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Ref. A086/974

PRIME MINISTER

Cabinet: Northern Ireland

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland will report to Cabinet on the general situation in the Province, especially unionist attitudes to the Anglo-Irish Agreement and likely reactions to your letters delivered today to Messrs Molyneaux and Paisley; and on the prospects for the march by the Apprentice Boys at Portadown on Easter Monday, 31 March.

2. There is continued uncertainty among unionists about how to pursue opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. There is no clear evidence that further strikes or "days of action" are so far planned, but it is also far from clear that the politicians will be able to keep the leadership of the opposition to the Agreement.
3. The Apprentice Boys of Londonderry no doubt intend (although they have not informed the police of this yet) that their march on Easter Monday should go through "the tunnel", the strongly Roman Catholic area of Portadown from which the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) debarred one of their marches last year. The key questions are whether the RUC will debar "the tunnel" again and take the steps necessary to enforce this (in contrast to their avoidance of clashes with loyalists during the "Day of Action" on 3 March); and whether serious violence is likely on Easter Monday.
4. You will wish to ask about the likely effect of the Glenholmes incident in Dublin on 22 March on the prospects for the Anglo-Irish Agreement. The Home Secretary and the Attorney General, who will attend for this item, will wish to speak on the



Glenholmes affair. This is not the first problem we have had with the form of warrants in extradition cases in the Irish Republic. Can we be sure of avoiding further embarrassment by getting the warrants exactly right in future? Are we making full use of the Intergovernmental Conference to sort out this matter?

5. Other questions which you might wish to raise are:

a. Are the Northern Ireland Office doing everything possible to correct misrepresentations of the Anglo-Irish Agreement? What has been the reaction to the advertisement they published for this purpose on 20 March (copy attached)?

b. The Government would be strongly criticised if, in the face of more prolonged strikes and other trouble in Northern Ireland, its contingency plans failed to keep life going in a reasonable way. Is the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland reviewing the plans in line with the conclusions of OD(I) on 4 March? Will he inform colleagues of the contingency plans and their likely effectiveness?

c. With the unionists continuing to misuse the Northern Ireland Assembly to criticise the Agreement, ignoring its proper functions, will the Government need to take any action soon?

MS

for

ROBERT ARMSTRONG

24 March 1986



The Anglo-Irish Agreement

November 1985

Time for Truth

Ever since the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed on 15 November it has been the target of a sustained campaign of half-truths and worse. It is now time – for all our futures – to put the record straight.

It's an Agreement which guarantees Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom, as long as a majority here wants it.

It's an Agreement which gives support for a devolved Government in Northern Ireland.

It's an Agreement which is bringing increasing cross-border security co-operation.

Developments which most people and politicians in Northern Ireland want. Yet the Agreement has been made the target of a deliberate campaign of lies, deceit, distortion and half-truths. A campaign exploiting emotions and leading to unrest and disorder, putting in danger jobs now and in the future.

It's time to sort out the facts from the daily diet of fictions. The fictions of those who before and since 15 November have said that the Agreement meant:

- the RUC would drop Royal from its name
- the UDR would be disbanded
- the style and colour of the RUC uniform would change
- Royal visits to Northern Ireland would have to have Southern approval.

None of those claims was true, as everybody can now see. Nor are charges that:

Fiction: The Agreement represents "Dublin Rule".

FACT: The Irish Republic does not have "joint authority" over any aspect of the affairs of Northern Ireland. The Agreement says "there is no derogation from the sovereignty of either the United Kingdom Government or the Irish Government, and each retains responsibility for the decisions and administration of Government within its own jurisdiction."

The Irish Government can express views and put forward proposals. But responsibility for the government of Northern Ireland remains firmly with British Ministers responsible to Parliament in London.

Fiction: Elected representatives in Northern Ireland are excluded and ignored.

FACT: The Prime Minister invited the Unionists to enter into discussions with her. The Secretary of State has repeatedly invited them to enter into discussions with him. The Unionists have refused all these offers; most of their MPs are also boycotting Parliament at Westminster. Unionist councillors are boycotting their councils in an attempt to wreck local government, and Unionist members of the Assembly are refusing to carry out the normal job of examining and influencing legislation and other matters affecting Northern Ireland.

Fiction: The Prime Minister has rejected or ignored the results of the 23 January by-elections.

FACT: The Prime Minister made clear that she respected the strength of unionist feeling. In response to it, she put forward proposals for talks on:

- new arrangements for Unionists to make their views known to the Government on the affairs of Northern Ireland;
- the future of the Northern Ireland Assembly;
- the arrangements for handling Northern Ireland's business in Parliament at Westminster.

She also agreed to consider positively the Unionist leaders' suggestion for a Round Table Conference, to discuss devolution in Northern Ireland.

Fiction: The Agreement will not help stop the violence.

FACT: Many of the Agreement's opponents said that the Irish Republic would never sign the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism, but it has. A prime aim of the Agreement is to increase co-operation between the UK and the Republic in the fight against terrorism and violence. This is something that both Governments are determined to achieve.

The Anglo-Irish Agreement –

Let's stick to the facts!

ISSUED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE.

Evelyn Glenholmes

3.32 pm

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Douglas Hurd): With permission, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make a statement about the recent regrettable failure to secure the extradition of Evelyn Glenholmes from the Republic of Ireland.

Nine endorsed warrants for the return of Miss Glenholmes were first issued on 31 October 1984 and submitted to the Irish authorities for endorsement in accordance with the United Kingdom-Irish extradition legislation. The offences covered by the warrants related to various terrorist offences committed between 1981 and 1982, including murder, attempted murder, firearms and explosives offences. The original warrants were returned by the Irish authorities, who asked for some technical changes to be made to their wording. Fresh warrants were accordingly submitted on 6 November 1984, but by that time details of the extradition request had been disclosed in the press and Miss Glenholmes disappeared from view.

She was later arrested in Dublin on 12 March 1986, and the hearing of the extradition request opened in the district court of Dublin last Wednesday on the basis of the warrants issued in November 1984.

