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N IRELAND OFFICE - PS TO SEC OF STATE
RM 66 A/2 GGS
N IRELAND OFFICE [4 copies]
SIR K STOWE
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MR MARSHALL
MR BUXTON
CABINET OFFICE - SIR R ARMSTRONG
DIO

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RESIDENT CLERK

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FM DUBLIN 09/1645Z 1980

TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 358 OF 09 DEC

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I OBELFAST PRIORITY WASHINGTON B IS NEW YORK

MEETING BETWEEN MRS THATCHER AND MR HAUGHEY : IRISH MEDIA REACTIONS

ADVANCE COPY
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to glance through

1. YESTERDAY'S MEETING BETWEEN MRS THATCHER AND MR HAUGHEY IN DUBLIN CASTLE IS THE LEAD STORY IN TODAY'S IRISH TIMES, IRISH INDEPENDENT, AND IRISH PRESS, WHICH ALL CARRY EXTENSIVE REPORTS OF THE MEETING AND THE SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCES IN DUBLIN AND LONDON, AS WELL AS EDITORIAL COMMENT.

2. THE PAPERS DIFFER IN THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE OUTCOME. THE TIMES AND PRESS ARE HOPEFUL: THE INDEPENDENT EXPRESSES BAFFLEMENT. THERE WAS SOME DISPOSITION ON THE PART OF MEDIA COMMENTATORS LAST NIGHT TO READ INTO PARA 6 OF THE COMMUNIQUE AND THE TAOISEACH'S PRESS CONFERENCE AFTER THE MEETING A RECOGNITION ON THE PART OF H M G OF AN ALL IRELAND DIMENSION. HOWEVER, MRS THATCHER'S PRESS CONFERENCE IN LONDON WAS ALSO WIDELY REPORTED HERE, INCLUDING HER WARNING NOT TO READ TOO MUCH INTO 'NEW INSTITUTIONALISED STRUCTURES' AND HER INSISTENCE THAT NORTHERN IRELAND WOULD REMAIN PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AS LONG AS THIS WAS THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY THERE. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TWO

IRELAND WOULD REMAIN PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AS LONG AS THIS WAS THE WILL OF THE MAJORITY THERE. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE TWO PRESS CONFERENCES WIDELY COMMENTED ON IN ALL THREE PAPERS, AND THE GENERAL TONE OF THEIR ASSESSMENTS IS SOBER.

3. IT IS PARAGRAPH 6 OF THE COMMUNIQUE WHICH HAS DRAWN THE MOST ATTENTION IN THE PAPERS. IRISH TIMES POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT DICK WALSH SINGLES THIS OUT, AND QUOTES MR HAUGHEY'S STATEMENT DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE THAT THERE WAS IN HIS VIEW NO LIMITS TO THE "INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS WHICH MIGHT BE CONCERNED OR BROUGHT FORWARD" UNDER THE JOINT STUDIES (THIS WAS TAKEN TO INCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFEDERATION). HE ALSO QUOTES AN IRISH GOVERNMENT SOURCE AS SAYING AFTERWARDS THAT THESE STUDIES MIGHT INCLUDE "FEDERATION, CONFEDERATION AND INNOVATION STRUCTURES YET TO BE DEFINED..." THE IRISH INDEPENDENT ALSO STRESSES THE SETTING UP OF INSTITUTIONS, BUT POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT CHRIS GLENNAN SPEAKS OF A "YAWNING GULF" BETWEEN THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS ON THE INTERPRETATION OF THIS PARAGRAPH. THE IRISH PRESS POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT REPORTS MORE HOPEFULLY THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE NORTH HAD "MOVED ON TO A NEW POLITICAL LEVEL WHEN THE TAOISEACH MR HAUGHEY AND THE BRITISH PRIME MINISTER, MRS THATCHER AGREED TO THE SETTING UP OF JOINT STUDIES BETWEEN THE IRISH AND BRITISH GOVERNMENTS".

EDITORIALS

4. THE IRISH TIMES EDITORIAL SPEAKS OF PARA 6 OF THE COMMUNIQUE AS ENCOURAGING: "MR HAUGHEY CAN CLAIM A SUBSTANTIAL GAIN BEING PLACED ON THE PROBLEMS AFFECTING THE TWO ISLANDS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE BRITISH AND IRISH GOVERNMENTS AND THE IRISH AND BRITISH PEOPLES. A GOOD DAY'S WORK WAS DONE IN DUBLIN CASTLE YESTERDAY".

5. THE IRISH PRESS EDITORIAL IS ALSO HOPEFUL: "EVEN WITHOUT TAKING THE MORE EUPHORIC INTERPRETATIONS WHICH WERE PLACED ON THE IRISH SIDE'S INTERPRETATION OF THE COMMUNIQUE IT SEEMS SAFE TO SAY THAT A GOOD DAY'S WORK WAS DONE." THE EDITORIAL SINGLES OUT THE SETTING UP OF "JOINT STUDIES" AS SOMETHING WHICH "CANNOT BE DECRIED AS SOME THING OF NO SIGNIFICANCE" BUT ENDS ON A CAUTIOUS NOTE, REMARKING ON THE TROUBLING SPECTRE" WHICH HANGS OVER THE TALKS IN THE FORM OF "THE H BLOCK ISSUE".

6. THE IRISH INDEPENDENT EDITORIAL IS LESS CONFIDENT: "NOTHING WAS REVEALED THAT JUSTIFIES THE DESCRIPTION "HISTORIC" BEING APPLIED TO THE MEETING", ALTHOUGH IT GRUDGINGLY CONCEDES THAT "MR HAUGHEY PROBABLY COUNTS IT AS AN ADVANCE THAT BRITAIN AND

APPLIED TO THE MEETING'' , ALTHOUGH IT GRUDGINGLY CONCEDES THAT
''MR HAUGHEY PROBABLY COUNTS IT AS AN ADVANCE THAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND WILL BE DISCUSSING AND OFFERING SOLUTIONS TO A PROBLEM
WHICH BRITAIN INSISTED ON CLAIMING AS HER OWN DOMESTIC PROBLEM
FOR A LONG TIME''.

7. FULL TRANSCRIPT OF MR HAUGHEY'S PRESS CONFERENCE FOLLOWS BY BAG.

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SENT/RECD AT 09:1840Z DH/RWS

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