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TO FLASH UKREP BRUSSELS

TELEGRAM NUMBER 254 OF 29 MARCH. FOR PS/PM
 FOLLOWING TELEGRAM NOW REPEATED TO YOU AT REQUEST OF RID WAS
 RECEIVED FROM DUBLIN TELEGRAM NO 80 OF 26 MARCH TO FCO
 AND TO PRIORITY INFO N I O (BELFAST)
 INFO SAVING TO WASHINGTON.

AMBASSADOR'S TELEGRAM NUMBER 76: MR HAUGHEY AND ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS

1. BEFORE ANY POSSIBLE MEETING AT THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, IT IS WORTH ASKING WHY MR HAUGHEY HAS ADOPTED HIS PRESENT FUNDAMENTALIST FIANNA FAIL POSITION ON IRISH UNITY AND TAKEN AN UNHELPFUL LINE ON MR PRIOR'S NORTHERN INITIATIVE.

2. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FACTORS AND PROBABLY NO INDIVIDUAL ONE IS DECISIVE. MR HAUGHEY'S OWN BACKGROUND IS NATIONALIST AND HIS COMMITMENT TO IRISH UNITY ENABLED HIM TO OUST MR LYNCH IN 1979. HE ORIGINALLY HOPED THAT THE ANGLO-IRISH PROCESS WOULD INDUCE HMG TO PUT PRESSURE ON THE UNIONISTS AND HE CERTAINLY IMPLIED TO HIS OWN PARTY AND THE SDLP THAT THIS WAS PART OF THE DEAL. BY THE TIME HE LEFT OFFICE LAST YEAR IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE ANGLO-IRISH TALKS HAD NOT LIVED UP TO HIS ORIGINAL EXPECTATIONS (HOWEVER UNREALISTIC) AND HAD DONE NOTHING TO EASE THE PRESSURE WHICH THE HUNGER STRIKE IMPOSED ON THE IRISH GOVERNMENT.

3. THERE IS ALSO THE BLANEY FACTOR. THE TAOISEACH NEEDS DEPUTY BLANEY'S SUPPORT IN THE DAIL AND BLANEY MADE CLEAR THAT HE REQUIRED A FIRM STATEMENT THAT "WE WANT BRITAIN OUT OF THIS COUNTRY". SOME CYNICAL COMMENTATORS HAVE SUGGESTED THAT MR HAUGHEY IS EMPHASISING THE NORTHERN ISSUE IN ORDER TO DIVERT ATTENTION FROM HIS OTHER DOMESTIC PROBLEMS. THERE IS PROBABLY SOMETHING IN THIS TOO: THE ECONOMIC NEWS HAS BEEN BAD AND MAY GET WORSE DESPITE YESTERDAY'S BUDGET. BEATING THE NATIONALIST DRUM UNITES THE FIANNA FAIL PARTY BEHIND HIM, EVEN IF IT FAILS TO AROUSE A WIDER NATIONAL RESPONSE.

4. WHEN ALL THESE FACTORS ARE COMBINED WITH THE ELATION OF VICTORY AND THE MUTUAL CONGRATULATION OF ANY IRISH AMERICAN FUNCTION, IT IS NOT SURPRISING THAT MR HAUGHEY SHOULD LOSE SIGHT OF THE MORE PROSAIC REALITIES OF THE ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONSHIP AND LET HIS NATIONALIST ENTHUSIASM RUN AWAY WITH HIM. SO FAR, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO SLACKENING IN SECURITY COOPERATION (THOUGH WE MUST WATCH THIS CAREFULLY) AND I BELIEVE HE CAN BE EDGED INTO A MORE REALISTIC RELATIONSHIP THROUGH RELATIONSHIPS WITH BRITISH MINISTERS. BUT WE CANNOT EXPECT HIM TO BE AS SYMPATHETIC TO PROPOSALS TO RESTORE DEVOLVED GOVERNMENT TO NORTHERN IRELAND. AS FAR AS HE IS CONCERNED, ANY EVIDENCE THAT THE NORTH IS A "FAILED POLITICAL ENTITY" IS GRIST TO HIS MILL AND THE EMPHASIS HE PLACES ON ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS IS LARGELY EXPLAINED BY HIS DESIRE TO AVOID CONFRONTING THE REALITY OF THE UNIONIST MAJORITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

CARRINGTON