

GRPS 200

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FM DUBLIN 041430Z OCT 81

PS TO PM. NO 10 DOWNING STREET.

TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY FCO 05:0800Z

TELEGRAM NUMBER 344 OF 04 OCTOBER 1981

AND TO IMMEDIATE DESKBY NIO(BELFAST) 05:0800Z

FCO PLEASE PASS SAVING TO WASHINGTON AND BIS NEW YORK

END OF HUNGER STRIKE: REACTIONS FROM POLITICIANS IN THE IRISH REPUBLIC.

1. THE ENDING OF THE HUNGER STRIKE IN THE MAZE PRISON ON 3 OCTOBER HAS BEEN GREETED BY POLITICIANS IN THE REPUBLIC WITH RELIEF.

2. THE TAOISEACH GAVE AN OFF THE CUFF INTERVIEW TO REPORTERS SOON AFTER THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE END OF THE HUNGER STRIKE WAS MADE. ACCORDING TO REPORTS IN TODAY'S NEWSPAPERS, DR FITZGERALD SAID THAT HE WAS "VERY PLEASED" THAT THE STRIKE HAD ENDED, AND THAT HE ADMIRERD THE COURAGE OF THE RELATIONS OF THE HUNGER STRIKERS WHO HAD HELPED BRING IT ABOUT. HE HOPED THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD INTRODUCE CHANGES IN THE PRISON REGIME ALONG THE LINES RECOMMENDED BY THE IRISH COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE THAT WOULD NOT GIVE ANY EXCUSE FOR A RESUMPTION OF THE HUNGER STRIKE. IN HIS VIEW THE VISIT TO THE MAZE PRISON BY MR PRIOR "WAS A SIGNAL OF THE INTENTION TO IMPLEMENT CHANGES." HE THOUGHT THAT THE END OF THE HUNGER STRIKE WOULD LEAD TO BETTER RELATIONS WITH BRITAIN AND ADMITTED THAT HE WAS "UNHAPPY" WITH THE INFLEXIBILITY OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON THE HUNGER STRIKE AS HE THOUGHT WERE THE IRISH PEOPLE. THE NEWS ALSO MEANT THAT HIS MEETING WITH MRS THATCHER WOULD NOT BE "OVERSHADOWED" BY THE CONTINUING HUNGER STRIKE.

3. THE TANAISTE, MR O'LEARY WELCOMED THE ENDING OF THE HUNGER STRIKE, BUT SAID: "IF THIS COULD BE ACCOMPANIED BY A CESSATION OF VIOLENCE BY THE PARAMILITARY ORGANISATIONS, A VAST STEP FORWARD COULD BE MADE IN REACHING A GENERAL POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND."

4. THE FIANNA FAIL LEADER, MR HAUGHEY IS REPORTED AS HAVING SAID: "THIS IS INDEED GREAT NEWS. THERE WILL BE RELIEF THROUGHOUT THIS ISLAND THAT THIS TRAGIC SITUATION HAS NOW COME TO AN END. IT IS TRAGIC THAT SO MANY DEATHS OCCURRED BUT IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT TODAY'S DEVELOPMENTS WILL USHER IN A NEW ERA OF PEACE."

5. SEE M.I.F.T. FOR MEDIA REACTIONS.

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