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UNCLASSIFIED

FM DUBLIN 10/1400Z DEC 1980

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 369 OF 10 DEC

AND TO INFO ROUTINE N I O BELFAST

By + large P. Haughey seems to me to have played with a pretty straight bat. It would have been all too easy for him to have gone a lot further.

ms

MY TELNO 368 AND TELECON NEWINGTON-STAPLES OF THIS MORNING: MEETING BETWEEN MRS THATCHER AND MR HAUGHEY

1. FOLLOWING ARE EXTRACTS FROM OUR TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH THE TAOISEACH GAVE AFTER HIS MEETING WITH MRS THATCHER ON THE EVENING OF 8 DECEMBER.

QUESTION:

COULD YOU PLEASE EXPLAIN A LITTLE MORE WHAT THE COMMUNIQUE MEANS BY THE PHRASE "JOINT STUDIES COVERING A RANGE OF ISSUES INCLUDING POSSIBLE NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES"? IS THIS A REFERENCE TO SOME SORT OF NEW IRISH PLAN THAT WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT, WITH THE

TO SOME SORT OF NEW IRISH PLAN THAT WE HAVE HEARD ABOUT, WITH THE IDEA OF PERHAPS OF CONFEDERATION BEING LOOKED AT AND STATE ASSEMBLIES IN BELFAST AND DUBLIN? COULD YOU PERHAPS EXPAND ON THAT PHRASE AT ALL?

MR HAUGHEY:

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDIES IS TO FIND OUT EXACTLY WHAT SORT OF INSTITUTIONS MIGHT BE BROUGHT FORWARD TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PURPOSES OUTLINED IN THE PARAGRAPH. FOR MY PART I DON'T SET ANY LIMIT TO WHAT INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS MIGHT BE CONCEIVED OR BROUGHT FORWARD AS LONG AS THEY ARE DESIGNED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF THIS ISLAND GENERALLY AND TO BRINGING ABOUT PEACE AND RECONCILIATION THROUGHOUT THIS ISLAND.

QUESTION: IN RELATION TO PARAGRAPH 6 THERE'S A SENTENCE MENTIONING THE "TOTALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THESE ISLANDS", THEN YOU GO ON TO TALK ABOUT THE "JOINT STUDIES". IS IT TRUE TO SAY THAT THIS PUTS AN EMPHASIS ON THE S D L P APPROACH, THAT WE'RE GETTING AWAY FROM POWER SHARING REGIME WITHIN THE NORTH AND THAT YOUR APPROACH IS NOW THAT, IT SEEMS TO BE AN APPROACH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO ELABORATE ON, THAT IN LONDON YOU WANT NOW AN OVERALL APPROACH POSSIBLY, AS HAS ALREADY BEEN ASKED, A FEDERAL SOLUTION BUT THAT YOU ARE GOING AWAY FROM THE POWER SHARING SOLUTION AS A ROLE TO SOME KIND OF FEDERAL SOLUTION?

MR HAUGHEY: WHAT'S YOUR QUESTION?

QUESTION: I'M ASKING YOU, HAVE YOU GONE AWAY FROM YOUR POWER SHARING?

HAS THE IRISH GOVERNMENT DITCHED A POWER SHARING SOLUTION IN ADVANCE OF ANY OTHER TYPE OF SOLUTION BE IT FEDERAL OR AN UNITED IRELAND? THAT IS SIMPLY AND BLUNTLY THE QUESTION IF YOU WANT IT THAT WAY.

MR HAUGHEY: THE IRISH GOVERNMENT IS NOT DITCHING ANY POSSIBLE PROPOSALS OR SUGGESTIONS WHICH MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO A SOLUTION TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM.

QUESTION: DOES THIS MEAN THAT MRS THATCHER HAS ACCEPTED THAT THERE MUST BE A RELATIONSHIP OF DUBLIN IN ANY NEW SETTLEMENT FOR NORTHERN IRELAND? THAT IT'S NO LONGER JUST AN INTERNAL PROBLEM?

MR HAUGHEY: I THINK THE COMMUNIQUE CLEARLY INDICATES THAT

MR HAUGHEY: I THINK THE COMMUNIQUE CLEARLY INDICATES THAT IT'S THROUGH A DEVELOPMENT OF A BETTER RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS THAT A SOLUTION WILL EMERGE.

QUESTION: ARE YOU NOW THINKING IN TERMS OF A NEW FRIENDSHIP TREATY, A FRIENDSHIP ARRANGEMENT WITH THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT?

MR HAUGHEY: THAT IS SOMETHING WHICH MAY POSSIBLY EMERGE FROM THE JOINT STUDIES.

