

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



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IMMEDIATE

TO HQ
FOR A/SECY NELIGAN

FROM LONDON
FROM AMBASSADOR

MMMKIKIO

JOHN H SPOKE TO T AFTER OUR LUNCH THIS AFTERNOON AND IT WAS AGREED HE WOULD COME DOWN TO DUBLIN AT WEEKEND AND REPORT TO T. DIRECT.

NEVERTHELESS, THE FOLLOWING, WHICH IS A SUMMARY OF WHAT HE SAID TO ME OVER LUNCH, MAY BE USEFUL. HE ARRIVED LATE FOR LUNCH AS HE HAD SEEN IRISH NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS BEFOREHAND.

OVERALL IMPRESSION

PM WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ATKINS AND BY MICHAEL ALEXANDER FROM PM'S PRIVATE OFFICE. HUME DID MOST OF THE TALKING WHILE PM LISTENED. AFTERWARDS ATKINS AND HUME WENT TO NI OFFICE FOR FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. ATMOSPHERE IN BOTH TALKS WAS FRIENDLY AND MATTER-OF-FACT. SHE LISTENED CAREFULLY TO WHAT HE HAD TO SAY AND WAS NOT IN ANY WAY HECTORING AND ARGUMENTATIVE. HE THOUGHT SHE WAS NOT UNRECEPTIVE TO HIS VIEWS AS SUMMARISED BELOW. HIS EVALUATION IS THAT SHE IS ABLE TO TAKE NEW IDEAS ON BOARD AND THAT SHE COULD WELL BE PERSUADED TO ACCEPT THAT ONLY A THREE TIER APPROACH IS POSSIBLE - IN THE NORTH BETWEEN THE COMMUNITIES; BETWEEN THE NORTH AND OURSELVES; AND BETWEEN THE TWO ISLANDS. HOWEVER, AND THIS I MUST EMPHASISE, SHE DID SAY THAT THE ONLY FEASIBLE RELATIONSHIP SHE COULD SEE AT PRESENT WOULD BE BETWEEN THE UK AND THE REPUBLIC.

HUME THOUGHT HOWEVER, - AND THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT - THAT FROM HER QUESTIONS AND REPLIES NO FINAL DECISIONS ABOUT FUTURE BRITISH POLICY IN NI HAD YET BEEN TAKEN. SHE REPEATED THE IDEA EXPRESSED IN HER AIREY NEAVE MEMORIAL SPEECH THAT BRITAIN COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO GIVE ANYTHING OTHER THAN SUPPORT TO THE EXPRESSED WISH OF THE MAJORITY IN NI. HE ALSO HAD IMPRESSION SHE IS CONSIDERING A BILL OF RIGHTS. SHE SEEMED TO RECOGNISE, FOLLOWING COMMENTS FROM HUME, THAT THE YEARS OF UNIONIST DOMINATION IN NI HAD BEEN CORRUPT AND HAD CAUSED INSTABILITY AND SUFFERING IN THE LONG RUN.

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SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

1. IN RELATION TO THE THREE-TIER APPROACH, HUME SAID THAT ONLY THE FIRST HAD REALLY BEEN GIVEN ATTENTION AND IT HAD FAILED BECAUSE OF UNIONIST INTRANSIGENCE. PEACE AND LAW AND ORDER COULD ONLY COME FROM A CONSENSUS BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH IN WHICH DUBLIN HAS A VITAL ROLE TO PLAY. THERE COULD BE NO LASTING SETTLEMENT WITHOUT DUBLIN'S COOPERATION AND IN BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN DUBLIN AND LONDON. HUME SAID IT WAS UNREASONABLE TO ASK DUBLIN TO COOPERATE IN BRINGING SECURITY TO AN ARTIFICIAL BORDER. IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO PREPARE FOR A CONFERENCE IN WHICH BOTH COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTH, AND THE DUBLIN AND LONDON GOVERNMENTS COULD PARTICIPATE.

