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B1F 30/9/97

Michael Mellett
Assistant Secretary
Office Of The Secretary
Department of Justice
Equality and Law Reform
Dublin 2

25 September 1997

Dear Michael

Thank you for your letter 18 September. You will be not entirely surprised to know that your request causes me some difficulty. It is our clear, and publicly stated policy, that each case for repatriation will be dealt with, in so far as it is possible, chronology and that we will not distinguish between one group of prisoners and another.

I would want to maintain this policy but I am mindful of the difficulties you referred to and will therefore look at the cases we have before us at the moment to see what room I have for manoeuvre. I will write to you again on this point in the very near future.

On a separate point it would be helpful to have the information we requested for comparative purposes about the average length of time served by lifes convicted and sentenced in the Republic.

Yours sincerely

KEVIN HEAL

Ref: Sept. Lett 156.KH