Throughout last week's court hearing there was close co-operation between the Irish prosecuting authorities and officers from the Metropolitan police and the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

On Saturday morning, having heard submissions from defence counsel that the extradition warrants were defective, the court discharged Miss Glenholmes. I understand that the principal consideration which underlay the court's decision was that, whereas the standard wording printed on the warrants referred to information on oath as having been laid on the day the warrants were issued — which was 6 November 1984 — the court considered that the relevant information was that laid when the original warrants had been issued on 31 October 1984. I understand that the magistrate in London treated the further application on 6 November as having been made under oath adopting the information already laid but not resworn. The information required for both sets of warrants was identical, but was not sworn again on 6 November, which could have avoided the difficulty which later arose.

Even before Miss Glenholmes was released, the United Kingdom authorities had made arrangements for the issue of a fresh warrant covering one of the charges of murder. On the basis of this fresh warrant, the Garda obtained a new provisional warrant, for Miss Glenholmes' arrest. Once she had been rearrested, she was brought back to the district court. I understand the Miss Glenholmes was then released, this time on the grounds that the court was not satisfied, in spite of a telephone call from New Scotland Yard to the Garda, that there was evidence that a fresh warrant had been issued in London that morning or that Miss Glenholmes had in effect been at liberty between her earlier release and her rearrest.

Following Miss Glenholmes' second release, the fresh warrant was sent to Dublin this morning. Earlier today additional warrants were sent covering the eight remaining charges and will be sent to the authorities in Dublin later today.

My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General and I have looked carefully at the information so far available to us. On the basis of that information, it is clear that the extradition application failed because of a technical objection taken by the Dublin court. My right hon. and learned Friend and I regret that this technical objection was not foreseen in time and fresh warrants obtained. We are considering urgently the need for a review of procedures and the handling of this sort of case. My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General has instructed the Directors of Public Prosecutions for England and Wales, and for Northern Ireland, to ensure personally that all outstanding warrants in respect of terrorist offences are checked at once for accuracy and sufficiency. Under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Conference work has already begun on a range of legal matters relating to extradition; and lessons of the past few days will be studied in that context.

For the sake of completeness, I should also inform the House that our inquiries have shown that in giving evidence to the court in Dublin an officer from the Metropolitan police made an error in referring to the dates on which the warrants were issued. I understand that he sought to correct this error, but that an opportunity for him to do so was not forthcoming. This does not, however, appear to have influenced the court in its decision to release Miss Glenholmes.

It is deeply disappointing that it has not so far proved possible to obtain the extradition of Miss Glenholmes to face justice in a British court. It is essential that we all learn the right lessons for the future from this failure.

Mr. Gerald Kaufman (Manchester, Gorton): That statement still leaves a number of extremely important questions to be answered. Will the Home Secretary confirm that throughout this lamentable episode the Irish authorities have behaved with complete propriety and that the Irish Government have fulfilled all their obligations?

We are told that Evelyn Glenholmes is Scotland Yard's most wanted suspect for alleged terrorist offences. In the light of the fact that the extradition of Brendan Burns failed through errors relating to warrants, and the further fact that two prior sets of warrants were prepared for Evelyn Glenholmes, one of which was found in the Irish courts to be faulty, not just technically — and the Home Secretary does himself no credit by harping on technicalities when matters of substance are involved — but in at least one serious material respect, and the second one withdrawn by the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions when found to be faulty, why was this third and crucial error permitted? Why were these warrants permitted to go forward without being meticulously checked? Why, during the nearly 18 months that were available, were the warrants not rechecked for accuracy? The Home Secretary says that they were originally checked with the Irish authorities, were found wanting and were corrected, but the right hon. Gentleman does not point out that the new ones — the allegedly corrected ones — also turned out to be faulty. Why were they not cleared in advance for accuracy and technical probity with the Irish legal authorities?

Who was in charge of this process in the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions? Is it true, as alleged, that this matter was dealt with at a junior level? Is it true, as further alleged, that other warrants that were sent to Ireland on other matters have also been found to be

[Mr. Gerald Kaufman]

defective? The Home Secretary says that new warrants in the Evelyn Glenholmes' case have now been issued. Is he sure that they are in order this time?

Mr. Dukes, the Irish Minister of Justice, said yesterday that after the court adjourned on Friday in Dublin further information and clarification were sought from the British authorities at that stage but, Mr. Dukes said:

"We were not able to get it."

What is the explanation for that serious lapse?

Why did an official from the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions then go to Dublin? What was his purpose? What did he achieve? What was the purpose of the telephone call referred to by the Home Secretary that was made to Dublin from a chief inspector of the Metropolitan police? What was that meant to achieve? Could the Home Secretary say how a British court would have responded to such a telephone call on a serious extradition case? Above all, taking into account the important and sensitive issues at stake, why did not the Director of Public Prosecutions ensure that he himself, or a high official, supervised meticulously all stages of the procedures? Why did not the Attorney-General, who is answerable to this House, take care to satisfy himself that the necessary procedures had been precisely observed?

The Home Secretary calmly tells us this afternoon that now, when the horse has bolted, there is to be a careful inspection of the stable. That is not good enough. A full inquiry is essential. It is also essential that those at the very top accept responsibility, are disciplined and, if necessary, are removed from the offices that they hold.

This disquieting episode has created serious difficulties for the Irish authorities in their determination to co-operate with this country over the delicate issue of extradition. What is more, the scenes on television have given the IRA a gratuitous propaganda triumph. Slackness, incompetence and complacency have brought about this discreditable botch up. May we have an absolute assurance that steps will now be taken to ensure that nothing like this can ever happen again?

Mr. Hurd: I confirm that we have no criticism of the co-operation that we have received in this matter from the Irish authorities. I am glad of the opportunity to make that clear.

In response to the right hon. Gentleman's second point, the difficulty on which this case foundered on Saturday was a technical difficulty. I think that my statement made that clear. It was concerned with the question whether, when a second and revised warrant was sought from the same magistrate, the identical information which was laid when obtaining the first warrant needed to be laid under oath all over again. Whatever view one takes of it, that is a technical point. As I said in my statement, I believe that a great deal of trouble could have been avoided if that had been foreseen and acted upon in the autumn of 1984.

The second set of warrants which were held to be defective on Saturday were given to the Irish authorities and no objection or criticism was raised on them. However, I think that it is fair to add that it would not have been reasonable to expect the Irish authorities to have spotted the particular point on which the court in Dublin found the warrant to be defective on Saturday. But the warrants were available to the Irish authorities for their comments.

