

PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/RENTON

PS/PCS

~~PS/J. SUMMERS~~

~~PS/JENNINGS~~

PS/S. O'S

PS/MR R. ANDREW
OAB 1/56

~~PS/BEETMAN~~

~~PS/BURNS~~

J. LYON

~~PS/BOWEN~~

NIO

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SIB B ARMSTRONG

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CABINET

IMMEDIATE

PS/No 10 DOWNING STREET (3)

CONFIDENTIAL

FM CONSULATE-GENERAL NEW YORK 191930Z OCT 84

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 56 OF 19 OCTOBER

AND TO IMMEDIATE NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST, DUBLIN, WASHINGTON

CALL ON ARCHBISHOP O'CONNOR

I HAVE BEEN WAITING SINCE MARCH TO CALL ON ARCHBISHOP O'CONNOR. HE INVITED ME TO DO SO THIS MORNING.

THE ARCHBISHOP SAID THAT HE WANTED TO RECEIVE ME BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR IRELAND. IT WAS HIS HOPE THAT THE VISIT WOULD BE KEPT ESSENTIALLY PASTORAL AND THAT ATTEMPTS TO POLITICIZE IT WOULD BE RESISTED. THE FOLLOWING WERE THE MAIN POINTS MADE BY THE ARCHBISHOP IN THE COURSE OF OUR CONVERSATION.

2. WITHIN THE NEW YORK ARCHDIOCESE THE IRISH POPULATION WERE FRAGMENTED INTO MANY DIFFERENT GROUPS IN WHOM AND BETWEEN WHOM THERE WAS GREAT INTENSITY OF FEELING. HE WAS OBLIGED TO MAKE SOME ATTEMPT TO BRING A GREATER DEGREE OF COHESION TO THIS COMMUNITY AND TO ENDEAVOUR TO ENSURE THAT THE LEADERSHIP WHICH EMERGED WAS MODERATE. SPECIFICALLY HE HAD TO TRY TO AVOID AN EXPLOSIVE SITUATION ON THE EVE OF ST. PATRICK'S DAY WITH AN ATTEMPT TO NOMINATE AS GRAND MARSHALL OF THE PARADE ONE OF THE PRO-IRA LEADERS. THE ST PATRICK'S DAY PARADE WAS A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR HIM AND HE DECIDED THAT HE MUST START WORKING ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR NEXT YEAR NOW.

3. VERY MANY OF THE IRISH-AMERICANS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE WERE MISINFORMED AND MISGUIDED IN THEIR VIEWS ABOUT IRELAND BUT IT WAS IMMENSELY DIFFICULT TO ERADICATE EMOTIONS WHOSE ROOTS REACHED BACK GENERATIONS. AS SOME OF THE PRESENT GENERATION DIED OFF IT MIGHT BE REASONABLE TO HOPE FOR SOME IMPROVEMENT.

4. HE HAD CONSULTED GROUPS OF LAY LEADERS ON THE NORTHERN IRELAND QUESTION. HE HAD STUDIED THE REPORT OF THE NEW FORUM AND HE HAD RECEIVED VERY USEFUL BRIEFING AND ADVICE FROM FORMER AMBASSADORS DAILEY, CURLEY AND MOORE.

5. HE WAS UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE IRISH-AMERICAN COMMUNITY TO DISPLAY SOME INTEREST IN THE IRISH QUESTION. HE HAD MADE SOME STATEMENTS ON POLAND AND HAD TAKEN A PUBLIC INTEREST IN SOME ASPECTS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN PROBLEM. HE HOPED THAT THE VISIT

SOME ASPECTS OF THE LATIN AMERICAN PROBLEM. HE HOPED THAT THE VISIT OF THE BISHOPS TO IRELAND WOULD HELP TO SATISFY THESE DEMANDS WITHOUT CREATING POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES. THE ARCHBISHOP IMPLIED THAT HE WAS UNDER NO ILLUSION AS TO THE DIFFICULTY OF THE LATTER.

