

IMMEDIATE

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NO 10 DOWNING STREET (2)

RESIDENT CLERK

Prime Minister to see

Neill Mitchell
Duty Clerk
27/6/81

GROUPS 340
CONFIDENTIAL
FROM DUBLIN 271148Z JUNE 1981
TO IMMEDIATE F C O
TELEGRAM NUMBER 214 OF 27 JUNE
AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O BELFAST

1. THE TAOISEACH ASKED ME TO CALL AT HIS HOUSE THIS MORNING WITH MR NALLY PRESENT. HE SAID THAT FROM WHAT THE LATTER HAD TOLD HIM OF HIS TALK WITH SIR R ARMSTRONG HE (HAUGHEY) WANTED TO MAKE IT CLEAR TO ME THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS SIMPLY NOT SHOWING THE SENSE OF URGENCY REQUIRED TO END THE HUNGER STRIKE. A STATEMENT BY MR ATKINS ON MONDAY AND POSSIBLY A REHASH OF THE DOCUMENT GIVEN TO THE PRISONERS LAST DECEMBER SEEMED TO HIM QUITE INADEQUATE.
2. THE SANDS DEATH HAD BEEN A TURNING POINT AND THE RECENT ELECTIONS IN THE REPUBLIC SHOWED HOW THE DESTABILISATION OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS WAS DEVELOPING. THE PROSPECT OF A MEMBER OF THE DAIL DYING (KIERAN DOHERTY) WAS MOST WORRYING. HE FELT HE WOULD HAVE TO MAKE A PUBLIC STATEMENT OF SOME KIND FOLLOWING HIS RECENT MEETINGS WITH THE STRIKERS FAMILIES. HE HADN'T DECIDED YET WHAT TO SAY BUT HE WOULD PROBABLY EXPLAIN THAT ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS WOULD DEPEND ON HMG'S FUTURE HANDLING OF THE STRIKE.

3. I SAID THAT WE HAD SHOWN A READY WILLINGNESS TO LISTEN TO RESPONSIBLE OPINION AND WERE NOW DISCUSSING THE STRIKE WITH THE IRISH COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE. MR HAUGHEY SAID TH^{AT} WHILE THE COMMISSION MIGHT PLAY SOME MARGINAL ROLE WE SHOULD NOT BELIEVE THAT ANY DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE FAMILIES AND THE IRA WOULD BE OF HELP. NATURALLY THE FAMILIES DID NOT WANT THEIR RELATIVES TO DIE BUT THEY HAD NO INFLUENCE ON THEM. IT WAS THE PRISONERS WHO IN THE END INFLUENCED THE FAMILIES.

4. ON THE CHANNEL OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE PRISONERS MR HAUGHEY AND MR NALLY BOTH SAID THAT IF MR HILDITCH WAS STILL GOVERNOR HE WOULD NOT BE TRUSTED BY THE PRISONERS. THEY CONSIDERED HE HAD LET THEM DOWN AT THE END OF THE LAST STRIKE IN DECEMBER. WE SHOULD THINK AGAIN ABOUT THIS.

5. MR HAUGHEY WAS ANXIOUS FOR ME TO UNDERSTAND THAT HE WAS NOT MAKING ANY POLITICAL POINTS. HE INDICATED THAT HE MIGHT NOT BE IN OFFICE MUCH LONGER. BUT FOR THE SAKE OF THE STATE AND WHOEVER WAS TAOISEACH NEXT WEEK HE WANTED TO MAKE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR TO US THE DANGERS OF THE STRIKE CONTINUING WITH MORE DEATHS. IT WOULD BE BOUND TO EFFECT OUR RELATIONS AND ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT SAY SO I HAVE THE FEELING THAT HE MAY HAVE HAD SECURITY COOPERATION IN MIND.

6. I SAID I WOULD REPORT WHAT HE HAD SAID.

FIGG.

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SENT/RECD AT 271240Z HMT/MBI