I am advised that it is perfectly normal in these circumstances for news of the issue of a fresh warrant to be conveyed, either way, by a telephone conversation between the police forces concerned. That has happened before, and I understand that it is normal. It happened on this occasion, although it was not accepted by the court for the reasons I have given. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman that it is essential that we find ways, through the Anglo-Irish conference and in other ways, to ensure that such difficulties do not recur.

Mr. Ian Gow (Eastbourne): Is there not a high duty resting on the Director of Public Prosecutions in all cases of extradition warrants to ensure that those warrants are validly and properly prepared? Is not that duty even greater when we are dealing with a matter of the gravest importance such as terrorism on a massive scale of which the person concerned is suspect? Is my right hon. Friend able to assure the House that the warrants taken to Dublin this morning have been seen and approved by the appropriate legal authorities in Dublin and that he has received an assurance that the new warrants sent over today are in order?

Mr. Hurd: I agree with the first part of my hon. Friend's comments. It is our responsibility to ensure that warrants of this kind are in a form which arms them against all possible difficulties and criticisms, whether of a substantial or technical kind. The new warrant and the other warrants which I mentioned being sent to Dublin today are identical to those previously sent, with the crucial exception that the information concerned has been relaid before the magistrate concerned.

Mr. J. Enoch Powell (South Down): Has it occurred to the Government that the incompetence of those acting on their behalf in the matter of extradition may have been exceeded by the incompetence of those who negotiated the Anglo-Irish agreement and who advised the Government to enter into it?

Mr. Hurd: I anticipated that the right hon. Gentleman would raise that point. However, I do not think that he has proved its relevance to the matter we are discussing.

Sir John Biggs-Davison (Epping Forest): Since my right hon. Friend has reasonably pointed out that there is no relevance to the Anglo-Irish agreement in this unhappy matter, it is not the case that the commendable and exceptional exertions of the Garda Siochana, to which I pay tribute, have no connection with that agreement either?

Mr. Hurd: As I said in my response to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton (Mr. Kaufman), we have no criticism of the behaviour of the Irish Government or of their agencies, including the Garda, in that respect. Therefore, I associate myself with what my hon. Friend has said. The relevance of the Anglo-Irish agreement is that discussions are taking place under article 8 of the agreement to review procedures. Obviously the lessons of this event will be relevant to those discussions.

Mr. Merlyn Rees (Morley and Leeds, South): Surely the purpose of a statement in this House is to enable us to question the responsible Minister. The Home Secretary is not responsible for extradition warrants and he is not responsible for the Director of Public Prosecutions. We should be questioning the Attorney-General. The Opposition will have to take the matter further.

In any event, is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this is not the only example of a defective extradition warrant recently? It was brought to my notice by the chief constable of Yorkshire on Friday that a defective warrant was served on a man called Anthony Kelly, who is wanted for questioning for 18 armed robberies and the murder of a Leeds policeman. Will the right hon. Gentleman use his powers as Home Secretary to tell the Attorney-General that when the warrant is served again we in Yorkshire will want better results?

Mr. Hurd: The matter concerns the police and the prosecuting authorities in this country, so it seems sensible that I should make the statement today. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman will have ample opportunities for asking questions of my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General if he wishes to do so. [HON. MEMBERS: "When?"] I do not doubt that there will be opportunities.

I refer to the case that the right hon. Gentleman mentioned. The gentleman concerned, Mr. Kelly, is serving a sentence of imprisonment in the Republic for offences committed in the Republic. Perhaps, therefore, we are not at the end of that story.

Mr. Ivan Lawrence (Burton): Would it not have been unthinkable for a British court not to have granted a reasonable adjournment when such a technicality arose—particular one which emerged only in the course of cross-examination—and which must have been known to the Irish authorities and thought by them to be utterly unimportant?

Mr. Hurd: I do not want to get drawn into that. It is true that those concerned on our behalf asked for an adjournment and the court did not grant it. My hon. and learned Friend and his colleagues will be able to judge whether a British court would have taken a different decision.

Mr. Alex Carlile (Montgomery): In dealing with this extraordinary example of sloppy, incompetent professional negligence, will the Home Secretary tell us whether in future we are to regard the failure by a court to administer an oath as a mere technicality? Why in a case as serious as this did not the Director of Public Prosecutions personally examine the warrants before they were sent to Ireland?

Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us why the mistake was not corrected properly before Saturday morning, and whether anybody will take responsibility for this shambles in the way that he should?

Mr. Hurd: The hon. and learned Gentleman misunderstood the point that was at issue. It was a question not simply whether the information was on oath, but whether the information needed to be relaid, although it was identical to the information that had been provided on oath a week before. That is the point. I maintain that it is a technical point.

The Director of Public Prosecutions is responsible for the conduct of that office, and for the extent to which he delegates to senior advisers and officials the handling of particular cases. The organisation of that office is, of course, a matter for my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General.

Mr. Michael Mates (Hampshire, East): Far from this sorry affair being used as a criticism of the Anglo-Irish agreement, does not my right hon. Friend agree that it is

a reason for those involved to try harder to make absolutely certain that the co-operation that was begun three months ago becomes more effective so that this sort of incident will not be repeated? Will he specifically ensure that those responsible get together in a working party specifically to make sure that this sort of misunderstanding will never happen again?

Mr. Hurd: I entirely agree with my hon. Friend. That is exactly what is happening. Of course, as right hon. and hon. Members on both sides of the House know, this process has always been a subject of extraordinary difficulty and complication, and the failure in this case is simply a further illustration of that fact. I do not complain about the criticisms that have been made this afternoon, but that is an argument not for despairing of that process but for continuing strenuously with it.

Mr. A. E. P. Duffy (Sheffield, Attercliffe): The Home Secretary persists in trying to minimise the incompetence of those responsible by putting forward legal objections when he is really dealing with due process. Is he not aware that this is the fourth major embarrassment in extradition cases with the Irish Government in the past two years because of blunders and inadequate presentation of cases by the British and Northern Ireland authorities? Why has it suddenly become so difficult in London to prepare an adequate legal presentation?

