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MINISTER STANLEY'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON -- MARCH 13-14

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS ON A NUMBER OF EVENTS INVOLVING MINISTER STANLEY:

- (A) A GROUP OF ACADEMICS INTERESTED IN IRELAND WHICH TOOK PLACE AT CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY ON MONDAY, 7 MARCH:
- (B) A MEETING WITH THE COMMITTEE FOR A NEW IRELAND:
- (C) A MEDIA BREAKFAST WHICH TOOK PLACE AT THE BRITISH EMBASSY ON TUESDAY, 8 MARCH:
- (D) MEETINGS IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT: AND
- (E) A MEETING WITH THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND ON CAPITOL HILL.

2. THE MAIN LINES OF STANLEY'S APPROACH WERE THAT MATTERS WERE IMPROVING IN THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY SPHERES. THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS WRE COMMITTED TO THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT. HE OUTLINED WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS A QUALITATIVE INCREASE IN IRA FIREPOWER LINKED TO THE ARMS SHIPMENTS. HE EMPHASISED THE LIBYAN CONNECTION. HE IMPLIED, IN RELATION TO STALKER/SAMPSON AND THE SUBSEQUENT EVENTS WHICH HAVE CLOUDED ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS, THAT HE AND THE GOVERNMENT WERE SOMEHOW ALOOF FROM THIS CONJUNCTURE OF EVENTS. HE EMPHASISED GROWING CONFIDENCE ON THE PART OF NATIONALISTS AND HE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE FOR THE RUC AND ASSERTED THAT CATHOLICS HAD AGREED TO SERVE ON THE POLICE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION. IN STRESSING THE THREAT POSED BY THE IRA, HE EMPHASISED THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS IN COMBATTING SUBVERSIVES. AS REGARDS FAIR EMPLOYMENT, SURPRISINGLY THIS WAS NOT AT THE TOP OF HIS AGENDA. HE LAID STRESS ON THE WELCOMING POSITION OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT TO THE BRITISH PROPOSALS.

3. MEDIA BREAKFAST

MR KELLEHER HAS RECEIVED AN ACCOUNT ON WHAT TRANSPIRED AT THIS EVENT. STANLEY GAVE AN UP-BEAT PRESENTATION ON FAIR EMPLOYMENT SAYING THAT THE BRITISH PROPOSALS HAD BEEN WELCOMED BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT. THERE WAS A CERTAIN INCREDULITY AT HIS EXPLANATION OF THE STALKER/SAMPSON AFFAIR AND THE OTHER EVENTS WHICH HAVE SINCE ENSUED AND PARTICULARLY HIS ASSERTION THAT NO DAMAGE HAD BEEN DONE TO THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT AND THAT CONFIDENCE IN THE RUC REMAINED HIGH. WHEN QUESTIONED ON THIS, HE INVOKED THE MAYHEW FORMULA OF NATIONAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC INTEREST BUT WAS REMINDED THAT THE TERM "NATIONAL SECURITY" HAD A LESS THAN IMPECCABLE REPUTATION IN THE UNITED STATES (E.G. NIXON/WATERGATE, IRANGATE, ETC). HE EMPHASISED THE FACT THAT THE RUC OFFICERS INVOLVED IN THE 1982 KILLINGS WERE ACQUITTED.

4. MEETING WITH COMMITTEE FOR A NEW IRELAND

MINISTER STANLEY'S PRESENTATION ON THIS EVENT, WHICH INCLUDED SOME STAFFERS ON THE HILL AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR A NEW IRELAND. WAS SIMILAR TO THE ABOVE. WHEN QUESTIONED ON SPECIFIC EVENTS SUCH AS STALKER/SAMPSON HE DENIED THERE WAS A SHOOT-TO-KILL POLICY, DEFENDED THE BRITISH A.G.'S INDEPENDENT POSITION AND SAID THERE WOULD BE DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS AGAINST OFFICERS INVOLVED. ON THE SERIES OF EVENTS FROM STALKER TO GIBRALTAR HE CLAIMED THAT THIS WAS A PECULIAR AND UNIQUE CHAIN OF EVENTS WHERE A NUMBER OF THINGS HAPPENED WHICH WERE OUTSIDE THE CONTROL OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

BRIAN ATWOOD OF THE NDI WHO WAS PRESENT EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT IT WAS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT ALL THE EVENTS OF THE LAST TWO MONTHS WERE COINCIDENTAL AND THAT IT WAS VERY DAMAGING TO THE EFFORT TO BUILD CONFIDENCE IN THE MINORITY COMMUNITY IN THE NORTH IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE AND THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT. STANLEY REPLIED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE JUDGED ON THE LAST THREE MONTHS BUT ON THE LAST THREE YEARS. THEY ARE STRONGLY COMMITTED TO THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT AND TO THE CONFERENCE PROCEDURE WITHIN THE AGREEMENT WHICH HAS HELPED THEM TO COPE WITH RECENT EVENTS.

