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AMBASÁD NA hÉIREANN, LONDAIN.



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

(1020)

Mr. Gifford
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PSW:
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3 February 1989

Dear Assistant Secretary

THE GUILDFORD FOUR

You will remember that some time ago you suggested I might have a further word with Cardinal Hume about this case and that my request for a meeting was overtaken by the Home Secretary's decision to refer the case to the Court of Appeal. Subsequently I was informed by the Cardinal's Office that the Committee (The Cardinal, Lords Scarman and Devlin and the two former Home Secretaries Lord Jenkins and Merlyn Rees) had been dissolved. It is clear from our contacts with the Cardinal's Office that he, and the other members of the Committee, now feel that a low profile is indicated and that it would be improper, in their view, to make further public comment now that the case is again to go before the Courts. I have, however, been assured that they are keeping in close touch with developments and are "ready to spring into action if anything untoward occurs".

I spoke with Robert Kee at a reception in the Embassy on 1 February. He told me that Scarman is not very optimistic about the outcome in the Court of Appeal but feels that an adverse decision there could well be overturned in the Lords, because, he suggested, of the interest Scarman and Devlin are taking in the case. In the first instance, the association of Scarman and Devlin with the case should ensure a more favourable hearing by the Appeals Committee (when leave to appeal to the Lords is sought) than that granted to the Birmingham Six appeal. Kee said that Scarman is advising in regard to the choice of the defence team and has suggested, as a right-winger less likely to antagonise the Court than somebody like Lord Gifford, a South African QC, Sydney Kentridge, now practicing in this country. (See his entry in Who's Who attached - we will see what else we can learn about him).

This is relevant.

Kee told me that he will continue to be in touch with Lord Scarman and he agreed we might meet to discuss developments at a suitable time.

Yours sincerely

Andrew O'Rourke
Ambassador

Mr Dermot A Gallagher
Assistant Secretary
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