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cc. PS7  
PSS  
A/Sec O hUiginn  
T. Dalton D/J  
F. Murray NT  
A/Sec Borenstein  
✓ cc T. Dalton

Meeting with British Ambassador, 29 April

Iran II

1. In the course of his call on A/Sec O hUiginn on the subject of links between Iran and the IRA the British Ambassador raised the question, previously broached through Garda channels, of Iranian plans to locate an intelligence officer in Dublin. He left the attached Speaking Note on the subject.
  
2. The Ambassador suggested that the two issues were related, being part of a wider series of activities by Iran in the security area of significant concern to the British Government. This includes most particularly the threat against Rushdie.
  
3. A/Sec O hUiginn responded that any activities of the kind suggested would be viewed by us as matters of the utmost seriousness. He asked if the British side knew the name of the Iranian officer concerned. The Ambassador did not have this information but referred to discussions on this matter in the police channel. He hoped for the co-operation of our authorities in dealing with this issue.
  
4. A/Sec O hUiginn said that the Ambassador could be assured that the matter would immediately be brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities, and given the careful attention it merited.

PA

P. Hennessy  
29 April 1994

## SPEAKING NOTE

An approach was made last month to the Garda through liaison channels about reports that the Iranians plan to post an intelligence officer to Dublin with a remit to increase coverage of the UK. Both we and the American authorities consider the Iranians to be the principal sponsors of terrorism in the world. They foster the murder abroad of opponents of the regime: the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) is the main executive instrument. Despite repeated assurances from the Iranian Government, including from its Minister of Intelligence and Security, Fallahian, during his visit to Germany last October, the MOIS remains charged with the murder of Bakhtiar in Paris in 1991, with complicity in the Berlin murders in 1992 and has been involved in some 24 assassinations in Europe and Turkey since 1989. From delicate sources we know that it continues to plan the murder of Salman Rushdie. For some time we have noticed that the Iranian Embassy uses Northern Ireland as a backdoor into the UK.

We have for some time had reason to believe that the MOIS plans to post a representative to the Iranian Embassy in Dublin. We hope that in this case the Irish authorities will cooperate with us as appropriate in a matter of serious concern to us.

British Embassy  
Dublin  
29 April 1994


cc PST  
PSS  
A/Sec O hUiginn  
T. Dalton D/I  
E. Murray D/I  
A/Sec O hUiginn  
S. Whelan  
✓ cc  
3/4/94

Meeting with British Ambassador, 29 April

1. The Ambassador said that he had been instructed to make representation at senior level with regard to Iran. It had been his intention, as we knew, to do so yesterday but owing to the absence of the relevant officials it had been deferred to today. He noted that he had previously had discussions with the Secretary on matters relating to Iran and Libya. He indicated that similar approaches were being made in European capitals, Washington and Tokyo. (Another partly related matter raised by the Ambassador has been minuted separately).
  
2. The Ambassador handed over a copy of his Speaking Note (attached). In response A/Sec O hUiginn indicated that any contact by a foreign government with the IRA would be a matter of concern to us. It was perhaps not surprising that the IRA would seek to initiate contact with regimes such as that in Iran. It would be helpful to us to have some further information on what these contacts involved and the nature of the response on the Iranian side. There was, perhaps understandably, an absence of detail in the information provided. We noted, for example, that it was stated that the Iranians have "probably" provided some finance: could the Ambassador be more specific?
  
3. The Ambassador said that he had no further information at present, but would enquire if there was additional data which could be given to us. However, in view of the fact that much of their information was based on intelligence sources there might be difficulties in this regard.
  
4. A/Sec. O hUiginn referred to the likelihood of PQs on the issue. While our practice was to avoid entering into the detail of security matters, the publicity which the story had generated made it likely that the topic would be the subject of close questioning. In this context any further

information which the British could provide would be helpful. In the event that this was not possible it would obviously be difficult for our Ministers to say they had any verifiable details to back up the concerns expressed on this issue.

5. A/Sec O hUiginn, commenting that the Note referred to contacts as far back as 1981, asked why the decision had now been taken to go public. The Ambassador suggested that press reports in Greece and the Middle East made disclosure unavoidable. Asked if the reports were well-founded, Mr. Blatherwick said that they coincided with what they already had good reason to believe.
6. In thanking the Ambassador for his call A/Sec O hUiginn said that we had noted carefully the concern of the British Government, on a matter in which we also had a very real interest. If it were possible to provide more detailed information this would be helpful and we looked forward to hearing further from the British side in this regard.
7. The Ambassador noted as a final observation that the disclosure of these events was in no way linked to the recent visit to Iran by the Minister for the Marine.

  
P. Hennessy  
29 April 1994

A2146

## SPEAKING NOTE

Mr Hogg, Minister of State at the FCO, summoned the Iranian Charge on 28 April to convey the British Government's considerable concern about recent press reports on contacts which have existed for some years between known members of Iranian intelligence (the Ministry of Intelligence and Security - MOIS) and the Provisional IRA (PIRA). We are satisfied that the reports are broadly accurate. Mr Hogg requested a very early assurance from the Iranian Government at senior level that the relationship would cease forthwith.

Sinn Fein have had a political link with Iran since 1981, including through Sinn Fein representatives in Britain. In the mid-1980s establishing contact with PIRA became a high priority for the MOIS and at some stage thereafter a high-level link was established. Since then PIRA members have held meetings with MOIS officers in Europe and Tehran.

Knowledge of the relationship is tightly held in MOIS. Amir Hussein Taqhavi, sometime official in charge of intelligence operations in Western Europe, is believed to be in control of the link. A senior PIRA member is involved, under the direction of the Provisional Army Council.

We believe that PIRA are seeking a successor to Libya as a source of weaponry, finance and possibly training and logistical support. For their part the Iranians appear to be trying, through supporting PIRA, to stir up trouble for the UK. Though there is no evidence as yet that the Iranians have supplied weaponry to PIRA, they have probably provided some finance.

British Embassy  
Dublin  
29 April 1994