



**An Chartlann Náisiúnta**  
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No 20

*M. Kavanagh*  
20/11

*Mr. J. Carrington*  
20-11-89

R9

<b>CODED MESSAGE</b>	
<b>IMMEDIATE URGENT</b>	
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	
DATE <i>21/11/89</i>	TIME <i>13.30</i>
INITIALS <i>TS</i>	

C.234

17 NOVEMBER 1989

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON  
FOR ASST SEC GALLAGHER FROM BRENDAN SCANNELL  
UUUFDGKH

*cc PST; PSW; AG  
H. Miller; PS8  
H. Hutton; H. Russell;  
H. Thomas  
Counsellor H/  
TSR.*

SUBJECT: GERARD CONLON'S VISIT TO WASHINGTON

1. GERARD CONLON, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS COUSIN, MARTIN LOUGHRAN, SPENT TODAY, 17TH NOVEMBER, IN WASHINGTON. THE EMBASSY ARRANGED MEETINGS FOR CONLON WITH CONGRESSMAN BRIAN DONNELLY, CHAIRMAN OF THE FRIENDS OF IRELAND, CONGRESSMAN JOE KENNEDY, CONGRESSMAN BILL COYNE, AND SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY. A MEETING WAS ALSO HELD WITH BRIAN MCKEON, SENIOR FOREIGN POLICY ADVISER IN SENATOR BIDEN'S STAFF.

2. PRESENT AT THE MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN DONNELLY WERE CONGRESSMAN BEN DWYER (D-NJ), AND CONGRESSMAN BILL LOWERY (R-CA). IN THIS AND IN ALL OTHER MEETINGS, CONLON WAS PARTICULARLY FOCUSED AND HIS PRESENTATION OF THE GUILDFORD FOUR CASE AND THAT OF THE BIRMINGHAM SIX WAS PRECISE AND COMPELLING. HE PLACED PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE CASE OF THE BIRMINGHAM SIX AND THE NEED TO BRING INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE ON THE BRITISH. CONLON STATED THAT IT WOULD BE A GREAT BOOST TO THE BIRMINGHAM SIX IF CONGRESSMAN DONNELLY COULD VISIT THEM IN PRISON. ALSO, IF LETTERS OF SUPPORT IN FAVOUR OF THE BIRMINGHAM SIX COULD BE SENT TO PRIME MINISTER THATCHER BY SENIOR INFLUENTIAL FIGURES IN CONGRESS. CONGRESSMAN DONNELLY WAS RECEPTIVE TO BOTH PROPOSALS.

3. REPRESENTATIVE KENNEDY

REP KENNEDY HAD CALLED ON CONLON'S MOTHER IN BELFAST DURING HIS VISIT THERE IN 1988. CONLON WENT OVER SIMILAR GROUND AS AT HIS MEETING WITH CONGRESSMAN DONNELLY. REP KENNEDY FELT IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE FOR CONLON TO MEET REP LANTOS WHO IS A SENIOR MEMBER OF THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS HUMAN RIGHTS SUBCOMMITTEE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS. KENNEDY UNDERTOOK TO ARRANGE A MEETING ON MONDAY NEXT FOR CONLON WITH LANTOS. IN RESPECT TO CONLON'S REQUEST FOR REP KENNEDY TO CALL ON THE BIRMINGHAM SIX, KENNEDY STATED THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE IN BRITAIN IN TWO TO THREE WEEKS' TIME AND THAT HE WOULD, TIME PERMITTING, REQUEST A VISIT TO THE BIRMINGHAM SIX. CONLON SUGGESTED THAT IF HE HAD TO CHOOSE ONE OF THE SIX HE SHOULD CALL ON PADDY JOE HILL, WHO IS THE MOST ACTIVE IN THE BIRMINGHAM SIX CAMPAIGN.

4. CONGRESSMAN COYNE ALSO UNDERTOOK TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY

OF ARRANGING A HEARING FOR CONLON ON THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS HUMAN RIGHTS SUBCOMMITTEE AND UNDERTOOK TO WRITE TO MRS THATCHER EXPRESSING HIS CONCERN ON BEHALF OF THE SIX.

5. SENATOR KENNEDY ALSO WARMLY RECEIVED CONLON AND SHOWED CONLON

A COPY OF HIS STATEMENT WHICH HE WAS PLACING IN THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD ON THE GUILDFORD FOUR AND BIRMINGHAM SIX. SENATOR KENNEDY UNDERTOOK TO WORK WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN THE SENATE TO HIGHLIGHT THE CASE OF THE BIRMINGHAM SIX.

6. COMMENT

CONLON'S MEETINGS WENT EXTREMELY WELL. HE MADE AN IMMEDIATE AND TELLING IMPRESSION BY HIS SINCERITY AND CONVICTION. CONLON MARSHALLED HIS POINTS WELL AND A PARTICULARLY FORCEFUL POINT OF HIS ARGUMENT WAS THAT OVER 300 MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT HAD SIGNED AN EARLY DAY MOTION ON BEHALF OF THE BIRMINGHAM SIX - GUILDFORD FOUR SEEKING REVIEWS OF THEIR CASES. IT WAS ALSO CLEAR THAT CONLON HAD ABSOLUTELY NO SYMPATHY WITH THE IRA OR SINN FEIN AND THAT THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE ON HIS MIND WAS THAT OF SEEKING JUSTICE FOR THE BIRMINGHAM SIX. BESIDES THE STATEMENTS MADE BY REP DONNELLY AND SENATOR KENNEDY (COPIES OF WHICH HAVE BEEN SENT TO D/FA), WE CAN REASONABLY EXPECT THAT FURTHER CONGRESSIONAL ACTION WILL FOLLOW AS A CONSEQUENCE OF CONLON'S VISIT.