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Reference Code: 2004/21/673

Title: Copy letter from Minister for Posts and Telegraphs Conor Cruise O'Brien to Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave, enclosing a set of possible questions and answers for the press conference following the meeting between the taoiseach and Prime Minister Edward Heath in September 1973.

Creation Date(s): [September, 1973]

Level of description: Item

Extent and medium: 2 pages

Creator(s): Department of the Taoiseach

Access Conditions: Open

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Possible questions and possible answers for the Press Conference after the meeting of the two Prime Ministers.

1. Q: Was the Littlejohn affair discussed?

A: Yes

Q: Did you protest to Mr. Heath about the Littlejohn affair?

A: You have to bear in mind that it is now more than nine months since the British Government first informed the Irish Government of its involvement in this matter. My Government subsequently did convey a protest through diplomatic channels. I do not judge the occasion of the present meeting appropriate for the repetition of a formal protest but Mr. Heath is aware of the Government's views in the matter.

Q: Did Mr. Heath express regret for this act of interference by his Government?

A: The matter was fully discussed, and Mr. Heath understands the attitude of the Irish Government. I believe there is no danger of the repetition of any such episode.

2. Q: Did Mr. Heath ask for or receive any assurances about extradition of political offenders from the Republic?

A: The question of extradition was discussed. Mr. Heath understands that under our law, extradition is a matter for the Courts, and that the Government is precluded from interference in the decisions of the Courts. Mr. Heath is also aware that the Government is determined to make it impossible for illegal organisations, either to engage in violent activities within the jurisdiction of this State or to use the territory of this State as a basis for such activities in Northern Ireland or in Great Britain.

omit - all they want the country as a base for UK activities?

Q: How do you account for the fact that no persons charged with such offences have yet been deported by decision of Courts in the Republic, while persons charged with similar offences in Northern Ireland have been deported to the Republic?

A: As I have indicated these decisions are taken by Courts and the Law, in each individual case in the light of the evidence before them, and I am not in a position to make any general statement regarding the basis for their decisions.

Q: Are you satisfied with the situation under which people wanted in Northern Ireland on serious charges, including murder, remain at large in the Republic.

A: No I am not satisfied with this situation. I am giving consideration to the question of whether it should call for legislative change, either as affecting extradition law or ways of charging persons here with offences committed outside the jurisdiction.



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OFFICE OF THE MINISTER FOR POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS

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An Taoiseach

Dear Taoiseach,

When you met with Muiris and myself on Friday morning we promised to let you have, for your consideration, a list of some of the more difficult questions which might come from the media after your meeting with Mr. Heath, plus an indication of possible replies.

We have worked together on the attached draft. The "answers" are necessarily highly approximate. What we have done is to assume that the talks go as favourably as possible, and on the basis of that assumption, to indicate the answers that would appear most satisfactory. You may of course have many reasons for choosing to reply differently, even irrespective of the course of the conversations. In "foreseeing" a Press Conference I assume the presence of both British and Irish journalists, pressing on different issues and implicitly in different directions. Thus "Littlejohn" questions are those likely to be asked by Irish journalists, "extradition" by the British. There may be some interaction between the two lines of questions.

You will be in touch with other Ministers, notably the Minister for Justice, about the substance of certain answers. All we are doing in this draft is to have a look at the more ticklish questions and suggest the kind of answer that could be satisfactory in such a context.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Conor Cruise-O'Brien,
Minister for Posts & Telegraphs