6. THE PROGRAMME WHICH HE HAD SEEN PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH SOME OF THE CHURCH LEADERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS. HE WOULD WELCOME THIS.

7. HE THOUGHT THAT ONE OF THE WAYS IN WHICH AMERICA COULD HELP WOULD BE BY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO NORTHER IRELAND. WITH UNEMPLOYMENT TOUCHING 30% IN SOME COMMUNITIES, POLITICAL PROGRESS WAS BOUND TO BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT.

8. HE EXPECTED THAT THE BISHOPS WOULD COME UNDER PRESSURE IN SOME QUARTERS TO MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM SINN FEIN OR THE IRA. HE HOPED THAT HIS FELLOW BISHOPS WOULD RESIST ANY SUCH PRESSURE.

9. HE WAS NOT SURE THAT A PUBLIC STATEMENT AT THE END OF THE TRIP WOULD BE DESIRABLE BUT IF IT PROVED IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID MAKING ONE HE WOULD HOPE THAT IT BE AS UNPROVOCATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE AS POSSIBLE. HIS INTENTION DURING THE VISIT WAS TO FOLLOW POPE JOHN PAUL'S EXAMPLE OF CONDEMNING VIOLENCE OF ALL KINDS AND FROM ALL SOURCES.

10. THE ARCHBISHOP WAS AWARE THAT IMPORTANT MEETINGS (I.E. BETWEEN DR. FITZGERALD AND MRS. THATCHER) WOULD BE TAKING PLACE IN THE NEAR FUTURE. I COULD BE ASSURED THAT HE WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO AVOID ACTION WHICH WOULD MAKE THE PROSPECTS FOR THESE TALKS MORE DIFFICULT.

11. AMONG THE POINTS WHICH I MADE TO THE ARCHBISHOP WERE:-
THE MORE UNEQUIVOCALLY THE ARCHBISHOP COULD CONDEMN THE IRA AND THE SUPPORT OF IT BY NORAID, THE BETTER WOULD BE SERVED THE INTERESTS OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF ALL PARTS OF IRELAND. I AGREED THAT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION WAS IMPORTANT AND EXPLAINED THE WORK WE WERE ENGAGED IN TO PROMOTE U.S. INVESTMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND. I WELCOMED THE ARCHBISHOP'S DISCUSSIONS WITH THE THREE EX-AMBASSADORS, ALL OF WHOM WERE WISE OBSERVERS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND SCENE. THE NEWLY APPOINTED SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND HAD SAID THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD CONTINUE TO TRY TO EDGE TOWARDS GREATER POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THAT BRITISH POLICY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND SHOULD NOT BE ALTERED AS A RESULT OF THE ATTACK BY THE IRA AT BRIGHTON. WE HAD FOUND FROM LONG EXPERIENCE THAT IT WAS MUCH EASIER TO GIVE OFFENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND THAN TO PROMOTE THE PROCESSES OF RECONCILIATION. I STRONGLY BELIEVED TWO THINGS: (1) THAT THE ARCHBISHOP WAS ABSOLUTELY RIGHT IN APPROACHING THE FORTHCOMING VISIT WITH GREAT CAUTION AND A CLEAR APPRECIATION OF THE PITFALLS THAT SOME WOULD TRY TO CREATE AROUND HIS EVERY STEP AND (2) THAT THE DEFEAT OF TERRORISM WAS THE PRE-REQUISITE TO ANY POLITICAL PROGRESS IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

NORTHERN IRELAND WAS A PROBLEM NOT BETWEEN ENGLISHMENT AND IRISHMEN BUT BETWEEN IRISHMEN AND IRISHMEN. THE UNEQUIVOCAL CONDEMNATION BY THE BISHOPS OF TERRORISM AND NORAID'S SUPPORT OF TERRORISM WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. IN THE SINN FEIN LEADER WE WERE FACING AN ABLE AS WELL AS EXCEEDINGLY DANGEROUS MAN.

KENNEDY

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