



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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British Side

Mr. J. Ledlie
Mr. R. Alston
Mr. A. Wilson
Mr. N. Dodds
Mr. P. Bell
Mr. J. McKervill
Mr. S. Rickard

Opening Remarks

1. Mr. Ledlie began by claiming that he had taken on board the points made by the Irish side at the meeting on Confidence issues last November. They had tried to "sharpen up" their performance over the past six months and he believed that they had improved their responses to us in areas such as the Emergency Provisions Bill, closure of PVCs and the Committee on Confidence in the Security Forces.

2. Mr. Gallagher said that the British reaction to Archbishop Daly's comments on the UDR was a good example of the gap in perceptions which exists between the two sides. Dr. Daly's comments were carefully phrased and took into account the difficult conditions under which the UDR operated. However, Dr. Daly's overall conclusion was that the deployment of the UDR in nationalist areas

cannot but be seen as "pitting one community against the other".

3. There followed a very detailed and wide ranging discussion about accompaniment, with the Irish side pursuing the discrepancies between the other side's figures on accompaniment levels and what we hear from our contacts; our disappointment with their response to our proposals for joint monitoring of accompaniment levels in Downpatrick and Coalisland, our concern at the qualification of the commitment to accompaniment by the use of such phrases as "where it is sensible and feasible"; the climate of fear in East Tyrone and South Derry after the Cappagh and other shootings in the area over the past year; the lack of accompaniment at PVCs, especially at Aughnacloy; and the passive and reluctant participation by some policemen in army patrols.
4. Mr. Ledlie denied that the British were trying to renege on the commitment to accompaniment given in 1985. There was scope for different interpretations of what was said. He suggested that the difficulty lay with the manpower problems of the RUC. The RUC were anxious to increase the percentage of accompanied patrols, but this was going to be difficult given the pressure from Ken Maginnis and others to intensify army/UDR activity. Accompaniment at PVCs was very costly in resource terms; it is unrealistic to expect full implementation because the RUC haven't got the manpower. However, he held out the possibility that he might be willing to look at the levels of accompaniment at PVCs.

5. Mr. Gallagher returned to the need for a detailed examination of accompaniment levels in South Derry and East Tyrone, and went on to suggest again that, as a first step towards the progressive implementation of the British commitment, the necessary measures be taken to ensure that accompaniment would be the norm at permanent checkpoints (the manpower needs of which were completely anticipatable) and in sensitive nationalist areas.

RUC - Police Primacy

6. Mr. Murphy and Mr. McMahon set out our views on the overriding importance of police primacy, citing by way of example two cases referred to the Secretariat (harassment of Sheila McCaughey and checks on Frank McManus' car) where the army asserted a very obvious primacy over the police. The cases in question would give a strong impression that the police play second fiddle to the army. With regard to the McManus case there appeared to be a conflict between the police and army intelligence assessments with the army view (supplemented by the local UDR?) winning out over the police view.
7. Mr. Ledlie, who claimed not to be familiar with the particulars of these cases, indicated that work is proceeding on a new joint Army/RUC intelligence data base which would use the "highest common denominator".
8. Mr. Alston and Mr. Bell indicated that the McManus case had been fully looked into and that "it was not an accident" that his car registration number appeared in the computer. It was a question of the company he kept and who he loaned his car to. It was not a situation

which was out of date. They added that Ms. McCaughey had withdrawn her formal complaint. In response, Mr. McMahon pointed out that Ms. McCaughey had withdrawn her complaint because the police had turned up at her house with landrovers in force. She did not wish to attract attention to her family and, in addition, her mother was unwell at present. The wider issues relating to police primacy and their use of sirens, etc. were still "live" as far as we were concerned.

Stevens / Collusion


9. Mr. Gallagher expressed appreciation of the RUC's help with the investigation into the Sproule case and noted that there was close co-operation between the two sides in the case. He also referred to the reply given by the Minister for Justice to private notice questions that afternoon, the text of which he had handed over before the meeting.
10. Mr. Ledlie said that the Sproule case was "very bad news". They had a very difficult 24 hours in trying to keep Ministers calmed down. It was very helpful that the Gardai had moved so quickly. However, the episode had reinforced the instinctive irrational views of people such as Paisley. He noted that the language used in the reply to the P.Q. was very similar to theirs. In particular, he found the final paragraph to be very appropriate in stressing that we must not lose sight of the underlying reality in these cases. It would be helpful to have that said about other murders committed by the IRA. He could think of two or three examples where our Ministers had issued quite severe remarks on certain

killings. British Ministers try to take a more neutral and objective view - it was noticeable to them that we did not find it easy to do that and this was, in their view, very unhelpful. He noted that the Taoiseach had expressed concern over the Cappagh shooting but what happens when Sergeant X or Y is killed? "There is a need for confidence building measures on your side too."

11. Mr. Gallagher expressed incredulity at these remarks and hoped that they would not be pursued. Nobody could doubt the commitment of the Irish Government in this area. It goes without saying that the Government feel the deepest revulsion about all killings in Northern Ireland without distinction. In every considered speech there is the strongest condemnation of IRA violence. The IRA had been condemned by our Government per longum et latum. There could be absolutely no doubting our credentials in this area.
12. Mr. Ledlie stressed that it was more a "matter of tone" in what had been said in the past about the UDR. Paisley had been complaining that they had allowed the Irish Government to walk all over them when there were allegations of collusion being made against the UDR. The boot was now on the other foot and we were reaping the harvest of the tone we struck on UDR collusion.
13. Mr. Gallagher, while again expressing regret at having to say the obvious, emphasised that there was no comparison between the problems which led to the Stevens enquiry, and also those which had arisen over the years with the UDR, and this one isolated Fógra Tóra incident. The reality was that the Chief Constable had thought the

collusion situation in the North sufficiently serious to warrant calling in an outside investigation. Paisley and Robinson might well pick and choose to score points; while he could accept and understand their emotion, he could not accept that their approach should be given any degree of credibility.

14. Mr. O'Donovan said that what happened in the Sproule case may have been carelessness rather than collusion. The only other allegations we had heard of Garda documents going astray was around the time of the Stevens inquiry when it was said that Garda documents on IRA suspects had found their way to loyalist paramilitaries. He added that he could not recall a single recent statement from Paisley or Molyneux condemning murders of Catholics.
15. Mr. Gallagher regretted that such comments should be made by the other side and the direction the discussion had taken. We must ensure that legitimate nationalist grievances are responded to politically; otherwise, there was danger of a growth in terrorist credibility. We have a right and, even more importantly, a duty under the Agreement to raise matters relating to the nationalist agenda and to seek, where necessary, their redress.
16. Mr. Ledlie apologised for the colourful language used in raising the issue but he felt he had to get his point across. He was sorry if he had gone "over the top". At this point the meeting ended, though there were further informal discussions over a meal hosted by Ledlie at his home that evening.


J. Farrell
Anglo-Irish Section
23 April, 1991.

cc: PSM; Mr. Nally; PSS; Mr. Brosnan; Mr. Dalton;
Counsellors A-I; Box.