Mr. Hurd: As I said in my last answer, this is an area which has proved to be difficult over the years. This is the latest example of it. I maintain—I think that my statement bears it out—that the difficulty on which this case fell was essentially a technical one and not one of principle.

Sir Eldon Griffiths (Bury St. Edmunds): Is there not a very painful contrast between the detailed, careful, and often dangerous work by the police service of the Irish Republic, of the Metropolitan police and of the RUC in obtaining the necessary information, sometimes at the risk of their lives, and the comparatively slipshod and careless way in which the matter was dealt with in the Director of Public Prosecution's office? Who precisely was responsible in the DPP's office for establishing the sufficiency and accuracy of the warrants? What hope does my right hon. Friend hold out of bringing this most wanted person to justice in the near future?

Mr. Hurd: It would be neither customary nor in order to give the names of officials. The structure of responsibility is clear. It is through the Director of Public Prosecutions to my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General.

Mr. George Foulkes (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley): Since this statement is principally about the DPP's office, since on a number of occasions the Home Secretary has said that this is a matter for his right hon. and learned Friend and since he has sometimes said "I am advised" after the Attorney-General as whispered the answer in his ear, why is the Home Secretary making the statement and not the Attorney-General?

Mr. Hurd: If the hon. Gentleman had been listening to my reply to the right hon. Member for Morley and Leeds, South (Mr. Rees) he would have realised—[HON. MEMBERS: "Answer."] I did answer the question. I explained that the matter which is the subject of the

[Mr. Hurd]

statement covers part of the area of my responsibility—that is, the police and the general conduct of policy against terrorism—and partly a matter which falls within my right hon. and learned Friend's responsibility, that is, the DPP's office. Since we could not both make the statement, one of us had to, and the lot fell to me.

Mr. John Wheeler (Westminster, North): Although my right hon. Friend and his Department are not directly responsible, does my right hon. Friend agree that the degree of incompetence involved is such that there must be the most searching inquiry into the way that these issues are handled to ensure that a proper administrative machine is put into place so that this does not happen again?

Mr. Hurd: I agree.

Mr. Robert Maclellan (Caithness and Sutherland): Is not the essence of the matter that the Home Secretary has attempted to suggest to the House that this is a matter of extraordinary complexity and that he has tried to weave a web to protect those responsible? Is not the reality that which is set out in the Government's Green Paper on extradition last February which described extradition by warrant as a "comparatively simple and expeditious procedure"? In the light of the evidence of the Director of Public Prosecutions' inability to manage such a comparatively simple and expeditious procedure, should he not resign, or if not he, the Attorney-General?

Mr. Hurd: I do not think that that is fair of the hon. Gentleman. The advantage of the procedure which we follow with the Republic is that it avoids some of the difficulties involved in our other extradition legislation, in particular the prima facie case which the House might be asked to consider next Session. It should be a comparatively straightforward procedure, but that assumes that everybody on both sides is armed effectively against the procedural difficulties, whether of substance or technical. That did not happen in this case.

Mr. Ivor Stanbrook (Orpington): May I ask my right hon. Friend not to accept too readily that there has been any incompetence on the part of the DPP or his staff? If true reciprocity existed, as it should, the document would not necessarily have been ruled defective. Given the nature of the technical objection, would it not have been sufficient in this country for the court to adjourn the case for consideration before making an announcement on the application and thus releasing into the community a notorious wanted criminal? In these circumstances, should we not address our criticism to the spirit with which the Dublin court operated this business?

Mr. Hurd: I hope that the House has noted carefully the point which my hon. Friend has made with his experience of these matters. Choosing my words with care, and as I have already said in answer to an earlier question, I think that it would have been possible for the court to take a different decision on the request for an adjournment.

Mr. Michael Foot (Blaenau Gwent): As the House is clearly quite dissatisfied with the answers given by the Home Secretary, will the right hon. Gentleman make representations to the Leader of the House that a statement should be made to the House tomorrow by the Attorney-General?

Mr. Hurd: My right hon. Friend the Leader of the House will have noted that request. As I have said, there are ample opportunities to put questions to my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General on aspects of the matter which concern him especially. There are wider aspects, however, and several of the questions which have been addressed to me have covered them. I repeat that I think that it was entirely right that I should make the statement.

Mr. William Cash (Stafford): Does my right hon. Friend deplore the irresponsible attempts of a vociferous minority to use this regrettable incident as a means of denigrating the Anglo-Irish agreement?

Mr. Hurd: Yes, Sir.

Mr. John Ryman (Blyth Valley): Normally the standard of professional work of the Director of Public Prosecutions is extremely high, so why was it that the revised warrant of 6 November 1984 was not sworn? What was the reason for not taking the step of swearing that warrant? It contained revised facts and was amended to an extent that made it obvious that it had to be sworn again to conform with the law.

Mr. Hurd: The magistrate did not so require.

Sir Anthony Grant (Cambridgeshire, South-West): Instead of merely showing the second lot of warrants to the Dublin legal authorities, would it not have been more sensible specifically to have asked the authorities whether the documents were in order? After all, the Dublin authorities should know more about Irish law than we do. Does my right hon. Friend agree that they should have been just as keen as the British authorities to bring criminals to justice? Also, has my right hon. Friend noted the apparent glee with which some Opposition Members have greeted the escape of a notorious criminal? Whose side are they on?

Mr. Hurd: The revised warrants were available to and shown to the Irish authorities, and they raised no comment or objection to them on the ground of Irish law. As I have already said to the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, (Mr. Kaufman), it would not have been fair or reasonable to expect the Irish authorities to spot the technical defect—

Mr. Stanbrook: Why not?

Mr. Hurd: This involved the relaying of information between one week and another in this country. It would not be fair to expect the Irish authorities to spot the alleged defect, which was thought to be decisive, by the court.

Mr. Andrew Faulds (Warley, East): Since Scotland Yard is blameless in this matter, and although the Home Secretary made an adverse comment on a Metropolitan officer, why has he been put up to protect the Attorney-General, whose responsibility the Director of Public Prosecutions comes under, and who should be making the statement and who should now proceed in any case, after this series of errors, to dismiss Sir Thomas Hetherington?

Mr. Hurd: I have answered that question twice. The hon. Gentleman will excuse me for not attempting to do so a third time.

