



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
National Archives

Reference Code: 2019/101/2225

Creator(s): Department of Foreign Affairs

Accession Conditions: Open

Copyright: National Archives, Ireland.
May only be reproduced with
the written permission of the
Director of the National
Archives.

SENT BY: IRISH EMBASSY

;24- 4-89 4:06PM ;

012456961+

754505; # 1

FAX COVER SHEETFax No: 659Date: 24/4/89 Time: 5.02To: H. Q.For: Tom RussellFrom: Shane O'NeillTotal number of pages, including this cover sheet: 3

Brief description of material: _____

Any special instructions: _____

Transmitting operator: - _____

This material is being sent from fax phone No. _____

This number should be used for return Faxing.

If there is any problems on receipt please phone transmitting
operator at 235-2171.

FAX

IMMEDIATE

To: H.Q.
For: Tom Russell

From: London
From: S. O'Neill

Private Notice Question on the
Arrest of three Ulstermen in Paris

Gerald Kaufman (Labour Foreign Affairs spokesman) asked Geoffrey Howe whether he would make a statement on Government policy towards South Africa following the arrest of three UDA men in company with a South African Diplomat and a U.S. arms dealer.

Howe replied that he had been informed by the French Government on 21 April of the arrest of three Ulstermen. Consular access is still being sought to the three U.K. citizens. The Government is seriously concerned by the substance of the charges brought against them. The matter is at present sub judice. The South African Ambassador in London has been summoned to the Foreign Office to be told of the grave view taken by the British authorities. Security at Shorts and other establishments is being reviewed by Secretary of State King.

Kaufman went on to ask whether it is not the case that weapons supplied by South Africa have already been used in attacks in Northern Ireland including grenades thrown at the police. Had Howe, last month, or the Prime Minister, this month, raised this matter with the South African authorities in their respective visits to that country? Would the Government confer with other EEC Governments to take united action to expel all the South African arms dealers operating in the community under diplomatic cover?

Howe replied that the U.K. remains committed to the arms embargo. There is a long way to go before definite conclusions can be made about this matter.

In reply to a question from Ivor Stanbrook as to whether there is any evidence that South African weapons have already been used in terrorist incidents in Northern Ireland, Howe said that it is not possible to offer conclusive evidence at the moment but if it were established that SA weapons had been used this would, of course, add to the gravity of the situation.

Martin Smyth who was the only Northern Ireland politician apart from Molyneux in the House asked whether Howe could confirm that the three were UDA men. He also made the point that it was hypocritical of certain MPs to attack South Africa without mentioning the link between the ANC and the IRA.

In response Howe said that he could not be specific on the question of the three being UDA men. Any involvement on either side of the tragic conflict in Northern Ireland is to be deplored.

In reply to Marilyn Rees, Howe said that the availability of weapons to either side in Northern Ireland is something which the Government must do its best to prevent.

-2-

In a further reply to a Labour backbencher, Howe said that it is clear that there is very genuine concern on all sides of the House at the implications of the facts as so far known. Precisely how this matter should be equated with the actions of other Governments has to be considered but the Government has a duty to leave every Government in no doubt as to how seriously the British regard such matters.

Please c.c. D. O'Donovan.