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IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

Mr B. Campbell
11.3.88
11/3

17 Grosvenor Place
SW1X 7HR

cc P.S. Tamm
PSH
AG
M. Waddy
P.R.
Mr. Deane/John R. ...
Counselor A/
Rox

CONFIDENTIAL - BY SPECIAL COURIER

9 March 1988

Dear Assistant Secretary

BIRMINGHAM SIX CASE

Mr Chris Mullin, MP, called to see me today, at his request, to discuss the matters dealt with in the material he has recently sent the Taoiseach, and other matters which, he said, he would shortly be raising in Parliament.

He said that the future of the campaign to secure the release of the Six lies in the Skuse/Reade relationship. The Appeal to the House of Lords was merely a procedure to be gone through; he was convinced it would not lead to anything. On timing, he thought that it might get a mention about May and then join a long queue of cases. It would be a year before it was resolved, though he thought there is a procedure for speeding the process up.

He said he is pursuing his investigations. He had obtained copies of part of the telephone account of Dr Skuse at the hotel he stayed at during the Appeal Court hearing. (Copy attached). This, he maintained, showed that Skuse had

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telephoned Reade on the night of 16-17 November, while Skuse was still in the witness box and under instruction not to discuss the case with anyone. (He has some further investigation to do about the sequence of calls on the account - 0889477779 is Reade's number). He said he had obtained other evidence regarding what he described as "the colourful career of Reade" that is, a person who while he has not yet signed a statement, says that about 1976/77 he had, while drinking with Reade, heard him boast about putting a gun in Paddy Hill's mouth. Ironically, Mullin said, it was not, in fact, Reade who had done this, but the evidence would be useful.

He also said (for confidential information at this stage) that somebody had sent him, from the Special Branch archives, a note of an interview in 1975 with a member of *the* IRA who named one of those who placed the bombs in the pubs in Birmingham. The police had "noted" this report - no investigation followed. In due course, he said, he would provide a copy of this.

As to what he wants us to do, Mullin suggested we wait until he makes some of these matters public. I told him that in any event it was our intention at present to wait and not to comment further until the legal process is completed; we had not decided how to proceed further, but that one possibility which might be considered could

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be a contact at Ministerial level. This would be in line with Mullin's views. He was not suggesting that we say anything publicly but he felt that, since the attitude in the Home Office is not to take new evidence or allegations seriously, ~~that~~ we should put down markers privately and so keep up the pressure. He said he would be anxious to brief us on the up-to-date state of his investigations before any such contacts. I gave him no undertaking in this regard. Mr Mullins asked if we could provide him with information on cases we have taken to the Commission/Court of Human Rights and perhaps we could do this, if you would be good enough to provide a list. He also asked if I would enquire if the Irish Government has any independent information leading it to believe that the Six are innocent. What he had in mind are police or intelligence reports like the Special Branch note referred to above. I tried to get him off this by saying that I had no knowledge of such matters and that I doubted whether, even if material of this sort existed (which by its nature would be secret) it would in any circumstances be made public. However, he maintained his request.

> This is a clear enough indication that we could get into pretty deep water in talking with Mullin and that we need to be cautious in our contacts with him. He asked me what had been my impression of the Appeal hearing. I replied that as an Ambassador accredited here I was in a quite different position from a politician or a private individual.

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and I had always thought it proper not to comment on the Appeal hearing. He said he understood this. I mentioned the Taoiseach's remarks, in his speech in the Dail of 17 February and at the Ard Fheis; Mullin was aware of these.

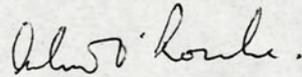
Finally, Mullin suggested we could usefully ask the Home Office to make available the report of Davis Owen (now Chief Constable of North Wales), made at the time of the civil action by the Six in 1976 against the police. This report has been kept so secret that Mullin suspects that it might provide some evidence or suggestion of assaults by the police before the confessions were signed.

In summary, Mullin is continuing to dig away with a view to producing new evidence, concentrating on the Skuse/Reade relationship. He intends to place this evidence on the record gradually "at dead of night" on adjournment debates. He is convinced that the police know, in both the Birmingham and Guildford cases that they have the wrong people and he will also continue to look wherever he can for evidence on this. He apparently feels that the Special Branch material referred to above is something of a breakthrough in police solidarity and, as indicated, he is beginning to look in our direction for possible further information to support his own conviction that

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persons other than the Six were responsible for the bombings.

Yours sincerely



Andrew O'Rourke
Ambassador

Mr Dermot A Gallagher
Assistant Secretary
Anglo-Irish Division
Department of Foreign Affairs
Dublin 2

STANDARD RATE

ROOM 1617

GUESTS 1/
ARRIVE 15/11/87
DEPART 18/11/87

FOLIO 3062715 COPY
PAY BY

RACK RATE BUSINESS

DATE		CHARGES	CREDITS		BALANCE
15/11/87	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	.18		22:30 8397202	
	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	.18		22:31 8397202	
	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	.36		23:13 8397202	
16/11/87	CASH PAID THREE YOU		50.00	09374	
	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	2.34		19:44 0942866986	
17/11/87	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	1.44		23:06 0889477779	
	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	4.50		00:03 0889477779	
	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	.36		22:40 0942866986	
	PAID OUT	40.64		CF ACC TO CU	
	VALUE ADDED TAX	0.00		@ 0.00%	
	DIRECT DIAL CALLS	1.44		19:38 0942866986	1.44

	N.I.T	TAX	
15.00%	9.39	1.41	
0.00%	40.64	0.00	
TOTAL	50.03	1.41	51.44

WE HOPE YOU ENJOYED YOUR STAY.

Q. Nitro-glycerine if it is there, nitro-cellulose if is there or anything else. -- A. Yes.

Q. This is pre-divison. You then have to divide that bowl into a further two portions. -- A. Yes.

Q. In order to do that, you add what is less than half a teaspoonful of ether to the bowl where the residue is. -- A. Yes.

B Q. And in order to get it into the other two bowls, one of which is the free nitrite, one of which goes back to the laboratory, you just tip. -- A. Yes.

Q. In the tipping process, do you agree that you may not get the residues at the bottom of the bowl you are using? Do you understand? The bowl in which you collected the residues, you are pouring less than -----? -- A. Yes.

C

Q. Do you follow? -- A. Yes.

Q. You may not get the residue constituents going into the other bowls, may you? -- A. You may not.

D

Q. And if you do not, when you take the other bowl back to the laboratory -- I will come to the swab. His Lordship is shaking so I will leave bowl 3 for the moment. Bowl 3 is for the laboratory, that one over there. -- A. The bowl you are tipping is going to the laboratory.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE: May I make a suggestion? What about Monday morning at 10.30?

E MR. MANSFIELD: Certainly.

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE: Let the appellants go down.

(The appellants left the court)

F THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE: Dr. Skuse, you will not discuss this case with anyone at all.

THE WITNESS: I understand, my Lord.

(Adjourned till 10.30 a.m. Monday, 16th November)

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