QUESTION: YOU HAVE INDICATED THAT YOU WANT TO SEE THE PROBLEM OF NORTHERN IRELAND RAISED TO AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL LEVEL ON A BIPARTISAN APPROACH AS IT WERE BETWEEN LONDON AND DUBLIN. HAS THIS MEETING GONE ANYWAY TOWARDS ACHIEVING ANY PROGRESS ALONG THOSE LINES?

MR HAUGHEY: I THINK THAT'S INHERENT IN THE COMMUNIQUE.

QUESTION: COULD YOU INDICATE WHAT PROGRESS YOU FEEL HAS BEEN MADE?

MR HAUGHEY: THE COMMISSIONING OF JOINT STUDIES, THE FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE JOINT STUDIES AT A FURTHER MEETING, I THINK ALL THIS INDICATES THAT THE CONCEPT OF THE BRINGING FORWARD OF A SOLUTION THROUGH GOVERNMENT COOPERATION IN DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS.

QUESTION: DO YOU FEEL THAT THE FAILURE AS YOU'VE SAID OF THE ATKINS CONFERENCE INDICATES THAT THE POLITICIANS IN NORTHERN IRELAND NO LONGER HAVE A PART TO PLAY IN THE SEARCH FOR THAT SOLUTION?

MR HAUGHEY: NO, I DON'T THINK SO, I THINK THAT THE PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAVE A VERY IMPORTANT PART TO PLAY AT ANY STAGE OF THE BRINGING FORWARD OF A SOLUTION.

QUESTION: SO HOW WOULD THE MACHINERY WORK AS YOU SEE IT? DO YOU SEE THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS ARRIVING AT A SOLUTION AND PRESENTING IT AS A FAIT ACCOMPLI TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND REPRESENTATIVES?

MR HAUGHEY: WELL I DON'T WANT TO GO TOO FAR AHEAD. SUFFICIENT FOR THE DAY IS THE ACHIEVEMENT THEREOF... WHAT WE BROUGHT FORWARD TODAY IS THE CONCEPT OF THESE SPECIAL STUDIES, THESE JOINT STUDIES -- WHICH WILL THEN BE CONSIDERED SPECIALLY AT A MEETING IN LONDON.

- WHICH WILL THEN BE CONSIDERED SPECIALLY AT A MEETING IN LONDON. I REGARD THAT AS VERY, VERY CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS, I THINK IT'S HISTORIC PROGRESS.

QUESTION: WHAT POLICIES WILL YOU ACTUALLY CONSIDER IN THESE STUDIES?

MR HAUGHEY: THEY ARE ELABORATED THERE IN THE COMMUNIQUE, POSSIBLE NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES, CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS, SECURITY MATTERS, ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.

QUESTION: COULD I ASK YOU WHEN YOU SPEAK OF POSSIBLE NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES WHAT YOU HAVE IN MIND, ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES GOVERNING IRISH-BRITISH RELATIONSHIPS OR NEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND, OR A COMBINATION OF THE TWO?

MR HAUGHEY: A COMBINATION - BOTH ARE POSSIBLY YES. WE SET NO LIMIT ON WHAT INSTITUTIONS MIGHT BE BROUGHT FORWARD, MIGHT BE CONSIDERED, MIGHT BE DESIGNED, MIGHT BE CONCEIVED AS LONG AS THEY SEEM TO BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE OBJECTIVES SET OUT IN THE PARAGRAPHS.

QUESTION: WILL THESE PROPOSALS ON NEW INSTITUTIONS WHEN THEY COME FORWARD BE FOLLOWED BY CONFERENCE OF BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS AND POSSIBLY PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES FROM NORTHERN IRELAND?

MR HAUGHEY: THEY WILL BE BROUGHT FORWARD FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AT A MEETING IN LONDON WHICH WILL SPECIALLY CONSIDER THEM. BEYOND THAT I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO SAY.

QUESTION: DOES THAT MEAN THEN THAT THESE STUDIES WILL BE COMPLETED IN TIME FOR YOUR NEXT MEETING WITH MRS THATCHER? WILL THAT BE BEFORE NEXT JUNE?

MR HAUGHEY: AGAIN I CAN'T SET A DATE ON THAT.

QUESTION: THE LAST TIME YOU SPOKE, THE ATKINS INITIATIVE WAS GOING ON IN MAY. THAT HAS NOW FAILED COMPLETELY. DO YOU FEEL THAT MRS THATCHER NOW RECOGNISES WHAT YOU WERE SAYING THAT A SOLUTION WITHIN THE STRUCTURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND ONLY WAS NOT POSSIBLE?

