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ADVANCE DESKBY FOR PRIVATE SECRETARY, PRIVATE SECRETARY NO 10, SOVIET DEPARTMENT AND RID

MY TELEGRAM 136: VISIT BY PRESIDENT GORBACHEV TO IRELAND

SUMMARY

1. THE TAOISEACH WILL TELEPHONE THE PRIME MINISTER AT 0945 BST ON 4 APRIL.

DETAIL

2. I SUGGESTED TO THE TAOISEACH'S OFFICE THAT SINCE MR GORBACHEV WAS TO CALL ON THE PRIME MINISTER LATER THIS WEEK, MR HAUGHEY MIGHT WISH TO SEND HER SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS. THE TAOISEACH PREFERS TO DO THIS BY TELEPHONE AND I UNDERSTAND THAT NALLY HAS ARRANGED WITH POWELL FOR A CONVERSATION TO TAKE PLACE AT 0945 BST ON TUESDAY 4 APRIL.

3. MR HAUGHEY MAY HAVE IT IN MIND TO MENTION:

A. NORTHERN IRELAND - AN ACCOUNT OF HIS CONVERSATION AND OF THE LINE MR GORBACHEV IS LIKELY TO TAKE IN LONDON: SEE BELOW.

B. MODERNISATION. MR HAUGHEY THINKS THAT MR GORBACHEV MAY RAISE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER HIS VIEW THAT THE MODERNISATION OF SRNF IS INAPPROPRIATE NOW THAT WE ARE ALL LOOKING FOR WAYS TO REDUCE BOTH CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR ARMAMENTS.

C. MR GORBACHEV'S VIEW, WHICH MR HAUGHEY SHARES, THAT THE NEW AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION IS TAKING A LONG TIME TO FORMULATE ITS POLICIES BOTH ON ARMS CONTROL AND ON THE MIDDLE EAST.

NORTHERN IRELAND

4. THE FOLLOWING IS A FULLER ACCOUNT OF THE HAUGHEY/GORBACHEV TALKS

ON NORTHERN IRELAND BASED ON A BRIEFING AT THE DFA AND AT THE TAOISEACH'S OFFICE.

5. THE TAOISEACH EXPLAINED HIS POINT OF VIEW ON NORTHERN IRELAND:

A. THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT WAS IN PLACE. IT WAS SATISFACTORY. BUT IT WAS NOT ENOUGH.

B. HE MENTIONED THE BIRMINGHAM SIX AND THE GUILDFORD FOUR CASES IN THE CONTEXT OF HUMAN RIGHTS.

C. HE COMPLIMENTED SOVIET SPOKESMEN ON THEIR RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR POLITICAL PROGRESS. HE EXPLAINED THAT THIS WAS INTERPRETED IN DIFFERENT WAYS: THE BRITISH LOOKED FOR DEVOLUTION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF NORTHERN IRELAND: THE IRISH WERE THINKING OF IRELAND AS A WHOLE.

D. HE STRESSED THE SENSITIVITY OF THE WHOLE SUBJECT.

6. MR GORBACHEV HAD RESPONDED:

A. THIS WAS A MATTER BETWEEN IRELAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM - A MATTER FOR THE TAOISEACH TO PURSUE WITH THE PRIME MINISTER.

B. HE WAS AWARE OF THYE DIFFICULTIES IN THE HUMAN DIMENSION AND WOULD CONVEY TO THE PRIME MINISTER WHAT THE TAOISEACH HAD SAID.

C. ALL NATIONS HAD FREEDOM OF CHOICE. THERE MUST BE NO EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE WHEN THEY WERE MAKING THEIR CHOICE. THERE FOLLOWED A PANEGYRIC ON THE VIRTUES OF DEMOCRACY WHICH MR HAUGHEY FOUND SURPRISING IN A LEADER WHO HAD COME TO DEMOCRACY SO RECENTLY, AND WHICH PRESERVED MR GORBACHEV'S AMBIGUITY AS TO WHETHER THE PEOPLE IN QUESTION WERE THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND OR THE PEOPLE OF IRELAND AS A WHOLE. (SEE MY TEL NO 136 PARA 6)

COMMENT

7. I CONCLUDE THAT MR GORBACHEV IS LIKELY TO RAISE THE BIRMINGHAM SIX AND THE GUILDFORD FOUR AS A TU QUOQUE IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR CONCERNS OVER HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE SOVIET UNION. HE MAY WITH SOME JUSTICE CLAIM TO BE DOING SO AT THE TAOISEACH'S REQUEST. MR HAUGHEY MAY WARN THE PRIME MINISTER OF THIS TOMORROW MORNING.

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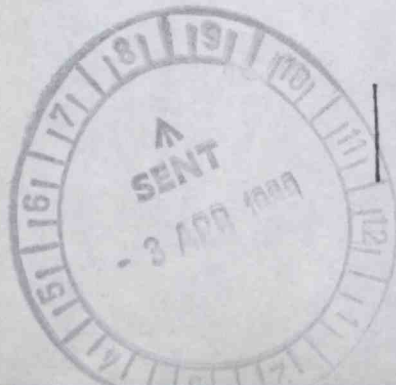
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PRIME MINISTER

Mr. Haughey wants to telephone you tomorrow  
morning to pass on one or two points from  
his talks with Mr. Gorbachev. I think it  
would be prudent to accept his call and I  
have provisionally agreed to 09.45 tomorrow.

CDP

      
mf

C. D. POWELL  
3 APRIL 1989