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OF 051745Z APRIL 93

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO(L), NIO(B), BIS NEW YORK, WASHINGTON

IRISH LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE: NORTHERN IRELAND

#### SUMMARY

1. TANAISTE'S SPEECH CONTAINS LARGE SECTION ON NORTHERN IRELAND, CHALLENGING HISTORIC PREJUDICES IN CONTRAST TO TAOISEACH'S SPEECH TO DAIL ON 1 APRIL. GENERAL WELCOME FROM THE MEDIA.

#### DETAIL

2. ALTHOUGH THERE WAS NO SEPARATE DEBATE ON NORTHERN IRELAND AT THE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE IN WATERFORD ON 2-4 APRIL (WE ARE REPORTING MAIN PROCEEDINGS SEPARATELY), THE TANAISTE COVERED THE ISSUE AT LENGTH IN HIS LEADER'S ADDRESS. SPRING CALLED ON THE IRISH PEOPLE TO 'BE PREPARED TO CAST OFF THE CHAINS OF HISTORY, TO STOP BEING PRISONERS OF OUR UPBRINGING'. HE SAID HIS AIM WAS TO 'PUT TOGETHER AN AGREEMENT TO TRANSCEND THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT WHICH WILL FIND SUPPORT ACROSS THE COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND ON BOTH PARTS OF THIS ISLAND' AND THAT TO SECURE SUCH AN AGREEMENT 'WE MUST BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT THAT IT WOULD BE WORTH PAYING A SUBSTANTIAL PRICE AS PART OF THE PROCESS OF MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATION AND DIALOGUE. WE CANNOT ASK OF OTHERS WHAT WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO DO OURSELVES. THAT MEANS BEING PREPARED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE INSTITUTIONAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE TO ACCOMMODATE AND PROTECT THE DIFFERENT TRADITIONS IN THE ISLAND AS A WHOLE.'

3. HE REMINDED DELEGATES THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT HAD UNDERTAKEN IN A SOLEMN INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT 'TO ACCEPT THAT THE STATUS OF NORTHERN IRELAND WILL REMAIN UNCHANGED UNLESS AND UNTIL A MAJORITY OF ITS CITIZENS DECIDE OTHERWISE. THOSE WHO ARE AFRAID TO GIVE ANY DEEPER EXPRESSION TO OUR GUARANTEES OF PROTECTION OF THE UNIONIST TRADITION, AND THOSE ON THE UNIONIST SIDE WHO PROFESS TO BE AFRAID OF THE TRUE INTENTIONS OF THE IRISH PEOPLE, SHOULD BE REMINDED AGAIN AND AGAIN OF WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED.' REPEATING HIS WISH TO SIT DOWN WITH UNIONISTS HE SAID THAT 'NOTHING I SEEK AND NOTHING I DO WILL BE AIMED AT UNDERMINING THE HERITAGE, TRADITION, ASPIRATIONS OR AFFILIATIONS OF THE PEOPLE TO WHOM I AM SPEAKING'.

4. SPRING'S COMMENTS HAVE RECEIVED A GENERAL WELCOME FROM THE PRESS, IN MARKED CONTRAST TO THE TAOISEACH'S SPEECH IN LAST WEEK'S DAIL DEBATE. THE IRISH TIMES SAID THAT HE LEFT 'NO DOUBT AS TO HIS ATTITUDE TO THE PROBLEM OR THE URGENCY WITH WHICH HE BELIEVES IT SHOULD BE ATTACKED.' IT SAYS HE HAS SHOWN 'THE DETERMINATION, CLARITY AND VISION THAT HE WILL NEED TO

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Mr J HANLEY  
PS/Mr MATES  
PUS

MR D FELL  
MR LEDLIE DUS (B)  
MR WOOD  
MR DODDS  
MR J STEELE  
MR M WILLIAMS  
MR LEACH  
MR MACCABE  
LIAISON STAFF X 2  
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BRING TO THE TASK'. YET, THE EDITORIAL RECOGNISES THAT 'NOT ONLY IN FIANNA FAIL BUT, IT WOULD APPEAR, AMONG HIS OWN BACK BENCHERS, THERE IS RESISTANCE TO FRESH THINKING AND THE VERY IDEA OF COMPROMISE'.

5. THE IRISH INDEPENDENT CONCENTRATES ON 'THE OBVIOUS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LABOUR AND FIANNA FAIL OVER THE NORTH' AND SUGGESTS THAT 'IF WE CAN SPOT SUCH CONTRADICTIONS THE NORTHERN PARTIES WILL SEE THEM TOO AND PERHAPS OFFER THEM AS SOUND REASONS WHY THEY WILL NOT DO BUSINESS WITH US IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE'. IT CONCLUDES THAT SPRING WILL HAVE 'TO WIN OVER MORE FIANNA FAIL DEPUTIES TO HIS GENEROUS VIEW OF THE NORTHERN PROBLEM BEFORE HE CAN MOVE HIS NORTHERN POLICY ALONG.'

6. THE IRISH PRESS THOUGHT THE SPEECH 'OFFERED HOPE AMID THE DESPAIR OF PARAMILITARY SAVAGERY, THAT SHOWED REAL SENSITIVITY FOR TWO COMMUNITIES TRAPPED ON THE TREADMILL OF HISTORY' AND WHICH RECOGNISED THAT IF A SOLUTION IS TO BE FOUND, THEN 'A PRICE WILL HAVE TO BE PAID BY THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH AS WELL BY THE NORTHERN MAJORITY'. TO UNIONISTS, IT SAYS, THE TANAISTE 'HAS SENT OUT A MESSAGE THAT CAN SCARCELY BE IGNORED'. IT CONCLUDES THAT IF SPRING'S APPROACH ALSO REPRESENTS THE TAOISEACH'S POLICY 'THEN THERE CAN BE REAL HOPE OF PROGRESS'.

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