MR HAUGHEY: I THINK A QUESTION LIKE THAT WOULD HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED TO MRS THATCHER HERSELF. I CAN ONLY SPEAK FOR MY VIEWS AND MY POSITION.

QUESTION: ACCORDING TO PARAGRAPH 8, BOTH SIDES REGARDED THE TALKS QUOTE CONSTRUCTIVE AND SIGNIFICANT UNQUOTE. FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR VIEWERS WHO ARE NOT AWARE OF COMPLEXITIES OF COMMUNIQUE COULD YOU SUM UP FOR US WHAT YOU FEEL THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS IN TODAY'S TALKS HAVE BEEN?

MR HAUGHEY: IN MY VIEW THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT IS THE DECISION TO COMMISSION JOINT STUDIES ON THESE VERY IMPORTANT AREAS AND THE DECISION TO GIVE THEM SPECIAL CONSIDERATION AT A FURTHER MEETING IN LONDON.

QUESTION: YOU TALK ABOUT THE UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND YOU SAY YOU HAVE AN OPEN MIND ABOUT THAT RELATIONSHIP, WOULD YOU IN THE LONG TERM EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF THE UNITED IRELAND HAVING SOME ASSOCIATION WITH THE COMMONWEALTH?

MR HAUGHEY: I DON'T THINK THAT THE COMMONWEALTH IS A LIVE ISSUE AT ALL IN THIS CONTEXT.

QUESTION: YOU HAVE USED THE WORD THERE EARLIER IN TALKING ABOUT PARAGRAPH 6 THAT THERE WAS AN QUOTE HISTORIC UNQUOTE - I THINK YOU USED THE PHRASE WHEN YOU WERE REPLYING TO ONE QUESTION - IT WAS A RATHER HISTORIC CONFERENCE TODAY. ARE WE THEN IN SUMMING UP TO SAY THAT YOU MEAN BY USING THE WORD HISTORIC THAT IT WAS A SIGNIFICANT BREAK-THROUGH TODAY IN THE SENSE THAT THE IRISH QUESTION WAS PUT ON A PLANE THAT THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS WOULD SOLVE IT, MOVE TOWARDS A SOLUTION AT THIS LONDON CONFERENCE AFTER THE JOINT STUDIES HAVE BEEN PRESENTED, ARE WE TODAY IN THE MIDDLE OF AN HISTORIC BREAK-THROUGH?

MR HAUGHEY: I WOULD BE HOPEFUL THAT WE ARE, AND I WOULD ACCEPT YOUR STATEMENT THAT THE PROBLEM IS NOW FIRMLY ON A NEW PLANE FOR DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND THE IRISH GOVERNMENTS.

QUESTION : DO YOU THINK FROM YOUR PERSONAL CHEMISTRY WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN MRS THATCHER AND YOURSELF TODAY DO YOU FEEL OPTIMISTIC THAT SHE HAS GOT A REAL GRASP OF THE PROBLEM ESPECIALLY THE H-BLOCK SITUATION BECAUSE IT HAS OFTEN BEEN SUGGESTED THAT ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IN ANGLO - IRISH RELATIONS IS A LACK OF AWARENESS OF THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF THE PROBLEM ESPECIALLY AMONGST TORY POLITICIANS. DO YOU THINK THAT MRS THATCHER UNDERSTANDS THE SITUATION?

MR HAUGHEY: I CERTAINLY AM SATISFIED THAT MRS THATCHER

MR HAUGHEY: I CERTAINLY AM SATISFIED THAT MRS THATCHER HAS A FULL GRASP AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE SITUATION BUT PERHAPS I MIGHT REFER TO THE COMMUNIQUE AGAIN HERE WHERE IT MENTIONS THAT WE'VE GOT TO BRING FORWARD POLICIES AND PROPOSALS FOR BETTER MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING - I THINK THAT VERY IMPORTANT, I THINK IN THAT AREA OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF THE TWO ISLANDS THERE IS GREAT SCOPE FOR WORK AND DEVELOPEMENT.

QUESTION : ARE YOU HAPPY WITH MRS THATCHER'S LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING?

MR HAUGHEY : YES.

QUESTION: DO YOU THINK THAT THE LOYALISTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAVE ANY REASON TO BE CONCERNED AS A RESULT OF WHAT HAPPENED HERE IN THE CONFERENCE TODAY?

