

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 130357Z FEB 85

CONFIDENTIAL

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 488 OF 12 FEBRUARY

INFO N I O BELFAST, B I S NEW YORK, C G NEW YORK, DUBLIN,  
INFO SAVING ALL OTHER C G'S IN THE U S A.

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT: NORTHERN IRELAND

SUMMARY

1. CONSIDERABLE CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL SAY ON NORTHERN IRELAND. THE EXTREMIST MINORITY ARE BEHAVING PREDICTABLY - BIAGGI'S INVITATION TO GERRY ADAMS, AND A DEMONSTRATION ON 20 FEBRUARY.

DETAIL

2. SPEAKER O'NEILL'S HOPE (MY TELNO 119) THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WOULD REFER TO NORTHERN IRELAND IN HER SPEECH TO THE JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS IS SHARED BY MANY ON THE HILL, PARTICULARLY OF COURSE THOSE WITH AN IRISH-AMERICAN BACKGROUND. THE MODERATES IN THE CONGRESSIONAL FRIENDS OF IRELAND HOPE THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL FIND AN OPPORTUNITY IN HER SPEECH TO CORRECT THE PRESS REPORTS, AFTER THE LAST ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT, OF A STAND-OFF BETWEEN LONDON AND DUBLIN, WHICH THEY BELIEVED WEAKENED THEIR OWN STANDING WITHIN THE IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY. THEY WERE HEARTENED BY THE ACCOUNT THEY RECEIVED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE OF WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER SAID TO THE PRESIDENT AT CAMP DAVID, AND HOPE THAT WHAT SHE SAYS ON THE HILL ON 20 FEBRUARY WILL PROVIDE THEM WITH AMMUNITION FURTHER TO FRUSTRATE THE ACTIVITIES OF IRISH-AMERICAN REPUBLICANISM.

3. THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND DO NOT INTEND TO WRITE TO THE PRESIDENT (AS THEY DID IN DECEMBER) OR TO THE PRIME MINISTER, BEFORE NEXT WEEK'S VISIT. THEIR PRESENT INTENTION IS THAT THE SPEAKER SHOULD RAISE NORTHERN IRELAND AT THE MEETING HE WILL CHAIR ON THE AFTERNOON OF 20 FEBRUARY. (THIS MEETING WILL ALSO BE ATTENDED BY THE HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, CONGRESSMAN MICHEL, AND THE HOUSE MAJORITY WHIP, CONGRESSMAN FOLEY, BOTH - LIKE O'NEILL - LEADING MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND).

4. NEWS OF THE VISIT HAS STIMULATED ACTIVITY BY THE BIAGGI GROUP IN CONGRESS AND THE EXTREMIST ELEMENT IN THE WIDER IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY. BIAGGI IS CIRCULATING TO CONGRESSIONAL COLLEAGUES A DRAFT LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER (TEXT ALREADY SENT BY BAG) URGING HER TO ADDRESS VARIOUS ASPECTS OF BRITISH POLICY TOWARDS NORTHERN IRELAND IN HER SPEECH ON 20 FEBRUARY. THE LETTER IS NOT DRAFTED IN SUCH STUDIOUSLY TEMPERATE TERMS AS THE ONE SENT BY BIAGGI TO THE PRESIDENT IN ADVANCE OF CAMP DAVID, BUT HE MAY GET NEAR TO THE 60 CO-SIGNATURES ACHIEVED THEN.

5. BIAGGI AND 9 OF THE INNER CORE OF HIS GROUP IN CONGRESS HAVE ALSO INVITED GERRY ADAMS TO SPEAK TO THEM ON 20 FEBRUARY (YOUR TELNO 244). THIS IS A PREDICATABLE PUBLICITY-SEEKING PLOY. THE U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL IN BELFAST RECEIVED A VISA APPLICATION BY ADAMS ON 11 FEBRUARY. THE STATE DEPARTMENT ARE TAKING THE LINE

CONFIDENTIAL

/in.

## CONFIDENTIAL

IN PUBLIC THAT THEY WILL TREAT IT ON ITS MERITS. BUT THEY HAVE ASSURED US PRIVATELY THAT THEY INTEND TO REFUSE IT. THEIR DECISION IS LIKELY TO BE MADE IN 4-5 DAYS TIME. IN RESPONSE TO PRESS INQUIRIES WE HAVE BEEN PLAYING DOWN THE BIAGGI INVITATION, AND HAVE POINTED TO THE SMALL NUMBER OF CONGRESSMEN WHO JOINED HIM IN ISSUING IT, AND TO THE FACT THAT ADAMS HAS NEVER PREVIOUSLY RECEIVED A U.S. VISA. ON THE RECORD OUR LINE SHOULD OF COURSE BE THAT ADAMS' VISA APPLICATION IS A MATTER FOR THE U.S. AUTHORITIES.

6. THERE WAS A SMALL DEMONSTRATION BY IRISH-AMERICANS OUTSIDE THE EMBASSY AT THE TIME OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT IN DECEMBER. ON THIS OCCASION THE MAIN FOCUS WILL BE ON THE CAPITOL ON 20 FEBRUARY. A NUMBER OF GROUPS, INCLUDING THE IRISH NATIONAL CAUCUS, N.O.R.A.I.D., AND THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS, WILL BE SENDING MEMBERS AND OFFICE-HOLDERS TO WASHINGTON. THE CAPITOL POLICE WILL KEEP THE DEMONSTRATORS WELL AWAY FROM THE CAPITOL BUILDING ITSELF. AT PRESENT WE HAVE NO INDICATION OF NUMBERS.

7. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT THERE WILL BE A DEMONSTRATION AT THE EMBASSY ON 20 FEBRUARY. WE RECEIVED WARNING OF ONE SOME WEEKS AGO, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT THE ORGANISERS WILL NOW DIVERT THEIR ENERGIES TO CAPITOL HILL.

8. WE HAVE NOT SO FAR RECEIVED ANY PRESS ENQUIRIES ABOUT POSSIBLE DEMONSTRATIONS. IF WE DO, WE SHALL ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE ARE AWARE OF THE POSSIBILITY FOLLOWING ARTICLES IN THE IRISH-AMERICAN PRESS. IF NECESSARY, WE SHALL OF COURSE SAY THAT THE POLICE WILL NO DOUBT HANDLE ANY DEMONSTRATION IN THE NORMAL WAY.

WRIGHT

NORTHERN IRELAND

LIMITED

RID

NAD

INFO D

WED

MAED

NEWS D

PUSD

SCU

RESEARCH D

PS

PS/LADY YOUNG

PS/MR RENTON

PS/PUS

MR DEREK THOMAS

SIR W HARDING

MR GOODALL

MR BARRINGTON

MR O'NEILL

MR JENKINS

MR D C THOMAS

BUCKINGHAM PALACE

ADDITIONAL DISTRIBUTION

NORTHERN IRELAND

- 2 -

## CONFIDENTIAL