



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2020/17/5
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Accession Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Uimhir.....

Comments by British Prime Minister

On the Taoiseach's direction, I asked Ambassador Fenn to call about the remarks attributed to the Prime Minister in Budapest. I said that this type of remark could be of assistance only to the Provos and would discourage those working against terrorism, in the way that was quite clear from the comments by a "Garda source" in yesterday's Irish Times. The attack - and we sympathised with the victim and in no way condone what had happened - took place in the UK, in territory covered by British security forces. There was no way that anything Gardai could have done could have prevented or deflected it. What we really wanted to know was what the comments were all about. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Justice had met with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Minister Cope last Friday at the Conference and had gone through every aspect of security. Nothing said then had given any grounds for anticipating the Prime Minister's statement.

The Ambassador said that he would have been glad if my statement had started with a repudiation of the attack on Sir Peter Terry. The Prime Minister had been doorsteped in Budapest and was speaking with a certain sense of exasperation. In tiredness there was often truth. He handed me the attached text which he said represented the official British position.

On what required to be done he said that the British side had a shopping list including more pre-emptive intelligence, better surveillance, communications - so as to channel messages directly from police to police - agreement to cover night flying, which they had been seeking for a long time - difficulties on the IED Agreement; and, in particular, the question of having British technicians help with the installation of surveillance equipment, in Irish ~~air~~planes following on the Mallard exercise.

The Ambassador also said that the refusal of the Irish Chairman to receive a briefing from the police in the North had rankled - though he understood the attitudes giving rise to this refusal.

I said again that there was nothing in any of this which would lead to the attachment of blame here for a crime committed in Britain, possibly by British subjects. How could the Garda be expected to deal with that? The list he had given was a list of items which were being dealt with in another place. I then

ROINN AN TAOISIGH

Uimhir.....

- 2 -

quoted to him Mr Cope's remarks complimenting the Gardai on the level of co-operation on the Robinson murder and the recent tributes paid by Scotland Yard to the excellent quality of the co-operation received with the Gardai - whom they described as a first class force - placing them above even the RUC.

The Ambassador said that he was not in any way suggesting Irish responsibility for the attack and gave a personal expression of regret at what had happened.

He will convey the Taoiseach's concerns to the proper place.

DN

Dermot Nally

20 September 1990

copied to:

Mr Noel Doherty, Secretary, Dept. of Foreign Affairs.

Mr Dermot Gallagher, Assistant Secretary, Dept. of Foreign Affairs

Mr Des Macken, Secretary, Dept. of Justice

UNCLASSIFIED

ATTACK ON SIR PETER AND LADY TERRY**LINE TO TAKE****1. Reference to Guerrilla Warfare**

In the United Kingdom we deal with all terrorism under the rule of law. We do not recognise the validity of terrorists' claims to be fighting a war. Murder is murder and is a crime which cannot be justified under any circumstances.

2. Assistance from the Republic of Ireland

We are in constant touch with the authorities in the Republic through the mechanism of the Anglo-Irish Agreement at both political and police levels. The question of security cooperation was discussed most recently at the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference meeting in Dublin on 14 September.

PRIME MINISTER - TWO DOORSTEP INTERVIEWS - BUDAPEST - 19 SEP 90

- 1 -

FROM JAMES LEE FOR COI RADIO TECHNICAL SERVICES

TRANSCRIPT OF TWO DOORSTEP INTERVIEWS
GIVEN BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MRS. THATCHER,
IN BUDAPEST
ON WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 1990

INTERVIEW NO. 1

INTERVIEWER:

Mrs. Thatcher, have you any comment on the shooting of Sir Peter Terry?

PRIME MINISTER:

I was utterly appalled and deeply grieved.

The IRA now seem to be going for people who are defenceless at the time when they are attacked. It is thoroughly cowardly and we shall have to consider how we can strengthen even further our defences against them. It is a wicked, evil thing to do.

INTERVIEW NO. 2

PRIME MINISTER:

.....It is wicked and evil and we are closely in touch to see how Mr. and Mrs. Terry are.

INTERVIEWER:

What about the wider implication of security? We have had rather a spate of...

PRIME MINISTER:

Again, we will have to look once again at that. The numbers of things that are happening now make it important that we look once again to see if there is anything further we can do to step up security and defences against this guerrilla warfare.

INTERVIEWER:

Why do you call it "guerrilla warfare"?

PRIME MINISTER:

Because they are at war with us and we can only fight them with the civil law, so they are acting under what they regard as rules of war and we are acting with the ordinary law of the land. It is the action of terrorism.

INTERVIEWER:

Is the law of the land enough therefore? Are you implying that it is not enough?

PRIME MINISTER:

We cannot in fact do more under the law of the land than we are doing. The question is whether we can do any more for protection. The question is also whether we can assure ourselves that the Republic is doing all it can to track down terrorists, their sources of weaponry and their stores of weapons.

(END OF TRANSCRIPT)