

E.P.

CONFIDENTIAL

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HCS 13

HCS/5/44

cc PS/Mr Scott (L&B)
PS/Mr Patten (L&B)
PS/PUS (L&B)
Mr Brennan
Mr Merifield
Mr Gilliland
Mr Chesterton
Mr Reeve
Mr Lyon
Miss Elliott
Mr Hill
Mr Hewitt
Mr Carlisle
Mr Bickham

PS/Secretary of State (L&B)

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1. I have read, with considerable misgivings, Mr Bickham's minute of 13 May recording his exchanges with Mr Brian Atwood.
2. I note that Mr Atwood considers himself to have 'informed' rather than 'consulted' Government, and that in Mr Bickham's view, we are highly unlikely to be able to deter the Institute from assisting the SDLP as it proposes to do.
3. Nevertheless, I think that the implications of using what is originally public money from one country to support a single political party in another friendly country are alarming; and one is frankly not at all reassured to learn that Mr Hume has sought to argue against any parallel assistance to the Alliance Party. If people want to bolster and lend credence to Mr Powell's alarmist talk about sinister American intentions and influence in Northern Ireland, this is a pretty good way to go about it.
4. Nor, frankly, do I think it is sufficient to rest solely upon the very proper warnings given to Mr Atwood by Mr Bickham. If and when all this emerges in the light of day, HMG is likely to be asked:- did we know anything about this proposal; and if we knew, what did we do to stop it? The distinction between being informed indirectly and asked directly for views will not, I fear, be universally appreciated at that stage.
5. I think there are very strong grounds indeed for making it quite clear that HMG does not believe that what is proposed would be at all helpful.

K.P. Bloomfield

K P BLOOMFIELD

14 May 1985

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