AM TO SPEAK TO THE MINISTER IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM MR PRIOR. ALTERNATIVELY, A PERSONAL TELEPHONE CALL WOULD BE LESS FORMAL AND PERHAPS PREFERABLE.

FIGG.

NNNNN

SENT/RECD AT 061735Z HMT/DW