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FM DUBLIN

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TELNO 428

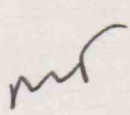
OF 021500Z OCTOBER 89

AND TO DESKBY 021630Z NIO(BELFAST)

AND TO DESKBY 021630Z NIO(LONDON)

INFO ROUTINE WASHINGTON,BIS NEW YORK

MY TELNO 418: APPROACH TO THE IGC

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SUMMARY

1. TAOISEACH WARNS PRIVATELY OF TROUBLE AHEAD. IRISH PRESS BRIEFING IN A LOW KEY. IRISH MINISTERS WILL GO TO LONDON UNDER PRESSURE OF THEIR OWN MAKING. ACCOMPANIMENT IS THE KEY.

DETAIL

2. BEFORE MR BROOKE'S BRIEFING MEETING TOMORROW FOR THIS WEEK'S INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE, IT MAY BE HELPFUL IF I SET OUT THE SITUATION AS SEEN FROM DUBLIN TODAY.

3. THE SUCCESSION OF ALLEGATIONS OF LEAKS AND COLLUSION HAS KEPT THIS ISSUE AT THE TOP OF THE AGENDA. THE REPORT IN TODAY'S IRISH NEWS ABOUT AN 'INNER CIRCLE' WILL ENCOURAGE IRISH OPINION IN THEIR VIEW THAT SOMETHING FUNDAMENTAL HAS GONE WRONG FOR WHICH FUNDAMENTAL REMEDIES ARE REQUIRED. THERE IS GENERAL SUPPORT FOR THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S STANCE. THE UDR HAS NO FRIENDS HERE.

4. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE DANGER OF A PRE-EMPTIVE PRESS STATEMENT SEEMS TO HAVE RECEDED. SINCE MR BURKE'S CAREFULLY CONTRIVED INDISCRETION ON TELEVISION IRISH JOURNALISTS HAVE BEEN DISCOURAGED FROM EXPECTING FURTHER STATEMENTS BEFORE THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE. MR COLLINS' SPEECH TO THE UNGA WAS HELPFUL.

5. THE IRISH CLAIM THAT THEIR MINISTERS ARE UNDER DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURE. THEY WOULD, WOULDN'T THEY? IN TERMS OF ORTHODOX ADVERSARIAL POLITICS THIS CLAIM IS FALSE. RECENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON THE ISSUE BY PETER BARRY AND JOHN HUME HAVE BEEN CONCILIATORY. FINE GAEL HAS CHOSEN TO ATTACK THE IRISH GOVERNMENT FOR ITS HINTS THAT THE FUTURE OF THE AGREEMENT ITSELF MIGHT BE AT STAKE.

6. NEVERTHELESS THERE ARE PRESSURES. FIRST AMONG THEM IS THE TAOISEACH HIMSELF WHO HAS INVOLVED HIMSELF CLOSELY WITH THE IRISH HANDLING OF THE ISSUE. THE PUBLIC WAS ALLOWED TO KNOW THAT MR BURKE'S 'TODAY, TONIGHT' TELEVISION INTERVIEW FOLLOWED DIRECTLY FROM A MEETING WITH THE TAOISEACH. PRESS BRIEFINGS HAVE INDICATED THAT THE LEAKS/COLLUSION ISSUE HAS DOMINATED RECENT CABINET MEETINGS. ABOVE ALL WE HAVE THE WARNING FROM THE SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT (MY TELNO 411) THAT MR HAUGHEY IS HAUNTED BY THE FEAR THAT IRISH INTELLIGENCE MAY HAVE CAUSED THE DEATH OF IRISH NATIONALISTS AND THAT HE MAY BE EXPOSED AS HAVING PERSONALLY BETRAYED THE IRISH NATION. THE CONNECTION WITH GIBRALTAR HAS SINCE APPEARED IN THE PRESS, PUT FORWARD BY A SINN FEIN SPOKESMAN. IT HAS NOT BEEN PICKED UP MORE WIDELY.

