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Meeting between the Minister of State Sean Calleary T. D.
and Mrs. Lily Hill, 27 April

Minister of State, Sean Calleary T. D., met with Mrs. Hill, mother of Paul Hill, one of the Guildford Four, at her request. She was visiting Dublin as part of a week long programme organised by the Union of Students in Ireland.

Mrs. Hill began the meeting by saying that the families were unhappy with the police inquiry. From the questions asked by the policemen and their general conduct of the inquiry they were afraid that police were operating on very narrow terms of reference. She asked the Minister to seek from the British Government the exact terms of reference under which the police inquiry was conducted. The Minister agreed to follow up on her request.

Mrs. Hill said that the police inquiry was now completed and a decision on the case by the Home Secretary was imminent. There are now several possible developments

- (i) rejection of the new evidence completely and the continuation of the present situation
- (ii) referral of the case to a complete retrial
- (iii) referral of the case to the Court of Appeal
- (iv) release of the men.

The relatives of the Guildford Four wished to see them released immediately. She herself did not want to see the case go to the Court of Appeal because of the experience of the Birmingham Six, the length of time it would take and the possible effects a long drawn out court case would have on her son. The Minister replied that while release of the Four would be the optimum position, the Government would view the referral of the case to the Court of Appeal as a positive step. Mrs. Hill conceded that such a referral would be a positive development though not the one most favoured by the relatives.

The Minister said that the Tanaiste would be seeking a meeting with the Home Secretary shortly on the case of the Birmingham Six and related cases which of course would include the Guildford Four. Mrs. Hill said that any representations to the British Government on the question of a referral of the case to the Court of Appeal should seek to have the Court of Appeal consider again the testimony of those convicted of the Balcome Street seige. Their accounts were the most compelling evidence of the Four's innocence.

Mrs. Hill also requested that the Government give a higher international profile to the case. The Birmingham Six case had received wider international recognition. The Minister said that the Irish Government had remained relatively quiet on the case of the Guildford Four while the police inquiry was underway. The legal avenues in the Birmingham Six case, on the other hand, appeared to have reached an end. Recent public references by the Government to the Birmingham Six case did not imply any lesser concern of the Guildford case.

Mrs. Hill also raised the conditions under which Paul Hill has been held in prison. He was seriously underweight and has been moved on 46 occasions. He has spent 1,500 days in solitary confinement. The Minister told Mrs. Hill that the Embassy had visited her son last week and as a result of the visit would be speaking to the Home Office on his prison conditions.

Mrs. Hill thanked the Minister for agreeing to meet her and listen to the case. The atmosphere at the meeting was cordial. Mrs. Hill was accompanied by a representative of the Union of Students in Ireland. The undersigned accompanied the Minister.

R. Bassett,
Anglo-Irish Section.

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