Text of a statement issued by the Government Information Bureau on behalf of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The statement details suggestions made to members of the American government by Dr Patrick Hillery, Minister for Foreign Affairs, that Britain should be encouraged to adopt a political rather than a military approach in Northern Ireland.
4 March 1972

Text of statement issued by the Government
Information Bureau on behalf of the Department
of Foreign Affairs

It has been reported that the Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Dr. P. J. Hillery, T.D., made no suggestions to the American
Secretary of State, Mr. William P. Rogers, when he met him
on February 3rd last concerning what action the United States
Government might take in regard to the Northern Ireland
situation. This is untrue. Among other things, Dr. Hillery
asked Mr. Rogers to indicate, on behalf of the U.S. Government,
to the British Government that their policy of seeking a
solution by military means in Northern Ireland was no way to
solve the problem and was an old-fashioned and self-
perpetuating procedure. He further made it clear that he was
not asking Governments, friendly to both Ireland and Britain,
to adopt a hostile attitude in relation to Britain but rather
suggesting that they should approach the matter on a friendly
basis with a view to influencing the British Government to
act with greater wisdom.

This does not amount to requesting intervention, in the
technical sense of that term, but indicates that Dr. Hillery
would welcome, short of intervention, anything that the United
States Government, as one friendly to Britain might feel able
to do with a view to encouraging Britain to substitute a
political for a military approach to the problem. Mr. Rogers
was reluctant to agree to this request at that meeting, unless
it should also be made by the British Government, on the
ground that any such action on his part would amount to taking
sides and this the United States Government did not want to do.