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SDLP 7/13.

PAUL S. QUINN
1735 NEW YORK AVENUE, N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20006

June 27, 1985

Personal

cc B. Savoyport
Anglo Irish Sec
Mr. Downing
File
C.G. Boston
W. Hall's NY

Hand Carry

The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy
113 Senate Russell Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Re: Northern Ireland

Dear Ted:

Here is a brief memo with some of my impressions on my visit last week to Northern Ireland. As you can see, my impression is the situation is deteriorating badly and I don't think my dire predictions of what could and, perhaps, will happen are overstated, unless you and the Speaker, and the President involve the United States in a dramatic and constructive way in the British/Irish talks.

I spent the weekend with John Hume in Derry and Donegal and he remains calm, optimistic and determined through it all -- a great example of Irish resiliency at its best!

Have a safe, productive and enjoyable trip. I look forward to getting together with you on your return.

Warm regards.

Sincerely,

Paul
Paul S. Quinn

cc: Mr. Jim Steinberg
Mr. Carey Parker

Mrs. Quinn
At with
previous papers
on INDI

PSM
PSIS
Mr. Lill
A. J. De
BD
7/7/85

16.7.85

NORTHERN IRELAND -- JUNE 1985

Paul S. Quinn

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs ("NDI") has undertaken a project to work with John Hume and the Social Democratic Labour Party ("SDLP") of Northern Ireland. Attached is a press release announcing that project.

I was in Northern Ireland from June 17-24 as a member of an NDI task force along with Les Francis and Peter Fenn. We will be getting a detailed report and set of recommendations to NDI shortly. In the meantime, because of the sense of urgency I feel, here are some of my general impressions about the situation in Northern Ireland.

The political, economic and social conditions in Northern Ireland are in a state of crisis. Developments during the next several months will dictate whether the country moves in the direction of reduced tensions and peace or continues down the road to chaos. Some of the factors which contribute to the rapidly worsening crisis are:

-- Increasing frustration on the part of Nationalists (Catholic) politicians and their constituents about the lack of progress in the British/Irish talks about the Report of the New Ireland Forum.

-- Sinn Fein's decision to run candidates in last month's local elections, a cynical attempt to participate in the democratic process while, at the same time, sustaining and expanding their terrorist activities through the IRA, has put substantial pressure on the SDLP and caused the Unionists to become increasingly intransigent and hard-lined. (See attached news articles.)

-- The Sinn Fein campaign of ballots and bullets has also put pressure on the Fitzgerald government in the Republic, and that coupled with substantial losses suffered by the Coalition government in local elections on June 20 further complicates its negotiating posture in the British talks.

-- Thatcher's popularity in Great Britain is slipping badly, and the deteriorating economic conditions in that country have combined to distract her attention from the Irish talks.

-- The deteriorating British economy, cutbacks in social programs and the political chaos in Northern Ireland have produced unemployment levels of 23 percent country wide and from 40-50 percent among adult males in predominantly Catholic areas in Belfast and Derry.

The crisis created by the foregoing factors, as well as others, unless dealt with immediately by the governments of Great Britain, Ireland and the United States can be expected to produce a rapid escalation of terrorism and bloodshed leading to guerrilla warfare if not open warfare putting the British Army which currently has 8,000 troops in Northern Ireland, the Royal Ulster Constabulary ("RUC"), the Ulster Defense Association ("UDA") and the Ulster Volunteer Force ("UVF") whose active members and reserves when added to the British Army constitute a force of almost 100,000 men all of whom are armed -- against the Provisional Sinn Fein (the IRA), the Irish National Liberation Army ("INLA") and presumably a large percentage of the more than 75,000 Northern Irish Catholics who voted for Sinn Fein candidates in last month's elections. To say that Northern Ireland could quickly turn into another Lebanon is no exaggeration.

In my view, the only way to turn Northern Ireland away from a course of action leading to complete chaos is to have set in motion quickly a process which will lead to the withdrawal of British Army troops on a relatively specific time table coupled with the restoration of law and order based upon due process and the infusion of substantial economic aid from the governments of Great Britain, Ireland and the United States, as well as private investment, to create job opportunities and a degree of economic stability which is now totally lacking. (Over 60 percent of all expenditures in Northern Ireland are British Government funds, the great majority of which are for defense expenditures, police forces, maintenance of the prison system and social welfare programs.)

The course of action which must be followed to avoid further and perhaps ultimate destruction of Northern Ireland must take place both inside and outside that country.

Inside Northern Ireland, the SDLP the sole Nationalist voice for a non-violent solution to the problems facing the country, must be strengthened politically and financially, moderate voices on the Unionist side must be encouraged to speak out against violence from any source and further dramatic steps must be undertaken to erode the continuing support given Sinn Fein/IRA terrorists and political activities particularly from the United States through NORAI and its supporters. (Perhaps the most significant, positive political development in Northern Ireland occurred when Ted Kennedy and Tip O'Neill took the initiative to speak out against violence and those who advocate and support it.) Any support given by United States politicians or others who purport to be interested in solving Northern Ireland's problems to the Sinn Fein or any steps taken to help legitimize its subversion of the democratic process would be disastrous.

It is clear that as John Hume has reminded us for 15 years, Northern Ireland's problems cannot be resolved within Northern Ireland. This means that the solution to those problems is in the hands of those who control the governments of Great Britain, Ireland and the United States. Each government has a specific and urgent role to play, and each of those roles involve a commitment to support the principles of the New Ireland Forum to produce an agenda of specific steps to be agreed upon at the staff level during the coming weeks and ratified at a resumption of the Summit talks between Thatcher and FitzGerald not later than the early fall. The essence of that agreement should include a plan for a joint security force between Ireland and Great Britain which could provide a backdrop to enable a phased withdrawal of British troops from that country.

The United States can make a major contribution to this process by:

-- Emphasizing in the strongest possible terms to the British the desire of the Administration and the Congress to find a peaceful solution to the problems in Northern Ireland. (The President should consider designating a personal emissary to travel to Northern Ireland on a fact-finding mission on the situation there and report back to the White House and the Congress on a specific set of recommendations all patterned on implementing on the blueprint of the New Ireland Forum -- Judge William Clark would be an excellent choice for this assignment.)

-- Our government should reassure the Irish government of its commitment to support its efforts in negotiations with the British and of its willingness to engage in an economic reconstruction program to help rehabilitate Northern Ireland.

-- The White House and the Congress must speak with one voice against all who support terrorist activity in Northern Ireland, specifically NORAID, and stepped up security measures should be taken to dry up the flow of money, guns and ammunition from our country to both the Republic and the North of Ireland. One fact is clear, the British government will not and cannot be driven for Northern Ireland through acts of violence -- rather continued violence by the IRA in Northern Ireland, Ireland and Great Britain perpetuates the impasse and creates an atmosphere within which meaningful discussions and difficult, if not impossible, to conduct. This is well known to Sinn Fein/IRA which does not want a peaceful solution to Northern Ireland's problems and this must be made known to those who lend their support to their efforts.

PSQ

June 27, 1985