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HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Feb 24

*London
Brett
by Mr Conroy
In the course of other
contacts, you might
perhaps confirm
that DIF &
H. & have
received their
papers
from London
Embassy
UK
3-3-88*

Mr Haughey,

Many thanks for seeing me the other day. Your interest in the Birmingham Six case is much appreciated.

I have passed on to Robert Kee the suggestion that you would be willing to discuss the Guildford and Woolwich case with him.

As promised, I also enclose a list of practical suggestions for ways in which your Government might keep the Birmingham Six issue alive.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Chris Mullin

CHRIS MULLIN MP

*Mr. Lockyer
re check with*

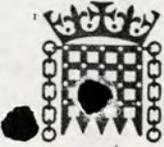
*P. O'Keefe is then
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*107
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H. Gally
for info*

Charles Haughey Esq.,
Taoiseach,
Government Buildings,
Dublin.

cc Andrew O'Rourke,
Embassy of Ireland,
London

*Robello.
3/3*



From: Chris Mullin MP

THE BIRMINGHAM SIX - future prospects

At my meeting with the Taoiseach on Friday 19 February, it was agreed that I provide him with a list of practical suggestions for ways in which his government might keep the issue alive. I do so as follows:

1. The Taoiseach and his ministers should at every opportunity, include a reference to the case in their public speeches.
2. That, at every available opportunity, the case should be raised in private meetings with representatives of HMG. If it is objected that HMG cannot interfere with the decisions of our allegedly independent judiciary, it might be worth referring to the case of Private Robert Thain, released by the Home Secretary less than three years into a life sentence for the murder of an Irish civilian. Attention might also be drawn to a statement by the Ministry of Defence, that the soldier was merely guilty of an error of judgement in clear contradiction of the comments by the trial judge who found him guilty of murder.
3. That a possible way out of the Birmingham impasse, would be for HMG to implement the recommendation of the House of Commons Home Affairs Select Committee report on miscarriages of justice. This proposed that a Court of Last Resort be established with power to consider evidence inadmissible before the courts - such as my suggestion that I have traced and interviewed the persons who carried out the bombing. I enclose a copy of the Committee's report which dealt at length with the limitations of the Court of Appeal. It is worth noting that the Select Committee which recommended a Court of Last Resort - also referred to as an Independent Review Tribunal - contained a majority of Tories. Also, the Early Day Motion calling for an Independent Review Tribunal for the Birmingham case has now been signed by more than 160 MPs of all parties.



4. That the Irish Ambassador in London be authorised to pursue with the Home Office every significant new piece of information that emerges subsequent to the appeal hearing. In an Adjournment debate on Friday 16 I placed on the record a good deal of information about the relationship between the two principal Crown witnesses, Frank Skuse and George Reade. Although the Minister dismissed my allegations with contempt, it is open to the Irish Government to pursue these privately and publicly and to demand that they be investigated. This should be done as soon as possible and I would be glad to know the outcome. A copy of the Adjournment debate is enclosed.
5. I shall, from time to time be placing further information on record. I shall keep the Irish Government, through your embassy in London, informed and I am always happy to make available the relevant documents. In due course there will be an updated edition of 'Error of Judgement' and a further 'World in Action'. It is important that the Irish Government follow up each of these developments.
6. The case should be raised internationally by the Irish Government. There are various possible avenues:
 - (i) Under the Helsinki Agreement. Until now this treaty has been used almost exclusively to raise human rights abuses in Soviet Bloc countries. There is no reason why this case could not be raised. In October last year I visited the Helsinki monitoring group in Washington and I found them very receptive to the idea.
 - (ii) The European Court: once the legal avenues in Britain are exhausted, the Irish Government should consider a reference to the European Court. This should be done in consultation with the lawyers for the men - Gareth Peirce of Birnberg's can be contacted on 01 403 3166
 - (iii) Amnesty International are in the process of preparing a report on the appeal hearing. It is as yet unclear if and when it will be published. The researcher responsible is Halya Gowan. She can be reached at Amnesty International, 1 Easton Street, London WC1X 8DJ. If an Amnesty report is published, the Irish Government should take a bulk order and distribute it through its embassies around the world.



I hope these suggestions are useful. I am available at any time to brief representatives of the Irish Government. I can be reached on any of the following numbers:

219 3440 (direct line); 219 4343 (messages)
091 567 2848 (Sunderland Office)

24 February 1988

Enc: Adjournment debate, Feb 16; Early Day Motion 652:
Report of Select Committee on Miscarriages of Justice