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FROM WASHINGTON 202345Z JUL 82.

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 2501 OF 20 JULY

INFO IMMEDIATE NIO BELFAST, NIO LONDON, DUBLIN,

C.G. NEW YORK, BIS NEW YORK.

INFO SAVING ALL C.G. U.S.A.

NORTHERN IRELAND: VISIT OF MR PRIOR TO WASHINGTON: 19/20 JULY.

TODAY'S MURDERS IN LONDON BY THE PROVISIONAL IRA GAVE POIGNANT IMMEDIACY TO THE APPEALS MR PRIOR HAS MADE HERE IN WASHINGTON IN A NUMBER OF TELEVISION INTERVIEWS AND IN MEETINGS WITH THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND GROUP IN CONGRESS AND THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE THAT PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES SHOULD REALISE THAT ANY MONEY SENT TO THE PROVISIONAL IRA WILL ONLY BUY ARMS AND BOMBS WHICH WILL BE USED TO KILL AND MAIM INNOCENT PEOPLE.

2. IN INTERVIEWS AND IN PRIVATE MEETINGS, MR PRIOR HAS STRESSED THAT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA WILL NOT DETER THE GOVERNMENT FROM PURSUING ITS POLITICAL INITIATIVE AND THAT TERRORIST ATTACKS, IN LONDON, AS IN NORTHERN IRELAND, WILL NOT FRIGHTEN THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN INTO PURSUING ANY COURSE OF ACTION OTHER THAN THAT WHICH THEY HAVE FREELY CHOSEN.

3. SPEAKER O'NEILL THIS AFTERNOON ISSUED A STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE BOMBINGS AS OUTRAGEOUS AND ADDING "SUCH ACTS OF TERRORISM MUST BE CONDEMNED BY EVERYONE WHO TRULY CARES ABOUT IRELAND. ONCE AGAIN I URGE AMERICANS NOT TO SUPPORT ANY ORGANISATION THAT ENGAGES IN THIS KIND OF TERRORISM. THE IRA IS A TRULY REPREHENSIBLE ORGANISATION." A SIMILAR STATEMENT WAS MADE BY CONGRESSMAN FOLEY, ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND, ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE, AND CONGRESSMAN JIM SHANNON (D-MASSACHUSETTS), WHO VISITED NORTHERN IRELAND RECENTLY, ISSUED A STATEMENT SAYING: "IRISH AMERICANS RECOGNISE THE IRA FOR WHAT IT IS EXCLAMEN WHO ARE DEDICATED TO DESTRUCTION AND DEATH AND ANARCHY - NOT TO PEACE, NOT TO THE OLD DREAM OF AN IRISH REPUBLIC".

4. AT A DINNER AT MY HOUSE LAST NIGHT ATTENDED BY SENATORS MOYNIHAN, DODD AND LUGAR AND CONGRESSMEN FOLEY AND SHANNON AS WELL AS BY JUDGE CLARK, AND LARRY EAGLEBURGER, MR PRIOR EXPLAINED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT'S INTIATIVE, MAKING CLEAR THAT,

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ALTHOUGH NONE OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES LIKED WHAT HE WAS DOING, HE BELIEVED THAT THEY WOULD TAKE PART IN ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS AND THAT THE HABIT OF WORKING TOGETHER ONCE THE ASSEMBLY WAS FORMED COULD CREATE CONDITIONS IN WHICH POWERS COULD BE DEVOLVED TO NORTHERN IRELAND. HE GAVE A DESCRIPTION OF THE DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PROVINCE AND EMPHASISED, NOT JUST THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO UPHOLD THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSENT WITHIN A DEMOCRACY, BUT THE FACT THAT THE UNIONISTS WERE AS DETERMINED AS THE NATIONALISTS TO FIGHT FOR WHAT THEY SAW AS THEIR CAUSE. HE DESCRIBED RECENT DIFFICULTIES IN RELATIONS WITH THE IRISH REPUBLIC BUT SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT THESE WOULD NOT ENDURE AND THAT, ONCE THE ASSEMBLY WAS ESTABLISHED, IT MIGHT BE EASIER FOR NORTHERN IRISHMEN TO DEAL WITH DUBLIN WITHOUT THE SUSPICION THAT LONDON WAS COOKING THINGS UP BEHIND THEIR BACKS. JUDGE CLARK EXPRESSED THE ADMINISTRATION'S SUPPORT FOR MR PRIOR'S EFFORTS AND WISHED HIM SUCCESS. STOESEL AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKE IN SIMILAR TERMS AND PROMISED CONTINUED SUPPORT FROM THE ADMINISTRATION IN TRYING TO STEM THE FLOW OF FUNDS AND WEAPONS TO THE PROVISIONAL IRA.

