

EN CLAIR

IMMEDIATE DUBLIN TO FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

TELNO 184

15 AUGUST 1969

UNCLASSIFIED

(21)

19
 MY TELEGRAM NO. 182.

AFTER PROLONGED EXHORTATIONS, THE MOB WENT INTO ACTION WITH STONES AND WE HAVE LOST SOME GLASS, MOST OF IT IN MY OFFICE. AT 1410 AN ATHLETIC YOUNG MAN SHINNED UP A DRAINPIPE AND TORE DOWN THE FLAG, WHICH WAS THEN CEREMONIOUSLY BURNT IN THE STREET. AN IRISH FLAG HOISTED ON A LAMP-POST GAVE AN IMPRESSION OF FLYING ON THE EMBASSY. (WE HAVE NOW REMOVED IT, THE POLICE BEING UNWILLING TO DO SO.)

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WRR 3/528/9

2. DURING THE PROCEEDINGS MICHAEL O'LEARY, MEMBER OF THE DAIL, CAME TO SEE ME TO TRY AND PERSUADE ME TO LOWER THE FLAG.

I TOLD HIM I WOULD GLADLY DO SO IF THE IRISH AUTHORITIES IN THE INTERESTS OF LAW AND ORDER WOULD MAKE AN OFFICIAL REQUEST. HE COULD NOT INDUCE THEM TO DO THIS.

3. THE ACTIVE SECTION OF THE MOB THOUGH VICIOUS WAS NOT LARGE, PERHAPS 80, BUT THERE WERE HUNDREDS OF INERT ONLOOKERS. SEVERAL OF THE INCITERS SPOKE WITH BELFAST ACCENTS AND O'LEARY CONFIRMED THAT THEY INCLUDED SOME WHO DERIVED GREAT PRESTIGE FROM HAVING BEEN "OUT" IN BELFAST LAST NIGHT. SOME WERE SAID TO BE ARMED.

4. THE GARDA PUT UP A HALF-HEARTED PERFORMANCE. THOUGH ROUGHLY EQUAL IN NUMBERS TO THE ACTIVISTS, THEY MADE NO SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO STOP THE STONE-THROWING OR THE BURNING OF THE FLAG.

I TAKE LITTLE PLEASURE IN THE OUTLOOK.

SIR A. GILCHRIST

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