Mr. Richard Ottaway (Nottingham, North): Will my right hon. Friend explain why the Irish courts were not satisfied that a new warrant was issued for the second hearing on Saturday afternoon?

Mr. Hurd: I sought to explain that. There were two reasons, and I do not wish to comment on them particularly. One reason, as has been mentioned already, was whether it is sufficient evidence of a new warrant having been provided that the news of that warrant is communicated by telephone between police forces. I gather that that is normal practice, but it was not accepted by the court.

The second question was directed to Irish law, on which I am not competent. The issue raised was whether the release of Miss Glenholmes on that morning was, in effect, a release to liberty under Irish law.

Mr. A. J. Beith (Berwick-upon-Tweed): Are there to be any resignations or any disciplinary action at any level in the department concerned, or does nobody take any responsibility for anything any more?

Mr. Hurd: I do not think that the hon. Gentleman could have listened to what I said in my statement on that issue. Both my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General and I regretted the failure in this case, and that was stated specifically in my original statement. The internal arrangements of the office of the Director are a matter for my right hon. and learned Friend.

Viscount Cranborne (Dorset, South): Can my right hon. Friend tell the House what sanctions are available to Ministers when they are convinced of the incompetence of public servants?

Mr. Hurd: They vary but they exist.

Mr. Kaufman: The House is clearly highly dissatisfied with the Home Secretary's faltering attempts to answer the basic points that have been raised. The right hon. Gentleman harps on the alleged technicality of the failure on Saturday, but the magistrate who signed the warrant signed it "Sworn this day" when it was not sworn that day. Was that statement, which was palpably untrue, merely a technicality? Above all, the right hon. Gentleman has not told the House who was responsible. Who was he seeking to shield by himself making this statement? Was it the

Director of Public Prosecutions? Was it the silent Attorney-General? Or, in accordance with the Government's style, will no one accept responsibility for this almighty mess?

Mr. Hurd: The right hon. Gentleman is repetitive. As I said in my statement, my right hon. and learned Friend and I have expressed our regret that this occurred. Therefore, we accept our share of the responsibility; and that, I think, is what the right hon. Gentleman would expect.

The point at issue was whether identical information which had been laid under oath on one day was required to be laid under oath on a second day before the same magistrate. The magistrate did not so require and it was not done. It is clear that if it had been done this particular difficulty would have been avoided, although everyone who has studied the case knows that even then there were further difficulties further down the road.

Mr. Anthony Nelson (Chichester): Is my right hon. Friend aware that, despite the opportunist and derogatory response of the Opposition, he and my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney-General continue to enjoy the confidence of the House and the country for the way in which they discharge their responsibilities to hound terrorists and to bring them to book?

Mr. Hurd: I do not think that my right hon. and learned Friend and I expected that a statement on this subject would be received with enthusiasm, and I do not wish to understate the importance of this failure. I have tried to be open with the House about exactly what happened. I am grateful to my hon. Friend for what he has said.

Mr. John Morris (Aberavon): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. In view of the disquiet on both sides of the House about the role of the Director of Public Prosecutions and his office, may we expect a statement tomorrow from the Attorney-General, the Minister responsible, on the reorganisation that he has effected of the director's office for the avoidance of further difficulties, technical or otherwise?

Mr. Speaker: That patently is not a matter for me.

Auxiliary Oil Replenishment Vessel (Order)

4.9 pm

Mr. Nicholas Brown (Newcastle upon Tyne, East): I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration, namely, "the Royal Navy's order for the Auxiliary oil replenishment lead vessel."

The matter is urgent because an announcement is about to be made placing the order at Harland and Wolff in spite of the representations made at the weekend by Swan Hunter to the Ministry of Defence and in spite of the representations made by myself and by my hon. Friend the Member for Wallsend (Mr. Garrett) when we met the Prime Minister last Thursday.

The decision should be delayed before such a disastrous course is embarked upon to allow Parliament the opportunity to consider the strategic issues involved. Is it Parliament's wish that privately owned warship yards—such as Swan Hunter—should compete against the massive public subsidies—£37 million last year—which have been given to Harland and Wolff? As there is enough work for both yards, why will the Government not place the order for the lead vessel at Swan Hunter and the order for the follow-on vessel at Harland and Wolff? Harland's has work until 1987 but Swan Hunter's has a shortfall. Why should the people of Tyneside have to accept a further 2,000 redundancies, which would give that area the highest level of unemployment in the country, including Northern Ireland, as the price for the Anglo-Irish agreement?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Newcastle upon Tyne, East (Mr. Brown) asks leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that he believes should have urgent consideration, namely,

"the Royal Navy's order for the AOR lead vessel."

I have listened with great concern to what the hon. Member has said, but I must say that I do not consider the matter that he has raised is appropriate for discussion under Standing Order No. 10. I cannot therefore submit his application to the House but I hope that he will find other ways of raising the matter.

Evelyn Glenholmes

4.12 pm

Mr. Ian Gow (Eastbourne): I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter which should have urgent consideration, namely, "the failure of the Director of Public Prosecutions to secure the extradition from the Republic of Ireland of Evelyn Glenholmes, suspected of the gravest terrorist offences, despite the Anglo-Irish agreement of 15 November 1985."

This matter is clearly specific and relates to events which are within the knowledge of the House, which took place as recently as last Saturday. It is undoubtedly important. You have heard, Mr. Speaker, the deep concern expressed by hon. Members on both sides of the House about the statement made by right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The matter is also urgent. You will have noticed, Mr. Speaker, that my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary did not answer the third question that I put to him this afternoon, and say whether he had satisfied himself that, in the view of the Irish legal authorities, the third warrant sent over this morning to Dublin did conform, and conform in every respect, with the legal requirements of Irish law so that there could be, if Miss Glenholmes should be apprehended, a proper extradition of the kind that was attempted twice on Saturday.

There is a third aspect which I would like to draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker. Our proceedings this afternoon take place four months after the signing of the Anglo-Irish agreement. On 11 March, less than a fortnight ago, there was a meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference at ministerial level. I wish to remind you, Mr. Speaker, of what took place as recorded in the official communiqué:

"The Conference welcomed the development of contacts between officials concerned with security questions, and the plans for these contacts to continue."

