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*Irish Embassy,
London.*

Memorandum

Note of Conversation with Sir Edward Peck, Deputy
Under Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth
Office, on 11.9.69.

Following informal discussions between Mr Maurice Foley, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, ^{and the Ambassador,} earlier in the week, Sir Edward Peck telephoned to suggest that he call on the Ambassador to discuss the current situation, and the Ambassador invited him to lunch on 11/9/69. Mr Rush was also present at the lunch.

Sir Edward Peck is a taciturn man, and made little attempt to open up the conversation. Indeed, he seemed to have very little to say, apart from indicating his desire to keep open the channel of communication.

At the outset, he indicated that he is maintaining a close contact these days with Sir Andrew Gilchrist - they have been close friends for years.

In reply to a question, Sir Edward said that Mr Callaghan was expected to return to Belfast about 8th October, and he confirmed that, following the publication of the Cameron Report (expected tomorrow), a visit to London by Major Chichester-Clark may be expected very shortly.

Sir Edward is also a personal friend of Mr Oliver Wright, whose appointment "as Ambassador to Belfast" was made very suddenly, and came as quite a shock to the latter, who was on leave. Sir Edward described Wright's function

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as "a watch dog on the Belfast Government" and referred in the same context to slapping their wrists.

Next, Sir Edward sought confirmation that we have inscribed the matter on the agenda for the General Assembly. When this was confirmed, he referred to the technicalities involved, but otherwise offered no comment. Nevertheless, one seemed to detect a ^{tone} ~~notion~~ of repro~~of~~ in his remarks on this subject. Next, he referred back to our Security Council initiative, and suggested that the outcome, i.e., postponement of the matter, was probably a most satisfactory solution for all concerned since "Dr Hillery had the chance to make his speech, which was probably all he had hoped to achieve, and, of course, Lord Caradon replied for us".

Later, he spoke about the so-called Peace Line, which he insisted would not be a Berlin Wall. He seemed rather on the defensive about this, and, when some doubts were expressed about it from our side, he maintained that one barricade manned by the British troops was better than the great many smaller barricades in individual streets, which it was intended to replace. When it was remarked to him that the "living barricade" represented by the soldiers, hitherto in place along the critical areas of the city, was preferred, ^{alle} he offered no comment, although, at an earlier stage, he had conceded that British soldiers - like British police - were nowadays a very scarce commodity which could not always be provided on demand for special duties.

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At a later point, he spoke with some feeling about the Extremists on both sides, and implied rather that it would be helpful if we on our side could do something about the I.R.A. It was, however, on the Trotskyite and Maoist Extremists that he concentrated his remarks in this connection, insisting that there was a serious problem to be faced, despite suggestions that this element, like the 'I.R.A., had been ^{? grossly} closely exaggerated.

When taking his leave, Sir Edward suggested to the Ambassador that they must keep in touch, and then added that he would like the Ambassador to meet Mr Oliver Wright, and hoped that could be arranged soon.

KR

September 12 1969