

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

### IRELAND



<b>Reference Code:</b>	2005/151/698
<b>Title:</b>	Copy telex to Sean Donlon, Assistant Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs from D O'Sullivan, Irish Ambassador to the United Kingdom reporting on meeting with Douglas Janes, Northern Ireland Office, relating to the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention and referring to a meeting in Downing Street between the Prime Minister [Harold Wilson, MP] and Mrs Margaret Thatcher, MP, leader of the Conservative Party the purpose of which was to solicit discretion in public utterances concerning the Convention; describes the behaviour of Ian Paisley, MP, as demonstrating 'bad judgement' and William Craig's letter as 'statesmanlike'
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*Mr. Nally*



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*12/9/75 1330*  
*- Fred*  
*Amir*

5300G ESTR E1  
HIBERNIA LDN

SERIAL NO 257

SECRET CODE

IMMEDIATE  
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*cc. PSS Ministers,*  
*Mr. Nally*  
*Mr. O'Brien*  
*Mr. Ryan*

TO HQ FROM LONDON  
FOR ASST. SEC. DONLON FROM AMBASSADOR

I SAW DOUGLAS JANES THIS MORNING. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE MAIN POINTS THAT EMERGED:

- (1) THE WEDNESDAY MEETING IN DOWNING STREET WAS ON THE INITIATIVE OF THE PRIME MINISTER. IT HAD BEEN ON THE MAT FOR SOME DAYS AND THE PURPOSE UNDERLYING IT IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S MIND WAS TO APPEAL TO MRS THATCHER TO ENSURE THE UTMOST DISCRETION BY HER COLLEAGUES IN THEIR PUBLIC UTTERANCES AT THIS SENSITIVE TIME IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION. THERE WAS CONCERN IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES ABOUT SOME RECENT STATEMENTS MADE BY AIREY NEAVE. AS THERE WAS SOME EVIDENCE OF LOBBYING OF TORIES BY MEMBERS OF THE UUUC EARLY THIS WEEK, THE PRIME MINISTER FELT ON MONDAY THAT NO TIME SHOULD BE LOST IN HAVING THE MEETING. A LESS PRESSING REASON FOR THE MEETING WAS THE DESIRABILITY OF FILLING MRS THATCHER IN BEFORE HER VISIT TO THE USA.
- (2) THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT PAISLEY MADE A PERSONAL BID FOR POWER. IN THIS HE HAS BEEN CLUMSY AND HAS SHOWN BAD JUDGMENT. THE GOVERNMENT WOULD CERTAINLY NOT WISH TO SEE HIM COMING OUT ON TOP AS HIS PUBLIC ATTITUDE IS INVARIABLY DESTRUCTIVE. IN PRIVATE HE CAN BE QUITE DIFFERENT.
- (3) CRAIG'S LETTER WAS STATESMANLIKE. WHILE THE SITUATION REGARDING THE CONVENTION IS NOW CONFUSED THERE COULD BE INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS BEFORE THE MEETING NEXT WEEK. A LOT OF INTENSIVE LOBBYING WILL BE GOING ON IN BELFAST OVER THE WEEK-END. THERE COULD BE SOME INTERESTING RALLYING OF SUPPORT FOR CRAIG.

*M*  
*12/9*



- (4) IF THE CONVENTION IS TO END SOON THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE PRODUCING ANY IDEAS OF ITS OWN QUICKLY. NORMALLY THE REPORT OF THE CONVENTION WOULD HAVE TO BE AWAITED AND A REACTION SHOULD COME ONLY AFTER THE REPORT HAD BEEN CONSIDERED. HOWEVER, THE DEBATE ON THE REPORT IN THE CONVENTION MAY CREATE A SITUATION IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MAY BE FORCED TO SHOW ITS HAND MORE QUICKLY.
- (5) JAMES FIRMLY EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WILL NOT BE STAMPEDED BY PAISLEY OR BY ANYBODY ELSE INTO MOVING MERLYN REES' QUICKLY. MERLYN REES'S FORTHCOMING VISIT TO THE US AND CANADA IS PARTLY PRIVATE AND PARTLY BUSINESS. HE HAS A LONGSTANDING INVITATION FROM HIS CLOSE FRIEND THE PERM. REP. AT THE UN. WHILE IN THE US AND CANADA HE WILL BE DOING SOME TRADE AND OTHER ECONOMIC PROMOTION WORK OF INTEREST TO THE NORTH. NO DOUBT HE WILL ALSO WISH ~~XX~~ " TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON THE POLITICAL ASPECTS".
- (6) REES HAD DEFINITELY PLANNED TO TAKE SOME LEAVE THIS WEEK AS HE HAS URGENT CONSTITUENCY MATTERS TO ATTEND TO.
- (7) JIM CALLAGHAN HAS BEEN BRIEFED FOR A TALK WITH THE MINISTER IN VENICE. IN A THROW AWAY REMARK JAMES THOUGHT THE REQUEST FOR A MEETING WITH HIM CALLAGHAN AND REES TOGETHER A BIT STRANGE. REES MAY NOT READILY AGREE TO THIS. *off magazine*
- (8) I CALLED JAMES'S ATTENTION TO THE INSERTIONS IN COMBAT ABOUT WHICH JOHN MC COLGAN WROTE TO ME. THESE HAD BEEN MENTIONED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE BY THE SDLP ABOUT TEN DAYS AGO. ENQUIRIES WHICH HAVE BEEN MADE SINCE LEAD TO THE CONCLUSION THAT THE INSERTIONS WERE BOGUS. *R.I.P. for VOR men ~~murdered~~ killed in Miami Beach incident* *We know nothing about this*
- (9) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE HAS AUTHORISED THE SOLICITORS TO PROCEED WITH THE NEGOTIATION OF A SETTLEMENT IN THE MC ELHONE CASE.
- (10) AFTER THE CONVENTION MEETING NEXT WEEK IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO SEE MORE CLEARLY WHAT THE FUTURE POSITION IS LIKELY TO BE

DO'S            12/9/75    TIME    13.25

CORRECTION    PAGE 1    LINE 10    "MAILY"    SHOULD READ    "MAINLY"

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