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FM WASHINGTON 132202Z FEB 85  
TO IMMEDIATE F C O  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 496 OF 13 FEBRUARY  
INFO BIS NEW YORK, CG NEW YORK, DUBLIN, NIO(B)

MY TELNO 488: PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: NORTHERN IRELAND

1. CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI AND FIVE OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS UNOFFICIAL AD HOC COMMITTEE FOR IRISH AFFAIRS HAVE WRITTEN TO ME TO REQUEST A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER DURING HER FORTHCOMING VISIT. THEIR PURPOSE WOULD BE QUOTE TO ENTER INTO A DIALOGUE AND AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON NORTHERN IRELAND UNQUOTE. THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT IS DESCRIBED AS QUOTE A UNIQUE AND HISTORIC OPPORTUNITY UNQUOTE FOR SUCH AN EXCHANGE.

2. THE AUTHORS OF THIS LETTER ARE THE HARD CORE OF THE BIAGGI GROUP IN CONGRESS. FIVE (INCLUDING SENATOR D'AMATO REPRESENT NEW YORK DISTRICTS, ONE A DISTRICT IN NEW JERSEY.

3. I HAVE NO HESITATION IN RECOMMENDING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD NOT SEE BIAGGI AND HIS COLLEAGUES. I WOULD NOT IN ANY CASE RECOMMEND A SEPARATE MEETING SPECIFICALLY ON NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT IF ONE WERE EVER TO BE CONSIDERED, IT SHOULD BE WITH THE CONGRESSIONAL FRIENDS OF IRELAND WHO, UNLIKE BIAGGI, UNAMBIGUOUSLY OPPOSE VIOLENCE.

4. UNLESS I RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS TO THE CONTRARY BY 151300Z, I PROPOSE TO REPLY TO BIAGGI BY SAYING THAT THE PRIME MINISTER'S BUSY PROGRAMME IN WASHINGTON WILL NOT ALLOW A MEETING WITH HIM OR HIS COLLEAGUES. I SHALL REFER TO HER ADDRESS TO THE JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS ON 20 FEBRUARY AND TO THE ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR HER TO MEET MEMBERS OF THE LEADERSHIP OF BOTH HOUSES.

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NORTHERN IRELAND

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