Later in that communiqué it states:

"The conference heard a report of the meeting held on 13 February to discuss legal matters including the administration of justice."

The communiqué also stressed that:

"The Conference agreed that at its next meeting it would consider . . . progress reports from the groups of officials set up under Article 8 of the Agreement to discuss extradition."

It is clear that the matters which were the subject of the terrible events in Dublin on Saturday and which were the subject of my right hon. Friend's statement this afternoon, were also considered at the last meeting of the Intergovernmental Conference.

The House is about to rise for the Easter recess. There is no other opportunity, save through an emergency debate, for us to discuss these matters which are so clearly of importance to the House. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, to agree to an emergency debate.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Eastbourne (Mr. Gow) asks leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that he believes should have urgent consideration, namely,

"The extradition from the Republic of Ireland of Evelyn Glenholmes, suspected of the gravest terrorist offences, despite the Anglo-Irish agreement of 15 November 1985."

I have listened, as has the whole House, to what the hon. Gentleman has said and I listened, of course, to the

earlier exchanges on the statement. I regret that I do not consider that the matter he has raised is appropriate for discussion under Standing Order No. 10. I cannot, therefore, submit his application to the House.

Courtaulds Clothing Ltd., Seaforth

4.16 pm

Mr. Allan Roberts (Bootle): I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration, namely,

"The threatened closure of the factory, Courtaulds Clothing Ltd. at Seaforth in my constituency."

This is a specific matter because on Friday the whole work force of 220 people was called into the canteen and given 90 days' notice of the closure of the factory. Of that work force, 58 per cent. are women and the sole breadwinners in their homes and 57 per cent. are under 21 years of age and in their first real job.

It is urgent because the House, by debating the issue, can prevent the closure of this viable factory which makes clothes for such companies as Mothercare and Marks and Spencer. It is urgent because the factory has a full order book and is being closed only for reasons of internal politics at Courtaulds. An urgent debate is needed because the work force has issued a statement saying that it will consider any method of non-violent, direct action to secure the future of their jobs and prosperity.

The House must ensure that the company opens the books to the work force and that if Courtaulds does not want to continue to operate that factory, a workers' co-operative is able to do so in co-operation with the companies for which the factory now produces goods. The issue is especially urgent because it is happening on Merseyside, where unemployment is at its highest ever and already running at 30 per cent. in Bootle and Seaforth. If the redundancy notices stand, the highly flexible, skilled work force is likely to be on the dole for some considerable time.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Bootle (Mr. Roberts) asks leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that he thinks should have urgent consideration, namely,

"The proposed closure of the Courtaulds factory at Seaforth in the constituency of Bootle."

I regret that I must give the hon. Member the same answer that I gave to the other hon. Members making Standing Order No. 10 applications. I do not consider that the matter that he has raised is appropriate for discussion under Standing Order No. 10 and I cannot therefore submit his application to the House, but I hope that he will find other methods of raising the matter, which is of concern to his constituents.

Prime Minister (Share Dealings)

4.19 pm

Mr. Dennis Skinner (Bolsover): I beg to ask leave to move the Adjournment of the House, under Standing Order No. 10, for the purpose of discussing a specific and important matter that should have urgent consideration, namely:

"Prime ministerial conflicts of interest in relation to share dealings."

The matter is specific, Mr. Speaker, because it refers to the head of the Government in the United Kingdom dealing in shares from 10 Downing street and using that building as an arm of the stock exchange.

It is also specific because it has always been generally understood in the House that like councillors and others who represent the public in matters of accountability, Government Ministers, including the Prime Minister, do not become involved in dealing in shares because they are privy to inside information that the ordinary public does not have. In these days of privatisation, there have been countless instances when Government and the Prime Minister have been and were privy to such information and could have made millions.

The matter is important because there is a conflict of interests. It is not right and proper that in these days of massive speculation on the stock exchange, when the *Financial Times* index has gone through the 1,400 barrier, that we should dismiss lightly the fact that a Prime Minister has been dealing in shares.

The matter is important because No. 10 Downing street does not belong to the Prime Minister but to the nation, and it is used for Cabinet meetings every week. It is also used for budgets, and announcements are made by the Prime Minister and many other Ministers with advance information that could lead to a lot of money being made

by a lot of people. That is why it has been generally agreed over the years that Ministers and Prime Ministers do not become involved in speculation. The matter is also important because it is set against a backcloth of City fraud that has been unsurpassed in these many years. I do not have to go much further down that road.

The matter is also important because of the public disquiet about this matter and because many people—I am among them—believe that there should be a full and independent public inquiry into the whole matter so that the people can judge for themselves.

The matter is urgent because it has occurred since the House last met on Friday and because the Prime Minister has refused to come to the House today, as she should have done, to make a Prime ministerial statement to explain the matter. It is also urgent because the Committee considering the Financial Services Bill is meeting upstairs and one of its jobs is to clear up the whole matter of conflict of interests as it applies to people in the City of London and Ministers.

The matter is important, urgent and specific. We might have gone to the Director of Public Prosecutions but we have no faith in him.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member for Bolsover (Mr. Skinner) asks leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing an important and specific matter that he thinks should have urgent consideration, namely,

"Prime ministerial conflict of interests relating to share dealings."

I have listened with care to what the hon. Gentleman has said, but I regret that I do not consider that the matter he has raised is appropriate for discussion under Standing Order No. 10 and, therefore, I cannot submit his application to the House.

Mr. Skinner: It will not go away.

010
E.P.

HOME SECRETARY'S DRAFT STATEMENT

EVELYN GLENHOLMES

With permission, Mr Speaker, I should like to make a statement about the recent failure to secure the extradition of Evelyn Glenholmes from the Republic of Ireland.

2. Nine endorsed warrants for the return of Miss Glenholmes were first submitted to the Irish authorities on 31 October 1984. The offences covered by the warrants related to an explosion outside the Chelsea Barracks in Ebury Bridge Road in October 1981, in which two people were killed and a number of others injured; the attempted murder of Sir Steuart Pringle in October 1981; an explosion at the home of my Rt Hon and learned friend the Attorney General in November 1981; an explosion in Oxford Street in 1982 in which a bomb disposal expert was killed; the planting of a bomb, which was defused, in a London store in 1982; and the discovery of an arms cache in Oxfordshire. The original warrants were returned by the Irish authorities, who asked for some technical changes to be made to the wording of the warrants. Fresh warrants were accordingly submitted on 6 November 1984, but by that time details of the extradition request had been disclosed in the press and Miss Glenholmes disappeared from view.

