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Title: Note by HJ McCann, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, reporting a telephone call from the Ambassador or Great Britain John Peck regarding the burning of the British Embassy in Dublin and the possible evacuation of British Embassy staff by air.

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NOTE

The British Ambassador spoke to me at my home by telephone last night about 9.30 p.m. He said that London had put at his disposal a large aircraft to evacuate the women and children and non-essential personnel of his Mission if he considered this necessary. He said that he was not taking a final decision until later to-day as to whether he would order the evacuation.

The Ambassador went on to say that he had come to the conclusion that there is a breakdown in law and order here particularly in the light of the activities of "hooligans" following the burning down of the Embassy Chancery. They had even gone so far as to hurl a petrol bomb at a maternity hospital. He said that the landlord of the home of Mr. Blatherwick of the Embassy had been threatened that unless he put Mr. Blatherwick out immediately there would be dire consequences.

The Ambassador said that if he takes the decision to evacuate the staff he will probably arrange for the departure on Saturday leaving only a skeleton male staff behind here having sent away their dependents. It is not his intention to publicise this action if it takes place but he said that it will inevitably leak.

A possible explanation of the Ambassador telling me this is to create the impression that they are going to be firm about Newry on Sunday. The Ambassador proposes to come in to see me later this morning.



4 Feabhra 1972