- MR HAUGHEY:- CERTAINLY NOT, NO. I WOULD HOPE THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT THAT WE ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH SECURING PEACE, RECONCILIATION AND PROMOTING THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF ALL THESE ISLANDS. I THINK I MIGHT RECALL WHAT I SAID IN MY ARD FHEIS SPEECH THAT WE WOULD AWARD A SPECIAL PRIORITY TO THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND AND PARTICULARLY THE UNIONIST SECTION OF THAT COMMUNITY.

QUESTION: DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOU WILL BE MAKING CHANGES IN THE LAW HERE TO TRY AND ACCOMODATE THOSE PEOPLE IN THE NORTH?

MR HAUGHEY: THAT IS SOMETHING WHICH COULD EMERGE IN THE FUTURE ARISING OUT OF THESE STUDIES.

QUESTION: YOU SAID THAT YOU THINK TODAY'S MEETING WAS HISTORIC OR YOU HOPE IT WAS, AND THAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE. WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE FAILURE OF THE ATKINS' INITIATIVE MAKES LONDON LOOK TO SOME EXTENT MORE AT DUBLIN FOR A MIDDLE-TERM SOLUTION?

MR HAUGHEY: I WOULD PREFER NOT TO COMMENT ON THAT. I JUST TAKE TODAY'S MEETING ON ITS OWN MERITS AS A VERY SUCESSFUL MEETING, A SIGNIFICANT MEETING, A CONSTRUCTIVE MEETING, A MEETING WHICH IN MY VIEW HAS BROUGHT VERY CONSIDERABLE POLITICAL MOVEMENT FORWARD INTO THIS TRAGIC SITUATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND.

QUESTION : SOME OF THE BEST EXPERTS SAY THAT THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM IS THAT THERE IS NO SOLUTION. WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMMENT ON THAT?

MR HAUGHEY: I WOULD TOTALLY DISOWN ANY SUCH PROPOSITION. I BELIEVE THAT THE NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION CAN BE SOLVED, AND WILL BE SOLVED, AND I BELIEVE WE'VE TAKEN A MAJOR STEP IN THAT DIRECTION TODAY.

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*Prime Minister
C. Stenius
D. Clerk
10/12*

RESIDENT CLERK

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CONFIDENTIAL

FROM DUBLIN 101730Z DECEMBER 1980.

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 370 OF 10 DECEMBER.

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST) FOR INFO.

mt

IMMEDIATE

YOUR TELNO 115: ANGLO-IRISH SUMMIT.

1. COUNSELLOR CONVEYED THE MESSAGE IN PARAGRAPH 2 OF YOUR TUR TO BOTH NALLY (TAOISEACH'S DEPARTMENT) AND NELIGAN (DFA) THIS AFTERNOON. NALLY'S OWN REACTION WAS READY ACCEPTANCE OF THE TERMS OF OUR MESSAGE, AND HE UNDERTOOK TO SUBMIT IT VERY RAPIDLY IN THE LIGHT OF TOMORROW'S DAIL DEBATE. LATER HE CONVEYED THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE IN REPLY:

QUOTE WE HAVE RECEIVED THE MESSAGE AND HAVE FOLLOWED WITH ADMIRATION THE VERY SKILLFUL WAY IN WHICH QUESTIONS HAVE BEEN ANSWERED. WE ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND WILL DO NOTHING TO EXACERBATE THEM. WE PROPOSE TO FOLLOW SUIT IN DEALING WITH THE MATTER WITH GREAT CARE. UNQUOTE.

2. THE DUBLIN PRESS, HOWEVER, CONTINUE TO INTERPRET THE TAOISEACH AS CONFIRMING THAT IDEAS OF CONFEDERATION ARE ON THE TABLE. I HAVE ALREADY DRAWN ATTENTION (MY TLENO 369, PARAGRAPH 3) TO THE IRISH TIMES ATTRIBUTION YESTERDAY TO QUOTE AN IRISH GOVERNMENT SOURCE UNQUOTE OF A STATEMENT IN THIS SENSE. TODAY'S IRISH PRESS INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH:

QUOTE THE CONTROVERSY WHICH WILL BE CARRIED OVER INTO TOMORROW'S DEBATE CENTRES ROUND THE APPARENT CONFLICT BETWEEN MR HAUGHEY'S INTERPRETATION OF THE JOINT STUDIES...MR HAUGHEY SAID THAT THEY OFFERED ALL KINDS OF POSSIBILITIES INCLUDING THE POSSIBILITY OF A NEW FEDERAL OR CONFEDERAL ARRANGEMENT TO RESOLVE THE NORTHERN IRELAND PROBLEM: MRS THATCHER BY CONTRAST HAS STATED THAT THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO POSSIBILITY OF A CONFEDERATION FLOWING FROM THE AGREEMENTS REACHED. UNQUOTE.

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