3. She was subsequently arrested in Dublin on 12 March 1986, and the hearing of the extradition request opened in the District Court of Dublin last Wednesday on the basis of the warrants issued in November 1984.

CEBI
Prime Minister
This is an
official's draft of
the statement, which
the Home Secretary &
A-G
are
studying overnight.
I think pre-7
needs to be treated
cautiously
CDD
24/3.

E.P.

4. On Saturday morning, having heard submissions from defence counsel that the extradition warrants were defective, the court discharged Miss Glenholmes. I understand that the principal consideration which underlay the court's decision was that, in accordance with standard practice, the wording of the warrants referred to information on oath as having been laid on the day the warrants were issued (i.e. 6 November 1984), whereas it appeared that the relevant information was that laid when the original warrants were issued on 30 October 1984. Nevertheless there was no question but that the information required for both sets of warrants was identical. I also understand that both applications were made under oath by the same person to the same magistrate.

5. Even before Miss Glenholmes was released, the United Kingdom authorities had made arrangements for the issue of a fresh warrant covering one of the charges of murder. On the basis of this fresh warrant, the Garda obtained a new provisional warrant for Miss Glenholmes' arrest. Once Miss Glenholmes had been re-arrested, she was brought back to the District Court. I understand that Miss Glenholmes was then released, this time on the grounds that the court was not satisfied that there was evidence that a fresh warrant had been issued in London that morning and that Miss Glenholmes had in fact enjoyed a period of liberty between her earlier release and her re-arrest.

6. Following Miss Glenholmes' release, a fresh warrant on a charge of murder has been obtained; this was sent to Dublin yesterday. Earlier today applications were made for additional warrants on five of the further charges; in addition applications are this afternoon being made for the issue of three further warrants in Oxfordshire and these will be forwarded to the authorities in Dublin as soon as they have been granted.

E.P.

7. I can tell the House that, on the basis of the information available to me, I am satisfied that the unfortunate outcome of this case is in no way due to any shortcoming on the part of either the Metropolitan Police or the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, who at all times co-operated fully in meeting the requirements of the authorities in Dublin.

I am sure that the whole House will join with me in expressing our disappointment that it has not so far proved possible to secure the return to this country of a person accused of very serious crimes of violence. It is our earnest hope that it will be possible to obtain the arrest of Miss Glenholmes on the basis of the fresh warrants and her subsequent extradition to face justice in a British court.

FOR WHAT OFFENCES IS SHE WANTED?

Miss Glenholmes' arrest is sought in connection with nine offences. The incidents to which the charges relate are:-

The Ebury Bridge Road explosion in October 1981 in which two civilians were killed and a number of civilians and soldiers injured;

The Wimpey Bar explosion in 1982 in which a civilian bomb disposal expert was killed;

The attempted murder of Sir Steuart Pringle in October 1981;

The bomb explosion at the house of my Rt Hon and learned friend the Attorney General in November 1981;

The discovery of an arms cache in Oxfordshire.

THE GRAND HOTEL BOMBING?

I understand from the Commissioner that Miss Glenholme's is not sought for offences in connection with this incident.

E.P.

ISN'T THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT SHOWN TO BE WORTHLESS?

No. Article 8 of the Agreement provides that extradition policy matters will be considered by the Inter-Governmental Conference. Procedural questions, including those relating to the formal details of arrest warrants, are being considered by a working group set up under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Conference.

THIS SHOWS THE ANTIPATHY OF THE IRISH COURTS TO
UNITED KINGDOM EXTRADITION REQUESTS

It would be entirely wrong for me to comment on the decisions of the Irish courts.

GARDA TACTICS ON SATURDAY MORNING

I cannot comment on the Garda.

WHAT ABOUT THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION OF TERRORISM?

The Republic has signed, but not yet ratified, the Convention. The Convention provides that fugitives should not be able to avoid extradition by claiming that their offences are political. But the problem faced on Saturday was a technical defect on the warrants. It had nothing to do with the political offence exception.

WHY NOT HOLD AN ENQUIRY?

Because we know the facts and the lessons for the future have been learned. The discussions taking place in the context of the Inter-Governmental Conference will take in deficiencies in the warrants procedure.

IS NEW LEGISLATION CALLED FOR?

That would not at this stage seem necessary. But there is nothing to stop proposals for changes to the machinery of warrants procedure emerging from the Inter-Governmental Conference.

WOULD AN ENGLISH COURT HAVE TAKEN THE SAME VIEW OF A DEFECTIVE IRISH WARRANT?

I cannot answer such a hypothetical question.

WILL ANYONE BE DISCIPLINED?

This is not a matter for me. But I know of no reason for any UK police officer or official of the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions to be subjected to disciplinary procedures. I am satisfied that those involved made very effort to meet the requirements of the Irish authorities.

E.P.

WHAT ABOUT CRITICISMS BY MEMBERS OF THE IRISH GOVERNMENT?

I have read reports in the newspapers. I can only say that I do not think that it would be justified to direct towards the police in this country any odium for the regrettable outcome of this case. The police officers involved made every effort to meet the requirements of the Irish authorities. We have to accept that the court in Dublin is entirely independent in interpreting the law and in making its judgment in any particular case.

SHOULDN'T THE MAGISTRATE HAVE GONE TO DUBLIN?

It is not certain that this would have affected the outcome. [ONLY IF PRESSED: It was also considered that for a magistrate from the United Kingdom to have given evidence in an Irish court could have set a bad precedent. The backing of warrants procedure is intended to provide a simple extradition procedure based solely on documents. If it were accepted that the judicial authority responsible for issuing a warrant could be questioned on that warrant in this case, then such oral evidence could presumably be required in any subsequent case.]

CAN MISS GLENHOMES NOW BE ARRESTED?

