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26th June, 1978

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Dear Michael,

Thank you for sending me a note of your recent meeting with the Rev. Martin Smyth. I see that despite our efforts, the extradition question is still being confused.

Yours sincerely,

J. LYNCH

Mr. Michael O'Kennedy, T.D.,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,

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European Commission
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OIFIG AN AIRE GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
DUBLIN 2

23 June, 1978

Mr. J. Lynch T.D.
Taoiseach
Government Buildings
Dublin 2.

Dear Taoiseach

You may be interested to know that I recently had a meeting with the Rev. Martin Smyth. I enclose a note of our conversation.

Yours sincerely

Michael O'Kennedy T.D.
Minister for Foreign Affairs

Confidential

Note

1. The Minister had a meeting on 20th June 1978 with the Rev. Martin Smyth, who was in Dublin on business connected with the Orange Order. The Rev. Smyth was accompanied by Mr. Walter Williams, Secretary of the Orange Order.
2. After initial courtesies the Rev. Smyth referred to the Special Disarmament session of the UN, with some light-hearted comments on Ciaran McKeown's contribution. The Minister outlined the proposals for disarmament put forward by the Taoiseach and made some general comments on the session.
3. The Rev. Smyth then mentioned the National Anthem, his comments on which had been picked up by John Stewart in the Sunday News. It was the only anthem he knew which made a reference to another country - the others, however military, did not. The Minister explained some of the terms used (bearna baol etc.) and the history of the anthem.
4. The main substantive point raised by the Rev. Smyth related to extradition. Very many Northerners were dismayed by the Dublin position on this. He wondered if the La Mon bombers were caught in the South whether their actions would be deemed a political offence. On this question the Minister produced the Newsletter article of the previous Friday and the corrective on Saturday. He emphasised his concern at Northern feelings on the question of bringing criminals to justice and especially in relation to the La Mon allegation. He gave the Rev. Smyth the factual background to the La Mon allegations. He then outlined the position on extradition both in the EEC context and in regard to the Constitution here. He listed the extra-territorial provisions now in force, which were available to be used against anyone suspected of the La Mon or any other crime committed subsequent to the legislation coming into force. He also touched briefly on other legislation here designed to counter subversives. The Rev. Smyth agreed that there were constraints inherent in the common-law system, which presumed the innocence of the accused until proved guilty, and there was also a reflex among clergymen and others of siding with the accused who was seen as the underdog.

5. The Minister mentioned briefly his recent visit to Northern Ireland, emphasising that it was a familiarisation visit rather than one aimed at political negotiation. Although he had been asked by the press about his contacts, he had been careful to avoid comment and to leave to those he had met the decision as to whether or not they publicised the fact. He had met a wide range of opinions and felt that provided they avoided intolerance, sincerely held convictions were a helpful factor rather than otherwise. The Rev. Smyth said he had always emphasised to people in Belfast that as head of the Orange Order he was prepared to see anyone - 'even the Foreign Secretary of a Foreign State', and agreed cheerfully that the North was indeed an opinionated place. Due to pressure of time on the Minister and the Rev. Smyth the meeting then concluded.

Soi

Seán Ó hUiginn

20 June 1978