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TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON
FOR SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR
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AZWQF

SPEAKER O'NEILL MET FOR EIGHT MINUTES WITH PRIME MINISTER THATCHER THIS AFTERNOON. SHE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY HOWE, WRIGHT AND ONE OTHER, POSSIBLY POWELL HER PRIVATE SECRETARY.

THE SPEAKER COMPLIMENTED MRS THATCHER ON HER SPEECH AND SAID HE APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT SHE INCLUDED A SECTION ON IRELAND IN IT. HE REFERRED TO HER POSITION IN PARLIAMENT AND DESCRIBED HER AS AN EXTREMELY STRONG LEADER. THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND WAS INTOLERABLE, HAVING LASTED FOR OVER FIFTEEN YEARS AND CAUSED SOMETHING LIKE 2,400 DEATHS. HE FELT THAT THE PRIME MINISTER HAD AN OBLIGATION TO BRING PEACE TO NORTHERN IRELAND. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT NEGOTIATIONS WERE AT PRESENT UNDER WAY AND HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT THEY WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL. HE REITERATED HIS PERSONAL ABHORRENCE TO THE IRA AND UNDERTOOK TO CONTINUE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO DISCOURAGE TERRORISM, EVEN IF THAT RESULTED, AS IT HAD IN THE PAST, IN PERSONAL ABUSE AND PICKETING FOR HIM.

MRS THATCHER, 8, 430)68,

MRS THATCHER, IN REPLYING, G, SAID SHE HAD AN EXTREMELY HIGH OPINION OF GARRET FITZGERALD AND THAT THEY WERE MAKING PROGRESS TOGETHER IN DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM. SHE SAID SHE HAD LEARNED A LOT ABOUT TERRORISM AND INTIMIDATION IN THE COURSE OF THE PAST YEAR. SHE SEEMED TO SITUATE THIS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE COAL MINERS STRIKE RATHER THAN IN THAT OF THE BRIGHTON BOMBING OR OTHER ACTIONS OF THE IRA.

THE SPEAKER SAID AT THIS POINT THAT FROM THE VERY BEGINNINGS OF DEMOCRACY COMPROMISE HAD BEEN THE ESSENCE OF CONSTRUCTIVE POLITICS AND HE HOPED THAT IT WOULD MANIFEST ITSELF IN THIS SITUATION ALSO. MRS THATCHER SAID SHE APPRECIATED THE WAY IN WHICH THE SPEAKER HAD RAISED THIS SUBJECT, AND THE SPEAKER SAID THAT HE WOULD HAVE BEEN REMISS HAD HE NOT RAISED IT.

FOLLOWING THIS INTERVIEW A MEMBER OF THE BRITISH DELEGATION (SHEINWALD) SUGGESTED TO KIRK O'DONNELL THAT IT WAS "OBVIOUS THAT THE IRISH HAVE BEEN TALKING TO YOU". O'DONNELL CONFIRMED THAT THIS WAS THE CASE AND THAT THEY ALWAYS SOUGHT THE ADVICE OF THEIR IRISH FRIENDS ON SUCH MATTERS. SHEINWALD SAID THEY HAD NOTHING WHATSOEVER AGAINST THIS AND THEY APPRECIATED THE FACT THAT THE SPEAKER HAD BEEN SO WELL BRIEFED.

THE SPEAKER'S OFFICE ALSO MENTIONED TO A MEMBER OF THE NSC THAT THIS DISCUSSION HAD TAKEN PLACE. IT WAS LATER SUGGESTED TO O'DONNELL BY ONE OF THE BRITISH THAT MRS THATCHER HAD HERSELF RAISED THE SUBJECT IN HER TALKS WITH PRESIDENT REAGAN, BUT O'DONNELL WAS UNABLE TO CONFIRM THIS INFORMATION.

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