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1. The British Ambassador telephoned this morning and asked if he could see me before lunch "in connection with" what Mr. Mason would be saying in the House of Commons debate later to-day. We met at mid-day and the Ambassador then said that because of the communications difficulty he did not have the final text of what Mr. Mason would be saying. He would, however, be making it clear that while the 2% figure being used by us was not inaccurate, it was not the complete picture and, if pressed, Mr. Mason would say that the border remained a continuing problem in the fight against terrorism. As far as possible, he would talk in very general terms and what he would say should in no way be taken as a criticism of security co-operation. Indeed it was likely that he would pay a particular tribute to Dublin in reducing the traffic in commercial explosives.

2. The Ambassador then handed me a document dated 28 February and headed "The Use of the Border by the Provisional IRA". The information in that document was the sort of thing Mr. Mason had in mind when he talked about the continuing problem of the border. There was, said the Ambassador, nothing new in the document and its contents were already "known to and agreed" by the Gardai. In accepting the document, I asked if it was intended to refer publicly, during to-day's House of Commons debate or elsewhere, to its being handed over. The Ambassador replied that this was not the intention and asked that we treat it as secret because of the nature of the sources on which it relied. I also asked if it was intended, as envisaged in to-day's Daily Express, to press us publicly on the question of extradition and the Ambassador replied that he had no information to suggest that there was any basis in that story. I reminded him that any references to problems of extradition without corresponding references to the existence of the Criminal Law Jurisdiction legislation would be seen here as most unhelpful.

Seán Donlon

Seán Donlon

6 March, 1978

c.c. PSM, PSS

Mr. M.J. Donnelly (D/Justice)

Mr. D. Nally (D/Taoiseach) ✓

Ambassador Keating (London)