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Mr. McNamara Party visit
put this on
1. Equal Treatment - Operation USA
and
2. U.S. Democratic Party Friends
(see pg. 2)
28/1/62 1715
see 6/7/62

C.39

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
FOR NELIGAN FROM J SHARKEY

MMMMVGHY

47/17/62
28/1/62

Q-2 1/62

MAJORITY WHIP TOM FOLEY TOGETHER WITH HIS AIDE BRANDT AND THE SPEAKER'S COUNSEL KIRK O'DONNELL MET YESTERDAY (25TH JAN) AT OUR RECOMMENDATION WITH THE VISITING UNIONIST DELEGATION TO THE U.S. (TAYLOR, ROBINSON, ETC.). FOLLOWING IS SENSE OF MEETING AS CONVEYED TO ME.

FOLEY EXPLAINED THAT IT WAS NOT THE BEST TIME FOR A VISIT TO WASHINGTON SINCE CONGRESS WAS ONLY IN PROCESS OF RETURNING FROM THE CHRISTMAS RECESS: MANY MEMBERS WERE STILL IN DISTRICTS AND IN ANY EVENT HAD A HEAVY SCHEDULE AWAITING THEIR RETURN. FOLEY ALSO EXPLAINED BRIEFLY PURPOSE OF FRIENDS OF IRELAND ORGANISATION VIZ ITS CLEAR CONDEMNATION OF VIOLENCE: ITS SUPPORT OF UNITY ON THE BASIS OF THE CONSENT OF A MAJORITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

ESSENTIALLY, DISCUSSION BOGGED DOWN ON THE "UNITY" ISSUE, WITH ROBINSON AND TAYLOR ARGUING THAT THERE WOULD NEVER BE IRISH UNITY: THE MAJORITY IN THE NORTH WISHED TO STAY WITH THE UK: BECAUSE OF THIS IT WAS HARMFUL FOR AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES TO SUPPORT UNITY.

FOLEY ARGUED THAT ALL IRISH-AMERICANS CHERISHED THE HOPE OF EVENTUAL UNITY. AS POLITICIANS, THE VISITORS WOULD HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THIS WAS A BASIC REALITY WHICH ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES HERE COULD NOT IGNORE: FURTHERMORE, FRIENDS OF IRELAND WAS ONLY ORGANISATION OFFERING CLEAR LEADERSHIP TO IRISH-AMERICANS AND ONLY GROUP CONSISTENTLY CONDEMNATORY OF VIOLENCE. IN THE ABSENCE OF THIS LEADERSHIP, THERE WOULD BE A VACUUM WHICH OTHERS MORE MILITANT WOULD FILL. THERE WAS, OF COURSE, NO UNIONIST CONSTITUENCY IN THE U.S. AND IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT ONE COULD EMERGE. DISCUSSION APPARENTLY CIRCLED AROUND THIS BROAD THEME FOR SOME TIME.

GENERALLY, FOLEY HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT TAYLOR WAS A MORE REASONABLY INDIVIDUAL THAN ROBINSON WHO EMERGED NONTHELESS AS THE MORE POWERFUL PERSONALITY OF THE TWO. ROBINSON ALLOWED TAYLOR TO BE MAIN SPOKESMAN, INTERVENING MOSTLY IN THE ROLE OF "GUARDIAN OF THE TRUTH". TAYLOR, WHEN PRESSED ON THE NEED FOR GREATER PROTECTION OF MINORITY RIGHTS, ADMITTED THE EXISTENCE OF FACTORS IN THE PRE-68 SITUATION WHICH CALLED FOR SUBSEQUENT CORRECTION BY STORMONT AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. ROBINSON MADE NO SUCH ADMISSION. BOTH ROBINSON AND TAYLOR WERE CRITICAL OF JOHN HUME WHO WAS CHARACTERISED AS "A PRISONER OF THE IRA." BOTH SPOKE WELL OF OLIVER NAPIER.

IN GENERAL, THE AMERICAN SIDE SAW THE MEETING AS "NOT VERY USEFUL," "A WASTE OF TIME." INDEED, IT WAS THEIR IMPRESSION THAT THE OVERALL VISIT TO THE U.S. HAD NOT BEEN VERY PRODUCTIVE FOR THE UNIONISTS. HAD TAYLOR AND MRS BRADFORD COME SEPARATELY AND NOW ALLOWED THEMSELVES TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH PAISLEY BETTER RESULTS WOULD PROBABLY HAVE EMERGED.