THE PM SAID THAT TERRORISTS WERE AN ENEMY BOTH OF NORTH AND SOUTH. HUME AGREED BUT SAID THAT SECURITY AND PEACE COULD ONLY BE WON IF THE ROLE OF THE REPUBLIC IN AN EVENTUAL SETTLEMENT WERE RECOGNISED.

THE PM ALSO SAID THAT ARTICLES 2 AND 3 IN OUR CONSTITUTION CREATED DIFFICULTIES FOR UNIONISTS. HUME SAID EVERYTHING SHOULD BE PUT ON THE TABLE FOR DISCUSSION WITHOUT PRIOR AGREEMENT AS TO THE FUTURE.

HUME SAID THAT IF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS HOPING TO FOSTER SOMETHING IN BETWEEN POWERSHARING AND MAJORITY RULE IT WOULD PLACE THE SDLP IN AN IMPOSSIBLE POSITION AND OPEN THE ORDER TO INCREASED VIOLENCE. HUME REFERRED TO PROGRESS ON RHODESIA AND SAID THAT IF IAN SMITH WAS NOT INCOURAGED TO MOVEMENT AND FLEXIBILITY HE WOULD NEVER HAVE EVEN CONSIDERED TALKING TO THE BLACKS. LANCASTER HOUSE ILLUSTRATED THE NEED TO TALK TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE MAIN COMMUNITIES CONCERNED AND THE NEIGHBOURING GOVERNMENTS.

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WHEN LEAVING NO 10 HUME SAID TO THE PM THAT HE WAS DISAPPOINTED AND EXPLAINED WHY. EARLIER IN THEIR CONVERSATION THE PM HAD SAID THAT THE CONSERVATIVE PEOPLE FOR EXAMPLE IN DURHAM HAVE TO ACCEPT A LABOUR GOVERNMENT EVERY FOUR OR FIVE YEARS. APPARENTLY THIS WAS TO SUPPORT MAJORITY RULE IN N.I. BUT HUME MADE THE OBVIOUS POINT THAT HE WISHED N.I. WERE LIKE DURHAM AND COULD HOPE FOR POLITICAL CHANGE EVERY FEW YEARS IN THE NORMAL DEMOCRATIC WAY. THE PM SAID SHE FULLY ACCEPTED THAT EVERY CITIZEN AND MINORITY MUST BE RESPECTED.

HUME ALSO MADE THE POINT THAT THE IRISH REPUBLIC COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO GO ON FOREVER EXPENDING LARGE SUMS OF MONEY ON SECURITY COOPERATION IN CONNECTION WITH AN AREA OVER WHICH THEY HAD NO JURISDICTION AND IN THE POLITICAL AFFAIRS OF WHICH THEY HAD NO SAY. THE ANNUAL COST OF N.I. TO THE UK EXCHEQUER WAS GREATER THAN THE EEC CONTRIBUTION - APART FROM THE COST IN BLOOD. YET AGAINST ALL THIS EXPENDITURE THERE WAS NO COOPERATION FROM THE UNIONIST MAJORITY. THEY HAD A GUARANTEE FROM LONDON BUT THEY SHOULD BE ASKED TO ACCEPT THE STANDARDS OF LONDON. LORD O'NEILL, CHICHESTER CLARKE AND BRIAN FAULKNER HAD ALL BEEN DEFEATED BY THE UNCONDITIONAL VETO. COULD 2% OF THE UK POPULATION CONTINUE TO REJECT WHAT IS REASONABLE?

TALKS WITH ATKINS.

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THE N.I. OFFICE ARE WORKING OUT POSSIBLE WHITE OR GREEN PAPERS NOW. THE N.I. PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARIES HAD APPROACHED ATKINS RECENTLY AND HAD SAID THAT THE PRESENT TALKS WOULD GET NOWHERE UNTIL THE CONTEXT IS BROADENED. KEN STOME, THE PERMANENT UNDER SECRETARY IN THE N.I. OFFICE ACCEPTED THAT THIS IS CLOSE TO HUMES BASIC CASE. BOTH ATKINS AND STOME FELT THAT HUMES MEETING WITH THE PM WAS USEFUL IN EXPRESSING SDLP POINTS OF VIEW.

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