



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Note for the Tanaiste's information

Persons apprehended

Noel Little: from Markethill, Co Armagh and a leading member of Ulster Resistance.

Jim King: from Killylea, Co Armagh and also prominent in Ulster Resistance.

Samuel Quinn: from Newtownards, Co Down. He was a member of the Territorial Army at Newtownards.

Douglas Bernhart: an American arms dealer based in Geneva.

Daniel Storm: said to be a member of the technical and administrative staff of the South African Embassy in Paris. It has been suggested that he was an official of the South African arms corporation [Arm Scor]. Members of the technical and administrative staff have diplomatic immunity under the Vienna Convention only in respect of their official duties. It could not be said that offering weapons or funds for weapons to the Ulster Resistance would come within the scope of such duties. However, the French Government appear to have accepted none the less his claim of diplomatic immunity.

All four were arrested last Friday [21 April]. Storm was released on the ground of diplomatic immunity. Little, King, Quinn and Bernhart were charged on Sunday [23 April] with illegal dealing in weapons and have been remanded by the Juge d'Instruction, Jean-Louis Brugier [who handles terrorism cases including the Eksund case]. The maximum period of remand is 4 months and any further remand can be ordered "in chambers".

Weapons found

Parts of two weapons manufactured by Shorts were found at the time of arrest:

Blowpipe: a ground to air missile of ageing design. It is believed that a training model in sections which was not operational was stolen from the Territorial Army base at Newtownards, Co Down earlier this month. A Blowpipe system and a training simulator were stolen from the Shorts factory on 31 October last.

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Javelin: parts of this more modern missile were stolen from the Shorts factory on 31 October.

Motive for the Paris meeting

It is believed that South Africa is attempting to get around UN and EC embargoes by obtaining illegally samples of weapons which they then copy and manufacture. In return it is believed that the South Africans offer arms or funds for arms purchases and that film was on offer to the loyalists in Paris. It is very likely that they arranged a large consignment of weaponry which arrived in Northern Ireland last January, half of which has been recovered by the RUC. Other weapons have been used in sectarian attacks including the Michael Stone attack on the funeral of the Gibraltar Three. The British have not been able to offer a conclusive judgment on the origin of these arms.

Ulster Resistance

In face of the unwillingness of the UDA or the UVF to respond to Unionist politicians desire to act against the Agreement, loyalist politicians and businessmen created Ulster Resistance in November 1986. Principal among the politicians were Ian Paisley and Peter Robinson. Statements by Robinson gave the impression that the Ulster Resistance might be called upon to "fight". They were widely criticised by other politicians and churchmen as encouraging militancy. Moylneaux kept his distance from this organisation. The movement became beset with internal differences and Paisley and Robinson disassociated themselves in November of last year.

Future action by the French authorities

The matter is in the hands of the Juge d'Instruction and would be regarded in France as sub judice. On the experience of the Eksund case, a prosecution should not be expected for some time. The South African appears to have left voluntarily. Our contacts with the French suggest that they would have expelled him had he not left.

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Future action by the Northern Ireland authorities

We have been told in the Secretariat that security at the Shorts factory and at security bases has been tightened up to avoid further thefts and that the security review would be concerned with possible involvement of members of the Territorial Army with loyalist paramilitary organisations.

Attachments

1. Tanaiste's statement of 24 April
2. Ambassador O'Rourke's Speaking Note
3. Statement by the South African Foreign Minister
4. Howe statement to the House of Commons yesterday
5. King statement to the press
6. Instruction to Embassy London and response
7. Instruction to Embassy Paris and response
8. Instruction to Secretariat and response

Anglo-Irish Section

25 April 1989