5. IN MEETINGS ON CAPITOL HILL, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE INTEREST IN THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS, EVEN FROM BIAGGI AND ONE OR TWO MEMBERS OF HIS COMMITTEE WHO WERE PRESENT. THERE WERE QUERIES WHETHER THE POSITION OF THE MINORITY WAS ADEQUATELY PROTECTED AND WHETHER THERE WAS ANY GUARANTEE THAT THE ASSEMBLY WOULD NOT SIMPLY BE A TALKING SHOP. MR PRIOR SAID THAT HE COULD NOT GUARANTEE THE SUCCESS OF THE ASSEMBLY THOUGH IT WAS DESIGNED TO OFFER THE MAXIMUM POSSIBILITIES OF PARTICIPATION AND THE RIGHTS OF THE MINORITY WOULD BE FULLY SAFEGUARDED, PARTICULARLY BY THE CHANGES MADE IN THE BILL DURING ITS PASSAGE THROUGH THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. BOTH AT THESE MEETINGS AND AT A LUNCHTIME MEETING WITH JOURNALISTS, MR PRIOR STRESSED THAT, IF DEMOCRACY MEANT ANYTHING, IT MUST HAVE EVEN MORE TO DO WITH THE RIGHTS OF MINORITIES THAN WITH THE RIGHTS OF MAJORITIES.

6. MR PRIOR'S VISIT CAME AT A TIME WHEN, ON THE DOMESTIC FRONT CONGRESS IS FOCUSING ITS ATTENTION ON THE BUDGET (ESPECIALLY THE DEFENCE BUDGET) AND, ON THE FOREIGN FRONT, IS CONCENTRATING ON THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST. TODAY'S BOMBINGS IN LONDON BROUGHT HOME, HOWEVER, TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS BOTH THE WANTON NATURE OF THE PROVISIONAL IRA AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE US AS A SOURCE OF WEAPONS AND MONEY AS WELL AS THE FACT THAT THE PROBLEMS OF NORTHERN IRELAND HAVE NOT GONE AWAY EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT HIGH ON THEIR CURRENT LIST OF PRIORITIES. MR PRIOR WAS ABLE TO EXPLAIN THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IS SEEKING TO FILL THE CURRENT POLITICAL VACUUM IN THE NORTH AS A MEANS OF BRINGING STABILITY TO THE PROVINCE AND TO REASSURE CONGRESS THAT WE WILL



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PURSUOE OUR GOALS UNDETERRED BY TERRORISM. MR PRIOR MANAGED TO DEMONSTRATE TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND THE ADMINISTRATION THAT, ALTHOUGH HIS PROPOSALS MAY NOT BE LIKED BY ANY OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND PARTIES, THEY DO OFFER THE BEST PROSPECT IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND THAT IT IS IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL PARTIES, INCLUDING THE SDLP, TO TAKE PART IN OCTOBER'S ELECTIONS IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND MAY NOT COME OUT IN SUPPORT OF OUR PROPOSALS BUT AS A RESULT OF THESE MEETINGS, THEY MAY BE LESS DISPOSED TO ACCEPT UNCRITICALLY THE VIEWS OF THE SDLP ON WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACIEVE. EQUALLY, I THINK MR PRIOR WAS ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE THE GOOD FAITH OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN TRYING TO ESTABLISH A FAIR SOCIETY IN THE NORTH AND THAT IF, FOR EXAMPLE, WE DO NOT PROSCRIBE ORGANISATIONS LIKE THE UDA (AS SOME IN CONGRESS WOULD WISH) THIS IS FOR GOOD REASONS - WHICH MR PRIOR DEPLOYED - AND NOT BECAUSE WE SOMEHOW ARE BIASED IN FAVOUR OF ONE SECTION OF THE COMMUNITY.

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PS/MR RIFKIND  
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MR ADAMS  
MR GOODISON  
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