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Confidential

Mr Burke

NOTE

The Chargé d'Affaires at the British Embassy called at his request on 14 July to raise the question of Mr. Harold McCusker's communication to the Secretary General of the United Nations. In this regard he was aware that we had made an approach in Geneva to know how the British Government, which together with our Government is accused by Mr. McCusker of responsibility for Human Rights infringements in Northern border counties, intended to handle the communication. This matter was also mentioned by Mr. Burke to an N.I.O. official in London on 2 July.

Mr. Tatham was instructed to say that the British side would be interested in consultations with us but on the strict proviso that the fact of our having being in contact on the subject would be kept totally confidential. Mr. Tatham pointed out there was an imbalance of interest in confidentiality in this matter. We might be able to live with a disclosure about consultations, but the British authorities certainly could not. Any indication of "collusion" about how to face up to Mr. McCusker's accusations would bring out the worst in Unionist politicians who would be sure to criticise the British authorities very vigorously. I said that I would endeavour to clear on our side the proposal that we should have consultations but that they would have to be secret.

Mr. Tatham went on to say that in their view the consultations should be between British and Irish officials directly concerned with handling Mr. McCusker's communication in Geneva or New York. I reminded him that our initial approach to their side had been in Geneva and that I thought we would have no difficulty in agreeing to his suggestion.

Telex No. 332 C from Geneva (attached) which I had not seen at the time Mr. Tatham called gives further background information.

[Signature]

D.M. Neligan

July 1982

d - PSM, PSS, Leg & Divs, [D/T, AG]