7. I EXCHANGED A FEW WORDS WITH THE TAOISEACH AFTER HIS SPEECH THIS MORNING OPENING A CONFERENCE ON IRISH POLICY IN THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS TROUBLE AHEAD. WOULD THERE BE NO END TO THE SCANDALS? I REPLIED THAT BRITISH MINISTERS WERE AT LEAST AS CONCERNED AS HE WAS. ANY SUGGESTION OF COLLUSION WAS INTOLERABLE. THE ENQUIRY WOULD BE RIGOROUSLY PURSUED. BUT THERE WERE OPERATIONAL AND POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS WHICH COULD NOT JUST BE WISHED AWAY. I HOPED THAT HE WOULD SAY NOTHING TO INFLATE EXPECTATIONS. MR HAUGHEY LOOKED AT ME STEADILY FOR A MOMENT AND PASSED ON.

8. THERE ARE ALSO PRESSURES FROM WITHIN FIANNA FAIL, INCLUDING COALITION DISCONTENTS AND THE AMBITIONS OF BOTH IRISH MINISTERS TO BE TAOISEACH. I COMMEND DICK WALSH'S PIECE IN THE IRISH TIMES OF 30 SEPTEMBER, 'RUMBLE OF TUMBRILS SHAKES DUBLIN 4'. WALSH DESCRIBES THE APOTOLYPTIC SELF-QUESTIONING WITHIN FIANNA FAIL ABOUT ITS SURVIVAL UNDER PRESENT LEADERSHIP AS THE DOMINANT POLITICAL FORCE IN THE COUNTRY.

9. THESE PRESSURES ARE OF IRISH ORIGIN AND SOME OF THEM OF IRISH MAKING. WE SHOULD NOT BEND OUR CONCLUSIONS TO ACCOMMODATE THEM. BUT WE SHOULD RECOGNISE THE DANGER OF AN HYSTERICAL REACTION IF WE FAIL TO CARRY CONVICTION ON THURSDAY.

10. ALL THIS SUGGESTS THAT WE SHOULD BE AS FIRM AS NECESSARY, WHILE KEEPING THE ATMOSPHERE AS CALM AS POSSIBLE. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE ARMY HAS CONTRIBUTED USEFUL PAPERS ON MILITARY ASPECTS. I HOPE THAT WE SHALL BE ABLE TO BE REASSURING ABOUT THE SECURITY OF 'RECOGNITION MATERIAL', RECRUITMENT, VETTING, TRAINING ETC. I AGREE WITH THE GENERAL APPROACH DISCUSSED WITH THE IRISH IN THE SECRERARIAT ON 28 SEPTEMBER. I ALSO AGREE THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE GOC WOULD BE USEFUL. IT WILL TAKE IRISH BREATH AWAY BUT THEY WOULD BE ON WEAK

GROUND IN RESISTING IT, AND THEY WILL LISTEN TO GENERAL WALTERS WITH RESPECT.

11. I ALSO MAINTAIN THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN PARAS 19 AND 20 OF MY TELEGRAM 393. WE SHOULD NOT BE SHY OF EXPLAINING THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE UDR AS A LIGHTNING CONDUCTOR: THE THOUGHT HAS EMERGED TENTATIVELY IN RECENT DAYS AND HAS BEEN RECEIVED WITH SOME UNDERSTANDING IN DUBLIN: IT COMES AS NO SURPRISE. WE SHOULD CERTAINLY MAKE VERY CLEAR TO MR COLLINS THAT IF HE CHOOSES TO LOSE HIS COOL IN PUBLIC ON THURSDAY THE ONUS FOR FAILURE WILL REST WITH HIM.

12. BUT IRISH MINISTERS WILL NOT BE ABLE TO SELL AN ANODYNE COMMUNIQUE IN DUBLIN. IT MUST REGISTER SOME SPECIFIC ADVANCE. ACCOMPANIMENT IS THE KEY. I RECOGNISE THE OPERATIONAL CONSTRAINTS BUT, IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT WAS AGREED IN NOVEMBER 1985, IT IS A WEAK POINT IN OUR DEFENSIVE ARMOURY. AN IMPROVEMENT ON THIS FRONT WOULD CARRY CONVICTION ON THURSDAY AND IMPROVE CONFIDENCE ON THE GROUND THEREAFTER.

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