

UNCLASSIFIED *CPs Jko*  
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TO ROUTINE FCO  
TELEGRAM NUMBER 342 OF 06 MAY  
INFO NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

*G. J. ...*

**NORTHERN IRELAND: DEATH OF SANDS.**

MOST FRG PAPERS TODAY CARRY FRONT PAGE REPORTS ON THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, WHICH THEY DESCRIBE AS QUOTE EXPLOSIVE UNQUOTE AND QUOTE TENSE UNQUOTE.

2. COMMENT SHOWS WIDESPREAD UNDERSTANDING FOR HMG'S POSITION. THERE ARE PASSING REMARKS OF RESPECT FOR SANDS'S QUOTE COURAGE AND WILL-POWER UNQUOTE (WELT) AND ABOUT THE PROPAGANDA SUCCESS OF HIS HUNGER STRIKE (GENERAL ANZEIGER). BUT BONNER RUNDSCHAU IS TYPICAL OF SEVERAL PAPERS IN SAYING THAT HMG'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS DEMANDS FOR POLITICAL STATUS IS SHARED BY EAST AND WEST EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS, AND THAT IF BRITAIN HAD MADE CONCESSIONS, ALMOST IRRESISTABLE PRESSURE WOULD HAVE ARISEN IN GERMANY, ITALY, FRANCE OR SPAIN TO MAKE SIMILAR CONCESSIONS TO TERRORISTS THERE. WELT SAYS THAT THE FACT THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION HAVE REMAINED FIRM UNDER PRESSURE, NOT ONLY FROM ULSTER BUT FROM ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD, SHOULD BE ACKNOWLEDGED. QUOTE TO MAKE THESE CRIMINALS POLITICAL PRISONERS WOULD BE TO JUSTIFY MURDER AND TERRORISM UNQUOTE.

3. SUEDEDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG SAYS THAT THE IRA ARE BANKING ON THE BRITISH BECOMING SICK AND TIRED OF NORTHERN IRELAND. BUT OTHER PAPERS STRESS THAT HATE WILL NOT TURN INTO BROTHERLY LOVE IN THE ABSENCE OF THE BRITISH, AND WITHDRAWAL WOULD ONLY MEAN THAT THE CATHOLICS WOULD BE LEFT TO THE PROTESTANTS DESIRE FOR REVENGE. FRANKFURTER ALLGEMEINE (GRUDINSKI) SAYS THAT SANDS' DEATH BRINGS A SOLUTION NO NEARER. IT HAS MERELY DRAWN WORLD ATTENTION TO THE WEAK POINT IN BRITISH DEMOCRACY. QUOTE THAT WAS THE REAL POINT OF THIS FRIGHTFUL UNDERTAKING ... TO STAGE A SENSATIONAL SHOW UNQUOTE.

4. OTHER PAPERS MENTION THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SANDS AND DEBUS (THE WEST GERMAN TERRORIST WHO DIED AFTER A HUNGER STRIKE LAST MONTH). SANDS WAS THE PRODUCT OF AN UPBRINGING IN AN ENVIRONMENT OF HATE AND FEAR. TO AN EXTENT HE WAS THE PRODUCT OF HISTORY. DEBUS WAS A PERIPHERAL FIGURE ON THE GERMAN TERRORIST SCENE. THE NORDRHEINISCHE ZEITUNG POINTS OUT THAT THE GERMAN TERRORIST MOVEMENT DOES NOT HAVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT ANYWHERE TO WIN A PARLIAMENTARY BY-ELECTION.

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GOODALL

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