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Title:	Copy letter from Donal O'Sullivan, Ambassador of Ireland to Great Britain, to HJ McCann, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, reporting discussions with William Whitelaw, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, on the prospects for a Provisional Irish Republican Army truce, Protestant reaction to developments in Northern Ireland, the establishment of the Special Criminal Court in the Republic of Ireland, and alleged torture by the Royal Irish Constabulary.
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Personal and Confidential

June 8th, 1972.

Dear Secretary

I met Mr. Whitelaw at the Derby yesterday and we were able to have a brief chat.

He told me that he had released 50 more internees that day and had decided to take flight to the Derby "before the Protestants got hold of me". The two latest sets of releases are all Official IRA supporters. He hopes their release will be a lesson to the Provisionals who, he believes, are coming around to the idea of a truce. Quite unfounded reports are being put about by the majority alleging that large numbers of those released are returning to their old service units. His best information is that about 15 in all have done so, and one of these has already been arrested.

He praised highly the Taoiseach's decision to set up special courts. This was a most helpful move. It is being criticised by the majority on the grounds that it has come too late and that it was introduced in a way to allow some of the IRA leaders like Stephenson and O'Connell to escape the net. He has no evidence that these two are in the Bogside but, if they are, they will have to be left there for the time being at any rate. The action taken by the women of Belfast and Derry in favour of peace was very courageous and will, he is certain, bring useful results. He repeatedly paid high tribute to John Hume "who is behaving magnificently". Some of the others in his party could be more helpful".

The risk of a serious Protestant backlash is now greater than it was but he is, nevertheless, hopeful that attempts at violence from that source can be effectively dealt with. He is giving thought to the setting up of special courts but is meeting with a lot of opposition on this even from some of his own team. Some quite heavy penalties have been imposed by the ordinary courts but there is, he

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personally thinks, "room for a further strengthening of the legal process". Once he is fully convinced of this, he will not lose his nerve about taking the necessary action.

Mr. Whitelaw said he is greatly encouraged not only by the extent to which the minority are rallying behind him but also by the growing support which he knows he is getting from moderate Protestants. More of these Protestants are, at last, coming to realise that "there was so much wrong in the situation". Paisley is being quite helpful. Craig is a diminishing influence and Faulkner, as usual, is being devious.

I brought up the question of the enquiry by the Head of the RUC into the cases of alleged torture. I explained that we did not find the lack of co-operation surprising. It reflected the lack of confidence by the minority in the RUC. He readily agreed that this is the case. He has given the most firm instructions to the Head of the RUC to investigate the allegations "as fully, as impartially and as rapidly as possible". He has made it clear that outrages of this nature will not be tolerated and will be ^{most} sternly dealt with. Even though there is a morale problem with the RUC, he intends to pursue the allegations as far as it is humanly possible for him to do so. Once he has received the report of the Head of the RUC, he will have no hesitation about placing the whole matter in the hands of the Director of Public Prosecutions if there seems to be a case for charges against individuals in the Force.

Our conversation ended at this point as the main race was about to commence.

I ran into the Home Secretary several times during the afternoon but he was careful to avoid any reference to the North in the brief chats which we had.

Yours sincerely

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