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| Reference Code: | 2015/89/74 |
| Creation Date(s): | 29 August 1985 |
| Extent and medium: | 3 pages |
| Creator(s): | Department of the Taoiseach |
| Access Conditions: | Open |
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Personal and Secret

S20703

Secretary

Visit to Northern Ireland of Judge Clark, 28 August 1985

Judge Clark met yesterday in Belfast for half an hour with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Douglas Hurd, and had lunch with Sir Philip Foreman, Managing Director of Shorts. Judge Clark said he explained his position vis-a-vis President Reagan and the Secretary of State for Defence, Casper Weinberger, to both Hurd and Foreman, telling them he continued to have a role in this area.

He had a general discussion with Hurd about American foreign policy on South Africa and the Soviet Union. He told Hurd that President Reagan has a continuing interest in Northern Ireland and in an Anglo-Irish agreement and he repeated to Hurd what the President had said to Mrs. Thatcher at their last two meetings. He said Hurd expressed concern at the possible perception in Northern Ireland of the Fund which could well be attacked by Paisley and Powell as a "bribe". Hurd didn't think it advisable that the Fund be announced at the same time as an agreement. Judge Clark said he hoped other Governments would be involved as well as the United States, to which Hurd responded positively. He told Hurd why he was calling on Foreman and Hurd expressed satisfaction that he was making the call. Hurd explained that he was under considerable pressure

because of the stand he had taken on parades and stressed that he believed he had taken the right decision. They had had reports that Martin Galvin may re-appear in Northern Ireland. He had made sure that the police handling of Galvin would be more restrained than last year. The Judge was not over-impressed with Hurd.

At the lunch with Foreman, which was attended also by John Hume, Judge Clark did not go into detail about the continuing discrimination at Shorts. Foreman's opening position was to defend his record. The Judge told Foreman that Foreman had entered into a personal commitment with him prior to the agreement to supply 18 Shorts aircraft to the American Government. On that basis he had persuaded his friend Weinberger to take the contract away from the Spaniards and to give it to Shorts. This was not for American interests but for social reasons.

It is now clear that Foreman has not lived up to those commitments. The next contract (which is an option for a further 48 planes) will be decided by December. Unless Shorts can provide evidence that they have lived up to the commitment given to the Judge by Foreman the Judge would speak to Weinberger, explain the position and release Weinberger from his agreement to give a further order to Shorts. Both the Judge and Hume remarked that Foreman paled visibly when he was given this news. It is now up to Shorts to show that they have lived up to their commitment.

The Judge told me later that he will not recommend that the option for 48 aircraft go to Shorts unless he is satisfied very rapidly that Foreman will exercise his power to undo some of the damage done since March 1984 (by favouring Catholics in the next recruitment process). I told the Judge that the next FEA review is due in October and that you would keep him fully informed of developments. He said that Foreman and himself parted amicably and that he is certain that his meeting will have had a deep effect on Foreman. Hume was delighted with the meeting and with the manner in which the Judge had handled it.

I later accompanied the Judge on a tour of West Belfast.

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Daithi O Ceallaigh

29 August 1985

c.c. Taoiseach
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Attorney-General
Secretary
Mr. Nally
Mr. Ward
Mr. Quigley
Ambassador, London
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