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Department of Foreign Affairs

CLAUDIA

The British-made arms seized on the "Claudia" have now been examined. The origin of the few weapons whose numbers had not been erased has been traced and the results of the investigation will be transmitted separately to the Irish authorities.

In their piece of paper dated 13 April 1973 the Department of Foreign Affairs said that they thought that in any approach to the Soviet Government it was preferable for the Irish and British authorities to act independently of each other. The British Government have accordingly spoken to the Russians about the provenance of the large number of modern Russian-made arms found on the "Claudia", but without profit. It is difficult to believe that the Russians, who undoubtedly keep careful records of arms sales, could not trace the arms found on the "Claudia" if they so wished.

The British Government consider that any further diplomatic approaches they may make to the Russians would be similarly ineffective, but that an Irish approach would have much greater chances of success. They would therefore be grateful if Dr FitzGerald would consider taking up the matter with Mr Gromyko in Helsinki this week, perhaps on the lines that it is a good principle that nations which manufacture arms should keep adequate records and should act swiftly to ensure that supplies

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to terrorists are cut off. We would have no objection if the Minister mentioned the fact that we provided all the details we could about arms believed to have originated in the United Kingdom.

BRITISH EMBASSY

DUBLIN

3 July 1973