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IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON

17 Grosvenor Place

SWIX THR

① Mr. Hagan

② Mr. Spillenger on return

1 August 1990

Dear Secretary

I enclose copies of faxes sent by Mr Donoghue on UK media coverage of the assassination of Ian Gow.

Following the conversations I had with the Taoiseach and with you on Monday morning, I arranged a call on Nigel Broomfield, Deputy Under-Secretary and Graham Archer, Head of the RID at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. When I was received during the afternoon, I conveyed the sympathy of the Government and that of the Embassy on the death of Mr Gow and asked that a copy of the Taoiseach's statement be brought to the attention of the Secretary of State. I recalled the many contacts we had had with Mr Gow over the years, that he and Mrs Gow had been guests at the Embassy on a number of occasions, and that he had been greatly respected and liked by those of us who knew him. Mr Broomfield said he much appreciated my call and he undertook to place the Taoiseach's statement before the Secretary of State.

Mr Broomfield said that Mr Gow's murder would be a grievous loss to Parliamentary life and in particular to Mrs Thatcher. It was difficult to protect against such outrages in an open society; all that could be done was to continue and as far as possible to intensify existing measures. He hoped and believed that there would be no backlash against the Irish, but the death of Mr Gow would, he thought, affect, in the autumn, the climate in which other issues - political progress and extradition - will be considered. Regarding political progress in Northern Ireland, he said he regretted the lack of agreement so far but was pleased that all sides have been careful in their recent statements which have not closed doors and he hoped that matters could be moved forward in September. (He mentioned the recent meeting in Dublin of Dermot Nally and Robin Butler and others (which I was unfortunately unable to attend) and in his dry manner commented that there had been a great deal of discussion but little progress).

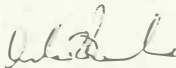
Both the Embassy and the FCO had received the news that the State had won the Ellis case in the High Court. Broomfield was aware that the judgement ran to 46 pages - he was very pleased with the result and looked forward to examining the judgement.

On Monday morning I sent a telegram of sympathy to Mrs Gow and her family.

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In regard to the funeral arrangements, Mr Murdo Maclean, PPS to the Chief Whip, who is coordinating matters in Whitehall, told me this afternoon (as I have reported by telephone) that, having consulted Geoffrey Howe and Mr Peter Horden MP, who is dealing with the arrangements in East Sussex, he wished to advise me that the funeral service on Wednesday next is basically regarded as for family, close friends and constituents and that the representational occasion will be in October in Westminster Abbey. Maclean said that he is actively discouraging Ministers and Parliamentarians, unless they are close personal or family friends, from attending. While he was careful to say that he was describing to me the circumstances of the funeral and was not making a judgement as to whether or not we should be officially represented and while he also said I could come back to him or to Mr Horden in the event of a decision to attend, his message was I think quite clear, that is, that it would be preferable to await the October memorial service for official representation.

Yours sincerely



Andrew O'Rourke
Ambassador

Mr Noel Dorr
Secretary
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Dublin 2

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