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Mr D H C Calleary
12.11.87

Lunch for John Boyd, FCO, and the British Ambassador

9 November 1987

1. The Secretary hosted a lunch on 9 November for John Boyd, Deputy Under-Secretary at the FCO, and the British Ambassador. Others present at the lunch were Sean O Huiginn, Dermot Gallagher, Declan O'Donovan and Anne Anderson.
2. Mr. Boyd's visit had been arranged some time ago (he and his wife are apparently long-standing friends of Ambassador and Mrs. Fenn and the two families had spent the weekend together). Since, in the event, the call took place in the immediate aftermath of the Enniskillen bombing, Mr. Boyd and the Ambassador used the opportunity to probe whether the events of the past week had changed the scenario for bringing into effect of the ECST.
3. The discussion on extradition was preceded by a largely social lunch. Two serious topics touched on during the lunch were (i) Sellafield and (ii) the recent experience of Minister of State Calleary at Manchester Airport. On Sellafield, the Secretary indicated the continuing concerns on the part of the public and at political level in Ireland. Mr. Calleary's experience in Manchester was raised by Mr. Boyd who expressed deep regret that the incident had occurred. Both he and Ambassador Fenn said that Mr. Calleary's identity was not known to the airport police and that, had it been, the incident would not of course have occurred. When we pointed out that Mr. Calleary's identity was in fact known, Ambassador Fenn said there was a conflict of evidence here and that he would have the matter checked out further. Mr. Boyd repeated his expression of regret and there was a general discussion of the problems posed by the requirement of completion of landing cards at Manchester Airport.
4. In a protracted discussion on the extradition issue, the following were the main points made by Mr. Boyd and Ambassador Fenn.
 - The landscape in their view has been dramatically changed by the events of the past week. The cumulative effect of the Eksund interception, the O'Grady kidnapping and the Enniskillen bombing is immense. In the

light of these events, British Ministers and public opinion would absolutely fail to understand a decision not to proceed with implementation of the Act.

- There is now a "confluence of symbolism and reality" - given the hideous reality of the events of the past week, it is difficult for anyone to see the decision on whether or not to proceed with the Convention as largely symbolic.
- The degree of publicity being given to these latest events means that the extradition decision has now an international dimension.
- If the Government did not proceed with the implementation, the reaction in Downing Street would be very strong. There would be "dismay amounting to a sense of betrayal". The reaction of Mrs. Thatcher would be outside the power of officials to control.
- On the British side, the Anglo-Irish Agreement is perceived in a very personal way as "Mrs. Thatcher's Agreement". She sees herself as having taken considerable risks for the Agreement and now expects the Irish Government to show a reciprocal readiness to incur risk.
- The opinion poll in the Sunday Press of 8 November showed a "surprising" degree of public support for going ahead with the Extradition Act. While the Fine Gael leader, Mr. Dukes, and the Progressive Democrats leader, Mr. O'Malley, remained carefully guarded in their statements, it seemed fairly clear from the thrust of their comments (Mr. O'Malley on the previous night's "Questions and Answers" and Mr. Dukes on that day's "Morning Ireland") that their parties would be prepared to support implementation of the Act.
- The last sentence of the Taoiseach's message to Mrs. Thatcher had a "striking clarity" in its commitment to a joint approach on security, which seemed significant in the context of the present debate.

5. The Secretary and the Irish side responded in detail to the above comments. Among the points made were:

- The events of the past week, and particularly the appalling atrocity in Enniskillen, undoubtedly had an impact and would of course be taken into account. However, shocked and horrified as everyone was, it was generally accepted that policy decisions should not be taken under the stress of emotional reactions. There was a general consensus that the "policy of the last atrocity" was better avoided.
- The position last week was that a final decision would be postponed until after 15 November. As of now, this remained the position.
- Other European countries, the majority of whom had ratified the ECST with reservations of the type which the Irish Government had from the outset sought to avoid, were hardly in a position to be critical of the Irish Government on this issue.
- Not too much significance should be attached to the Sunday Press poll. Differently worded questions would possibly have evoked widely differing responses.
- The Birmingham Six and other cases are a significant factor in the attitude of public opinion to extradition. The Birmingham appeal is widely viewed here as a test of the application of British justice in cases involving Irish people.
- The reality is of course that extradition operates anyway without the ECST, on foot of Court decisions. If the perpetrators of the Enniskillen atrocity were apprehended in the Republic, the courts would almost certainly, in view of the precedents, refuse to see their crime as "political".
- Because security cooperation and extradition are already there, the last sentence of the Taoiseach's message to Mrs. Thatcher should not necessarily be seen as a pointer on the ECST.

6. Throughout the discussion, Mr. Boyd and Ambassador Fenn generally supported and echoed each other's points. However, on the question of timing of a Government decision on the implementation of the Act, there seemed to be a slight difference in emphasis. Mr. Boyd appeared to suggest that if a "positive" decision were taken, it was desirable that the Government announce it sooner rather than later, as it would have greater resonance if it followed closely on the horror of Enniskillen. Ambassador Fenn felt that a "positive" decision anytime before 1 December would have the same effect.

Anne Anderson.

Anne Anderson

10 November 1987

c.c. PSM
PSMS (para 3)
PSS
Mr. Gallagher
Counsellors A-I
Mr. O Huiginn
Ambassador London
Mr. Nally