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FROM FCO 131652Z AUG 81
TO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN
TELEGRAM NUMBER 134 OF 13 AUGUST 1981.
REPEATED FOR INFORMATION TO IMMEDIATE BELFAST AND PRIORITY
WASHINGTON, PARIS, HOLY SEE
YOUR TELS 288 AND 290: STATEMENTS BY MR O'LEARY AND MR KELLY
1. PLEASE TAKE AN EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK AT AN APPROP-
RIATELY SENIOR LEVEL IN THE DFA ON THE FOLLOWING LINES:-
(A) WE WERE GRATEFUL FOR MR KELLY'S STATEMENT ON 11 AUGUST.
THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT RECOGNISE THAT THE
H BLOCK PROTEST AND IN PARTICULAR THE HUNGER STRIKES ARE CAUSING
SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THE IRISH GOVERNMENT. THE BRITISH GOVERN-
MENT HAVE TRIED HARD TO BRING THE HUNGER STRIKES TO A CONCLUSION.
THEY HAVE MADE CLEAR ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS TO THOSE CONCERNED
THAT THERE IS SOME LIMITED SCOPE FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE
REGIME, AND WHAT THE AREAS OF SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE, IF THE
HUNGER STRIKE WERE TO END. THE HUNGER STRIKERS, THEIR FAMILIES
AND THE PROVISIONAL LEADERSHIP CAN BE UNDER NO ILLUSION WHAT
THESE AREAS ARE AND THAT THE PRISONERS STAND TO GAIN A GOOD DEAL
FROM ENDING THE HUNGER STRIKE. WE HAVE REFUSED TO COMMIT
OURSELVES PUBLICLY AND IN DETAIL IN ADVANCE BECAUSE THE IRA WOULD
SIMPLY GRAB WHAT WE OFFERED AND ASK FOR MORE. SCOPE FOR DEVELOP-
MENT IS IN ANY CASE NOT LARGE. AS THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED TO
MR KELLY LAST FRIDAY WE HAVE NO REASON AT PRESENT TO BELIEVE THAT
WHAT WE HAVE TO OFFER WOULD CAUSE THE HUNGER STRIKERS TO END
THEIR FAST NOW. (IF THE DFA REPEAT THE POINT MADE BY MR KELLY
LAST FRIDAY - YOUR TEL 284 - ABOUT MR ATKINS'
EARLIER REMARKS ABOUT POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS IN
THE PRISON ADMINISTRATION, YOU CAN EXPLAIN
THAT LOOKED AT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF A FAIR PRISON REGIME
PROGRESS IS INDEED POSSIBLE BUT ANY MEASURES WHICH WE COULD

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INTRODUCE WOULD STILL FALL WELL SHORT OF WHAT WOULD SATISFY THE FIVE DEMANDS):

(B) THE PROVISIONALS/ HUNGER STRIKERS STILL INSIST ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIVE DEMANDS. A SPOKESMAN (MCCAULEY OF PSF) SAID IN AN INTERVIEW ON ITV ON 7 AUGUST THAT THE PRISONERS' STATEMENT OF THE DAY BEFORE WAS NO DILUTION OF THESE DEMANDS AND THAT ITS ACCEPTANCE BY HMG WOULD CONSTITUTE POLITICAL STATUS. WHAT THE HUNGER STRIKERS WANT IS THE INTRODUCTION OF A PRISONER OF WAR SYSTEM, WITH FREE MOVEMENT IN ADJOINING WINGS OF THE H BLOCK AND NO PRISONER DOING WORK OTHER THAN STUDY/HANDICRAFTS OR SELF-MAINTENANCE:

(C) WE FACE THE DIFFICULT SITUATION THAT THE PROVISIONALS ARE SIMPLY NOT WILLING TO END THEIR HUNGER STRIKE ON ANYTHING LIKE THE TERMS A RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT COULD OFFER. THE ICJP PROPOSALS OPEN SQUARE BRACKETS CITED BY MR O'LEARY CLOSE SQUARE BRACKETS WERE DISMISSED BY THE PRISONERS AS 'AN UNACCEPTABLE WATERING-DOWN OF THE FIVE DEMANDS'. IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT, FROM BRITISH GOVERNMENTS POINT OF VIEW, THE ICJP SUGGESTED MORE DEVELOPMENT THAN CAN BE MADE AVAILABLE:

(D) JUST AS WE TRY TO BE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT FACE, WE TRUST THAT THEY REALISE THE HEAVY BURDEN THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEALING WITH THE HUNGER STRIKE PLACES ON US. UNGUARDED PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND PERSONAL ATTACKS ARE UNHELPFUL.

2. IN PUTTING OVER THESE POINTS YOU SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR, WITH ALL DUE DISCRETION, THAT THE REFERENCE ABOVE IS TO O'LEARY'S RADIO INTERVIEW. YOU MAY ADD THAT SUCH COMMENTS CAN DO POSITIVE DAMAGE IN THAT THEY ENCOURAGE THE HUNGER STRIKERS AND THOSE BEHIND THEM TO BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE MORE TO GAIN BY CARRYING ON WITH THE HUNGER STRIKE THEN BY ENDING IT. WE SHALL REPLY TO ENQUIRIES FROM THE PRESS THAT WE HAVE RESPONDED PRIVATELY TO MR O'LEARY AND NATURALLY REGRET SOME OF WHAT HE SAID BUT THAT WE FOUND MR KELLY'S STATEMENT GENERALLY HELPFUL.

3. REPETITION ADDRESSEES MAY USE THE POINTS IN PARAGRAPH 1 WITH CONTACTS WITHOUT OF COURSE TYING THEM TO MR O'LEARY'S STATEMENT. BUT THEY SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT USE THE LAST FOUR SENTENCES OF

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(A) (FROM QUOTE WE HAVE REFUSED UNQUOTE).
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