ON FAIR EMPLOYMENT, HE ENTHUSIASTICALLY SET OUT THE BRITISH PROPOSALS, ATTACKED THE MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES AND STRESSED THE WELCOMING NATURE OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE. HE WAS SOMEWHAT EVASIVE WHEN QUESTIONED ON THE SPECIFICS SUCH AS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND OUTREACH MEASURES AND WAS LEFT IN NO DOUBT THAT THE FINAL BRITISH PROPOSALS WILL HAVE TO BE SEEN TO HAVE REAL CONTENT AND TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO CHANGE A SITUATION IN WHICH 2.5 TIMES MORE CATHOLICS ARE UNEMPLOYED THAN PROTESTANTS. IN A SOMEWHAT BIZARRE AND UNEXPECTED FASHION HE STRESSED AT THE END OF THE MEETING THE NEED FOR MORE CATHOLICS TO JOIN THE RUC AND IT WAS OF COURSE POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT THIS DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY IN VIEW OF RECENT EVENTS. IN GENERAL, THE PARTICIPANTS FELT IT WAS SOMEWHAT A SMOOTH, ARROGANT, AND POLISHED PERFORMANCE BUT ONE THAT DID NOT CONVINCe MANY PEOPLE.

5. MEETINGS IN THE STATE DEPT

I UNDERSTAND FROM THE STATE DEPT THAT MINISTER STANLEY MET BRIEFLY WITH ARMACOST AND PEOPLE IN THE EUROPEAN DIVISION. STANLEY STRESSED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUED US FUNDING FOR THE INTERNATIONAL FUND. HE PRAISED THE IRISH GOVERNMENT FOR ITS COOPERATION IN COMBATTING TERRORISM. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT STANLEY WAS NOT PRESSED AT THE STATE DEPT ON THE IMPACT OF RECENT EVENTS THAT HAVE CAUSED US CONCERN.

6. MEETING WITH THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND GROUP

BRIAN DONNELLY ARRANGED A LUNCH FOR MINISTER STANLEY WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY MAJORITY LEADER TOM FOLEY, PAT WILLIAMS AND BILL COYNE. STANLEY WAS ACCOMPANIED BY THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AND SHERARD COWPER-COLES. THERE WAS A BRIEF INITIAL DISCUSSION ON THE FAIR EMPLOYMENT ISSUE DURING WHICH DONNELLY AND FOLEY TOOK A CAUTIOUS AND CRITICAL APPROACH. THEY PERCEIVED TOO MANY LOOPHOLES IN THE BRITISH PROPOSALS AND FELT THAT THERE WAS A NEED FOR STRONG MEASURES TO BE BUILT INTO THE ACTUAL LEGISLATION. MOST OF THE MEETING WHICH WAS IN GENERAL ACRIMONIOUS AND TENSE WAS SPENT ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. DONNELLY IN PARTICULAR STRESSED STALKER/SAMPSON, THE BIRMINGHAM SIX, THE PRIVATE THAIN AFFAIR, THE SHOOTING OF MACANESPIE AND THE KILLINGS IN GIBRALTAR. STANLEY TOOK WHAT WAS DESCRIBED TO ME PERSONALLY BY BRIAN DONNELLY AS A SMOOTH, UNCTIOUS AND CONDESCENDING APPROACH AND DEFENDED THE BRITISH POSITION IN EVERY ASPECT. IN RELATION TO PRIVATE THAIN, STANLEY SAID THAT IT WAS REALLY A CASE OF MANSLAUGHTER AND NOT MURDER AND THAT ONE OF THE REASONS FOR ALLOWING HIM BACK INTO THE ARMY WAS IN ORDER TO HAVE HIM SUPERVISED. IN WHAT HE APPEARED TO FEEL WAS A CONCESSION HE SAID THAT THAIN WOULD NOT BE SENT BACK TO NORTHERN IRELAND. FOLEY MADE THE POINT THAT FROM THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE THIS COULD ONLY BE VIEWED WITH INCREDULITY. ONE COULD NOT IMAGINE A WHITE BOSTON POLICEMAN BEING CONVICTED OF MURDERING A BLACK MAN, BEING RELEASED EARLY AND THEN REINSTATED. THE BLACKS WOULD BURN DOWN BOSTON IN SUCH A SITUATION. DONNELLY ALSO RAISED THE NON-PUBLICATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RUC AND RECEIVED THE USUAL RESPONSE THAT THIS WAS BEING CONSIDERED. DONNELLY WHO WAS MY INFORMANT FOR ALL OF THE ABOVE WAS OBVIOUSLY INCENSED AND FELT THAT HE HAD BEEN ON THE RECEIVING END OF AN "ARROGANT, LECTURING BRITISH POLITICIAN." HE SAID THAT THE MAJORITY LEADER WHO IS NORMALLY A FAIRLY CALM PERSON BECAME QUITE HEATED ALSO AND FELT THAT THE WHOLE APPROACH OUTLINED BY STANLEY WAS INSENSITIVE AND DAMAGING TO ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS. THEY DID NOT HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET ON TO OTHER ISSUES SUCH AS THE FUND, ETC. STANLEY'S ATTITUDE ENCOURAGED FOLEY TO SIGN ON TO A FRIENDS OF IRELAND STATEMENT WHICH IS MUCH TOUGHER THAN USUAL (TEXT IS BEING FAXED TO YOU).