ROBINSON AND TAYLOR WERE CLEARLY INCENSED THAT THEY HAD BEEN SIGNED BY KENNEDY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE FOUNDING CHARTER OF THE FRIENDS (OF WHICH THEY WERE GIVEN COPY) SPOKE WILLINGNESS TO HEAR ALL SIDES. THEY WILL PROBABLY TARGET KENNEDY FOR FURTHER CRITICISM.

AS YOU KNOW, WE HAVE BEEN PRESSING KENNEDY'S OFFICE STRONGLY TO MAKE SOME GESTURE TO THE VISITING DELEGATION E.G. A MEETING WITH TAYLOR AND MRS BRADFORD OR A MEETING WITH MRS BRADFORD ALONE. WE ALSO SUGGESTED THAT AT THE LEAST KENNEDY NOMINATE A SPOKESMAN TO MEET THE DELEGATION. WE ARGUED THAT THIS COULD BE DONE BY INVOLVING CONGRESSMAN-FOLEY IN THE EXERCISE, ALLOWING FOLEY TO INVITE REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE OFFICES OF KENNEDY, O'NEILL AND MOYNIHAN TO SIT IN AT A MEETING IN HIS OFFICE. WE PUT A SIMILAR CASE TO THE OFFICES OF MOYNIHAN AND O'NEILL.

IN THE EVENT, AT OUR SUGGESTION, FOLEY INVITED REPRESENTATIVES FROM ALL THREE OFFICES. MOYNIHAN'S CHIEF AIDE PROMISED TO ATTEND THE MEETING BUT DID NOT COME IN THE END. AS MENTIONED, THE SPEAKER WAS REPRESENTED BY HIS COUNSEL.

DESPITE OUR ENDEAVOURS, KENNEDY'S OFFICE COULD NOT BE PERSUADED TO HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH THE DELEGATION. THEY HAVE ARGUED (A) THAT KENNEDY HAS MET UNIONISTS IN THE PAST (E.G. MARTIN SMYTH; CHURCH OF IRELAND) (B) HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO MEET TAYLOR OR MRS BRADFORD HAD THEY COME TO THE U.S. OTHER THAN AS PART OF A PAISLEYITE DELEGATION (C) FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE, THE DELEGATION (WHATEVER THE DETAIL OF ITS COMPOSITION) WAS VIEWED AS A PAISLEYITE DELEGATION AND KENNEDY'S POSITION WOULD BE SEEN TO BE INCONSISTENT IF HE RECEIVED (OR HIS OFFICE RECEIVED ANY PART OF IT) (D) SHOULD AN OPPORTUNITY ARISE (AND NO SUCH OPPORTUNITY SO FAR SEEMS TO EXIST) WHERE KENNEDY AND TAYLOR WERE ATTENDING THE SAME FUNCTION KENNEDY WOULD SPEAK TO TAYLOR. KENNEDY'S OFFICE VERY MUCH REGRETTED THAT THEY COULD NOT YIELD TO OUR ENTREATIES ON THE POINT AT ISSUE.

OBVIOUSLY, KENNEDY'S OFFICE IS EXTRAORDINARILY SENSITIVE ON THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE. THE MAIN KENNEDY PREOCCUPATION AT THE PRESENT TIME IS RE-ELECTION BY A MASSIVE MAJORITY IN MASSACHUSETTS. AS DEMOCRATIC WHIP FOLEY REMARKED TO ME, KENNEDY IS NERVOUS OF GIVING ANY HOSTAGES TO FORTUNE TO THE OFTEN HOSTILE SOUTH-BOSTON (AND RELATED) CONSTITUENCY WHICH HAS CAUSED HIM PROBLEMS (E.G. ON BUSSING) IN THE PAST.

MOYNIHAN IS, OF COURSE, SIMILARLY PREOCCUPIED WITH HIS NEW YORK RE-ELECTION. WE SPOKE TO HIS OFFICE TODAY AND THEY PLEADED THAT THE SENATOR'S UNUSUALLY HEAVY SCHEDULE PRECLUDED HIS MEETING A UNIONIST DELEGATION FROM IRELAND. IF THE SENATOR FOUND DIFFICULTY IN SCHEDULING TIME FOR MEETINGS WITH VISITING NEW YORK ASSEMBLY MEN, THEN WE WOULD UNDERSTAND HIS DIFFICULTY IN SCHEDULING A SLOT FOR UNIONIST VISITORS. WE HAVE TO ASSUME THAT THE SAME ELECTORAL CONSTRAINTS APPLY IN MOYNIHAN'S CASE AS THEY DO IN KENNEDY'S AND BE AWARE, OF COURSE, OF THE CLOSE LIAISON BETWEEN THE TWO OFFICES.

END OF MESSAGE

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