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TO IMMEDIATE F C O

TELEGRAM NUMBER 317 OF 02 SEPTEMBER

AND TO IMMEDIATE N I O (BELFAST)

H BLOCKS : MEETING BETWEEN HAUGHEY AND CARRON.

1. THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION FIANNA FAIL PARTY, MR HAUGHEY HAD A MEETING LASTING AN HOUR WITH OWEN CARRON M P AT HIS HOME IN DUBLIN LAST NIGHT. AFTERWARDS, BOTH MEN GAVE SEPARATE PRESS CONFERENCES.

2. THERE IS NO TRANSCRIPT OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE PRESS REPORTS ARE SOMEWHAT AT VARIANCE WITH EACH OTHER. TONY FITZPATRICK, THE NEW FIANNA FAIL PRESS OFFICER CLAIMS THAT MR HAUGHEY BELIEVES THAT THE IRISH TIMES OFFERS THE BEST VERSION OF WHAT HAD BEEN SAID. HOWEVER THERE ARE TWO OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES

BELIEVES THAT THE IRISH TIMES OFFERS THE BEST VERSION OF WHAT HAD BEEN SAID. HOWEVER THERE ARE TWO OBVIOUS DIFFICULTIES THE IRISH TIMES HEADLINE READS " HAUGHEY GIVES FIVE DEMANDS FIRM BACKING " YET THE OTHER PAPERS REPORT THAT CARRON ADMITTED THAT MR HAUGHEY'S STATEMENT DID NOT REPRESENT FULL SUPPORT FOR THE FIVE DEMANDS. EQUALLY THE IRISH TIMES STORY STARTS "MR HAUGHEY HARDENED FIANNA FAIL'S REPUBLICAN LINE YESTERDAY" ALTHOUGH THE OTHER PAPERS REPORT THAT MR HAUGHEY SPECIFICALLY DENIED THAT HIS APPROACH IN OPPOSITION DIFFERED IN ANY WAY FROM HIS POLICY IN GOVERNMENT. (THE EXPLANATION FOR THESE OMISSIONS MAY BE THAT THE TIMES ARTICLE IS BY NIALL KEILLY, WHO IS KNOWN TO HAVE STRONG REPUBLICAN VIEWS. EQUALLY MR HAUGHEY MAY BE HAPPY WITH IMPRESSION CONVEYED IN THE ARTICLE AND HEADLINE.

3. IT IS HOWEVER GENERALLY AGREED THAT MR HAUGHEY SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT SETTLEMENT ON THE BASIS OF THE FIVE DEMANDS SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED DIRECTLY BY THE PRISONERS AND THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. IN HIS VIEW, IT WAS QUITE UNACCEPTABLE FOR ANY MODERN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW PRISONERS TO DIE WITHOUT MAKING A SERIOUS EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. NO CIVILISED SOCIETY COULD CONTEMPLATE THIS SITUATION CONTINUING. HE ADDED, "I AM AFRAID THE ONLY WAY A SOLUTION CAN COME ABOUT IS BY SUFFICIENT MORAL, DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL PRESSURE BEING BROUGHT ON THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE A SOLUTION ALONG THE LINES SUGGESTED" . HE ALSO SAID THAT THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE PRISON WOULD NOT HAVE OCCURRED IF BRITAIN HAD ADHERED TO THE AGREEMENT MADE LAST DECEMBER. HE DECLINED TO BE DRAWN INTO CRITICISING THE NEW GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF THE H BLOCK CRISIS, AND SAID THAT HE HAD DISAGREED WITH CARRON WHEN THE LATTER HAD URGED THAT HE SHOULD CALL FOR THE EXPULSION OF THE AMBASSADOR. IN MR HAUGHEY'S VIEW THIS WOULD NOT HELP BUT WOULD IN FACT BE COUNTER PRODUCTIVE: IN EFFECT IT WOULD MEAN BREAKING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

TATHAM