7. BRITISH EMBASSY RECEPTION

I RECEIVED A CALL LATE YESTERDAY FROM SHERARD COWPER-COLES OF THE BRITISH EMBASSY. HE WANTED TO MENTION IN PARTICULAR MINISTER STANLEY'S CONTACTS IN RELATION TO THE INTERNATIONAL FUND. THE NEW HEAD OF US AID, MR WOODS, HAD BEEN VERY TOUGH ON THE QUESTION OF FUNDING FOR THE 4TH YEAR. HE MADE THE POINT THAT THE CAKE TO BE DISTRIBUTED WAS GETTING SMALLER AND THAT THERE WERE MORE DESERVING COUNTRIES SUCH AS BANGLADESH, PAKISTAN AND THE PHILIPPINES. COWPER-COLES FELT THAT THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF CHANGING USAID'S APPROACH TO THIS ISSUE. THE RECEPTION ON THE POLITICAL SIDE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT (THE EUROPEAN DIVISION) WAS MORE SUPPORTIVE PARTICULARLY IN RELATION TO THE FUND AND THE WORK THAT IT IS DOING BUT IT IS CLEAR THAT THEY WILL NOT TRY TO OVERRIDE THE USAID APPROACH. IN THEIR CONTACTS ON THE HILL WHERE THEY MET LEE HAMILTON (CHAIRMAN, FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE) THERE WAS A MORE SYMPATHETIC APPROACH ON THE FUND. COWPER-COLES ALSO MENTIONED THAT AMBASSADOR ACLAND WILL SHORTLY CALL ON SEN LAUTENBERG TO TRY AND PERSUADE HIM TO DROP THE GAO REPORT IDEA.

8. IN GENERAL, COWPER-COLES CLAIMED THAT THE VISIT HAD GONE RATHER WELL AND HIS MAIN IMPRESSION WAS THAT PEOPLE HAD COME TO REALISE THAT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE ISSUES WERE NOT AS PURE AND SIMPLE AS THEY APPEARED. I INDICATED THAT THIS WAS NOT THE IMPRESSION THAT THE EMBASSY HAD RECEIVED AND THAT MANY PEOPLE HAD BEEN RATHER TAKEN ABACK AT MINISTER STANLEY'S ALOOF AND CONDESCENDING TONE. COWPER-COLES CONCEDED THAT STANLEY WOULD NOT HAVE CONVINCED MANY PEOPLE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE ISSUES BUT THAT HE WAS GOOD ON FAIR EMPLOYMENT. HE ADMITTED THAT STANLEY HAD BEEN PRESSED ON THE CONTENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE BILL THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY EMERGE, ON THE TIMETABLE FOR LEGISLATION AND ON THE QUESTION OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN PARTICULAR. COWPER-COLES STRESSED THAT MY GOVERNMENT'S WELCOMING REACTION HAD BEEN EXTREMELY HELPFUL AND HAD BEEN MUCH APPRECIATED ON THEIR SIDE: E

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