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C. for 305/14/192^E

Report of meeting in the Secretary's Office between Mr. J. Hoofnagle of the American Embassy and Mr. H.J. McCann, Secretary. Also present at the meeting were Dr. O'Sullivan, ~~Mr. Ronan~~, Mr. Holmes and ~~Mr. O'Tuathail~~, and Mr. Ransom.

Mr. Hoofnagle of the American Embassy called at the Department at 4.30 p.m. on Saturday, 16th August and the Secretary gave him the following briefing on the situation to date.

On August 1st, the Minister went to London to see Mr. Stewart, the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary, in order to bring to his attention the extreme seriousness as we saw it of the proposed march to take place in Derry on August 12th. In the adjusting situation in Derry, it was like a tinder box and, no matter what the position might have been in previous years, to stage this march this year would be asking for trouble. Therefore, the Irish Government requested that the march should be cancelled or at least restricted to its normal size and to a safe route.

In reply, Mr. Stewart stated that the primary responsibility for the matter rested on Stormont, even though the ultimate responsibility remained with Westminster. Both Governments were satisfied that the march in Derry could take place without upsetting law and order and that the existing resources to control the situation were adequate.

In the event our fears were proved only too well founded and the use of the B Specials and armed partisans force had led to the stage where British troops ultimately had to intervene. Dr. Hillery went to London again on August 15th and saw Lord Chelmsford to express our grave concern at the situation and to put forward proposals with a view to reaching a

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solution to the immediate problem of restoring peace in the area and the long-term problem of maintaining it. For the immediate problem it was suggested that either a United Nations peace-keeping force or a joint British/Irish force might be employed since British troops could not, and were not intended, to remain more than a short while in action. Once the British troops were withdrawn there had to be some alternative to returning to the situation where the R.U.C. and the B Specials would simply attack one section of the community. With regard to the long-term situation, it would be necessary to have talks regarding the constitutional position of the North. These proposals, both for immediate and long-term solutions, were rejected.

Dr. Hillery made two further suggestions to the British which were not rejected out of hand and may be under examination by them. These were intended to help to diffuse the situation by means of a dramatic gesture of a kind which would allay the fears which had been aroused and concerned the introduction of immediate and significant reforms in the field of civil rights as well as the disarming and disbanding of the B Specials.

After a meeting of the Government this morning, the Minister left at 2.45 p.m. for New York in order to seek to have the sending of a United Nations Peace-keeping Force to the North considered by the Security Council. We appealed to the American Government, as we were appealing to all other Governments concerned, to support us in this approach, both to have the matter placed on the agenda for an early meeting of the Council and for its adoption by that body.

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Mr. Hoofnagle undertook to inform Washington immediately of our view of the position and the description of it given by the Secretary. The Secretary mentioned that in addition to his visit to the UN, the Minister would also be seeking an interview with Mr. Rogers, the Secretary of State.

Mr. Hoofnagle referred to a report from London which he showed to the Secretary and requested any comments he might have on it. The Secretary after reading it said that it was not correct to say that the Minister's request for a meeting with Mr. Wilson had been rejected. He had been told that it might be difficult to arrange such a meeting at once but that the full text of what he had told the British authorities would be conveyed to Mr. Wilson. The Secretary also mentioned in regard to the establishment of army field hospitals along the Border that this had been decided on by the Government in order to provide a means of treating casualties but would have been liable to police arrest if they had gone to hospitals in the Six Counties. The supporting troops which were accompanying these field hospitals were what the army authorities considered necessary in support of an operation of this kind. With regard to the calling up of the first line reserve, this had been decided on by the Government at the time of the proposal to the British for a joint Irish/British Peace-keeping Force since our experience in Cyprus showed that up to six weeks was required for the preparation of contingents for such a force and we wanted to be ready as soon as possible. Mr. Hoofnagle enquired whether, now that the British had rejected this proposal, the reserve would be stood down, to which the Secretary replied that this was a matter for the Government which was in continuous session and would continue so as long as the present dire emergency lasted.