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Mr Noel Dorr
Secretary
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin

BRITISH EMBASSY,
DUBLIN.

28 July 1988

Handwritten notes:
Law Dorr for per. 4/8
Mr. Dorr (for your files?) 25/7/88
handed to me after lunch by British Ambassador 28/7/88
(PA Gil.)

Handwritten notes:
Pl. copy urgently to
PST
Mr. Nally
Mr. Matthews (D) (Surtan) (for M/T)
Mr. D. Gallogher.
M) 28/7/88

Dear Noel,

GIBRALTAR INQUEST

1. In the course of the InterGovernmental Conference in London on 27 July, the two Co-Chairmen had some discussion of the forthcoming Inquest in Gibraltar. In the light of a ministerial meeting which was taking place in parallel, I am now authorised to be a little more specific on two of the three questions raised.

IRISH OBSERVER

2. An official Irish Observer will be welcome to attend the Inquest. We have been holding a seat for this contingency. We should be grateful to know in due course the name of your representative and also for advance warning of any announcement which you may wish to make.

ATTENDANCE OF WITNESSES

3. The Tanaiste asked about the attendance at the Inquest of members of the Security Forces. Unless there are unexpected problems between now and the Inquest, it is the firm intention of the Government and of the witnesses that they should go. This will be announced in the House of Commons tomorrow by the Secretary of State for Defence. I am authorised to transmit the enclosed draft text for the confidential advance information of the Irish authorities.

Yours sincerely,

N M Fenn

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GIBRALTAR INQUEST: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

The following is the draft of a parliamentary question and written answer expected to be delivered in the House of Commons in London at about 11.30 am on Friday, 29 July 1988.

Question: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement about the attendance of Security Forces Witnesses at the forthcoming Inquest at Gibraltar.

The Secretary of State for Defence: All concerned wish to cooperate as fully as possible with the Coroner. At the same time the Government has a responsibility to ensure that the personal security of witnesses is not put at risk. A final decision whether or not the witnesses should be advised to attend the Inquest will be taken immediately before the Inquest opens in the light of an up-to-date assessment of the security risk. At present, however, the intention of HMG and of the witnesses is that they will go.