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AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTARACH
DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
DUBLIN 2

Secret

12 December 1988

Ambassador
Vienna

huc Dillon

Mr. Dillon, Mr. O'Brien
for info. J.D.
14.12.88. 14/12

As you will be aware, large quantities of Semtex (a plastic explosive manufactured in Czechoslovakia) have been among the weapons and explosives, intended for subversive use, that have been found in recent years in Ireland.

While there is no evidence to show that the Czech authorities are consciously permitting, still less arranging for, the supply of arms to illegal organisations, we consider it would be useful to draw to their attention our concern to ensure that, so far as possible, explosives do not fall into paramilitary hands. I would be grateful if you would take the opportunity of your next visit to Prague to raise the matter with the Foreign Ministry.

In so doing, you might make the following points:

- recall the Government's policy in relation to Northern Ireland and its efforts to combat the violence arising from the situation there;
- that the ending of terrorist violence is an aim that we share with the Czechoslovak Government, and is one to which we are committed in the CSCE process;



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- that unfortunately, large quantities of Semtex have found their way into the hands of the IRA and other subversive organisations, a situation that causes grave concern to the Government;
- that we are therefore seeking the assistance of the Czech authorities and asking them to take the steps available to them with a view to ensuring that, as far as possible, explosives do not fall into paramilitary hands.

I would be glad to receive in due course a report on the Czech authorities' reactions to this approach.

For your information, consideration is being given to making similar approaches to a number of other countries.

Pádraig Murphy
Assistant Secretary