The warrant that was obtained in London on Saturday morning was yesterday taken to Dublin. Following endorsement by the Garda of that warrant - which relates to the murder of Nora Field in Ebury Bridge Road in October 1981 - it would be possible for Miss Glenholmes to be arrested and brought before the court. [A further five fresh warrants relating to alleged offences in London were issued at Bow Street magistrates' court this morning. Warrants in relation to the cache of arms discovered in Oxfordshire are this afternoon being sought at the Henley-on-Thames magistrates' court. All the warrants obtained today will be sent immediately to the Republic.]

E.P.

HOW ARE THE NEW WARRANTS DIFFERENT?

They incorporate the amendments previously recommended in 1984. And a separate information has been freshly sworn in respect of each warrant.

COULD MISS GLENHOLMES NOW BE EXTRADITED IF THE DUBLIN COURT ACCEPTS THE WARRANTS?

I cannot comment on what decision the Irish courts might reach. But it has to be borne in mind that a fugitive has the right to apply to the High Court for habeas corpus.

IS THE POLITICAL OFFENCE EXCEPTION A FACTOR

I am informed that this could not be a factor in District Court proceedings. But the issue can be considered by the High Court.

COULD SHE BE CHARGED WITH OTHER OFFENCES ON HER RETURN

I understand from the Commissioner that it is not intended to prosecute Miss Glenholmes in respect of any offence alleged to have been committed prior to her return other than those shown on the extradition warrants.

[IF PRESSED ON THE QUESTION OF ASSURANCES ON THIS POINT:

This present question of prosecution for offences committed prior to extradition is being discussed under the Inter-Governmental Conference. It would not be right for me to comment on our discussions at this stage.]

E.B.

WHERE WERE THE WARRANTS ISSUED?

At Lambeth magistrates' court (by a Metropolitan Stipendiary Magistrate).

WHO APPLIED FOR THE WARRANTS?

An official in the Department of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

ROXLEY
DUPLICATOR

E.B.

BACKGROUND NOTES

There is a simplified procedure for the return of offenders between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland based on endorsed warrants of arrest. Return from the United Kingdom is governed by the Backing of Warrants (Republic of Ireland) Act 1965, and from the Republic by the largely reciprocal provisions of its own Extradition Act 1965. These Acts provide for the return of persons accused or convicted of indictable offences, or of offences punishable on summary conviction with six months' imprisonment, for which there is a corresponding offence under the law of the requested country. There are safeguards (e.g. the political offence exception) but certain important features of our present extradition law are omitted - for example there is no need to establish a prima facie case.

TO BE CHECKED
AGAINST DELIVERYHOME SECRETARY'S STATEMENTEVELYN GLENHOLMES

With permission, Mr Speaker, I should like to make a statement about the recent regrettable failure to secure the extradition of Evelyn Glenholmes from the Republic of Ireland.

2. Nine endorsed warrants for the return of Miss Glenholmes were first issued on 31 October 1984 and submitted to the Irish authorities for endorsement in accordance with the UK-Irish extradition legislation. The offences covered by the warrants related to various terrorist offences committed between 1981 and 1982, including murder, attempted murder, firearms and explosives offences. The original warrants were returned by the Irish authorities, who asked for some technical changes to be made to their wording. Fresh warrants were accordingly submitted on 6 November 1984, but by that time details of the extradition request had been disclosed in the press and Miss Glenholmes disappeared from view.

3. She was subsequently arrested in Dublin on 12 March 1986, and the hearing of the extradition request opened in the District Court of Dublin last Wednesday on the basis of the warrants issued in November 1984.

4. Throughout last week's court hearing there was close co-operation between the Irish prosecuting authorities and officers from the Metropolitan Police and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecution.

5. On Saturday morning, having heard submissions from defence counsel that the extradition warrants were defective, the court discharged Miss Glenholmes. I understand that the principal consideration which underlay the court's decision was that, whereas the standard wording printed on the warrants referred to information on oath as having been laid on the day the warrants were issued (i.e. 6 November 1984), the court considered that the relevant information was that laid when the original warrants had been issued on 31 October 1984. I understand that the magistrate in London treated the further application on November 6 as having been made under oath adopting the information already laid but not resworn. The information required for both sets of warrants was identical, but was not sworn again on November 6, which would have avoided the difficulty which later arose.

6. Even before Miss Glenholmes was released, the United Kingdom authorities had made arrangements for the issue of a fresh warrant covering one of the charges of murder. On the basis of this fresh warrant, the Garda obtained a new provisional warrant for Miss Glenholmes' arrest. Once Miss Glenholmes had been re-arrested, she was brought back to the District Court. I understand that Miss Glenholmes was then released, this time on

/the grounds..

the grounds that the court was not satisfied in spite of a telephone call from New Scotland Yard to the Garda that there was evidence that a fresh warrant had been issued in London that morning or that Miss Glenholmes had in effect been at liberty between her earlier release and her re-arrest.

7. Following Miss Glenholmes' second release, the fresh warrant was sent to Dublin this morning. Earlier today additional warrants were obtained covering five of the further charges; in addition, applications are this afternoon being made for the issue of three further warrants in Oxfordshire and these will be forwarded to the authorities in Dublin as soon as they have been granted.

7. My Rt Hon and learned friend the Attorney General and I have looked carefully at the information so far available to us. On the basis of that information it is clear that the extradition application failed because of a technical objection taken by the Dublin court. My Rt Hon and learned friend and I regret that this technical objection was not foreseen in time and fresh warrants obtained. We are considering urgently the need for a review of procedures and the handling of this sort of case. My Rt Hon and learned friend the Attorney General has instructed the Directors of Public Prosecutions for England and Wales, and for Northern Ireland, to ensure personally that all outstanding warrants in respect of terrorist offences are checked at once for accuracy and sufficiency. Under the auspices of the Inter-Governmental Conference work has already begun on a range of legal matters relating to extradition; the lessons of the past few days will be studied in that context.

8. I should also inform the House, for the sake of completeness, that our enquiries have shown that in giving evidence to the court in Dublin an officer from the Metropolitan Police made an error in referring to the dates on which the warrants were issued. I understand that he sought to correct this error, but that an opportunity for him to do so was not forthcoming. This does not, however, appear to have influenced the court in its decision to release Miss Glenholmes.

It is deeply disappointing that it has not so far proved possible to obtain the extradition of Miss Glenholmes to face justice in a British court. It is essential that we all learn the right lessons for the future from this failure.