

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES****IRELAND**

**Reference Code:** 2001/61/1

**Title:** Garda statement by Andrew J Desmond, Customs and Excise Surveyor, regarding an alleged plot to import arms into Ireland.

**Creation Date(s):** 23 April, 1970

**Level of description:** Item

**Extent and medium:** 2 pages

**Creator(s):** Department of Justice

**Access Conditions:** Open

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

Statement of Mr. Andrew J. Desmond, Surveyor, Customs and Excise, taken at his home 33 Shantalla Road, Beaumont, on Thursday, 23rd. April, 1970, by Chief Superintendent John P. Fleming.

10<sup>th</sup> April  
FRIDAY

About 10th. April, 1970, I was approached in my office by a man who gave the name J. J. KELLY and who said he was from the Dept. of Finance. I said to this man "what do you do in the Dept" and he said "I'm Assistant to Mr. Haughey". I asked him what he meant by that and he said "I'm assisting Mr. Haughey's Assistant, really". He then said he was expecting some mining machinery in on a Charter Flight for the Department of Finance. I asked him what about documents and he said they would accompany the goods. He said the goods would be consigned to "WEEDOCKS - c/o Dept. of Finance". When KELLY had left I saw Jack FARRELLY who is Supt., Import Cargo, Aer Lingus, and I asked him to check-up on this Firm "WEEDOCKS". We could find no information about the Firm or about the importation.

15<sup>th</sup> April

Wednesday

Ryan says he introduced K to him?

On the following Wednesday, approximately, Mr. FARRELLY came to my Office and told me that the Aer Lingus Agent named JOHNSTON in Frankfort had told Aer Lingus in Dublin that a person in Frankfort was trying to send Arms and Ammunition to a Firm called "WELUX". Mr. FARRELLY asked me if this was the Firm I was enquiring about and I said I didn't know. Later on same day J.J. KELLY called to my Office and Superintendent Jack RYAN, Aer Lingus called at the same time. KELLY knew RYAN as far as I can recollect. RYAN told both KELLY and myself that Arms and Ammunition were awaiting transport from Frankfort, and KELLY then acknowledged the fact that this was the consignment he was interested in and which he had previously described as mining machinery. He verified that it was an official Government importation intended for the Army. KELLY and RYAN then discussed the shipping of Arms and Ammunition and I.A.T.A. Prohibitions about shipping ammunition on passenger planes. On - I think - the following day - Thursday Mr. RYAN called to my Office and he said he had stopped any shipment from Frankfort - that Aer Lingus would not bring KELLY'S Consignment in. J.J.KELLY called to the office while RYAN was there on Thursday or Friday and RYAN had already told him on the phone about having stopped the shipment of goods.

Thursday 16 April

Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>  
Friday 17<sup>th</sup>  
according to Ryan

(10) hand + then



KELLY said to me that they wanted to import the goods without fuss because of the political situation. He said they were thinking of having a charter plane and bringing all the goods in together. I was never committed to any view with regard to KELLY, that is with regard to the bona fides of his claim, or otherwise. If the goods had been imported, they would not have been cleared without proper licences, documentations, etc. as required by Standing Customs and Excise Regulations.

*Desmond makes no mention of the fact that he told Mc Cleon that the cargo was to get customs clearance, ie without any customs checks.*

I finished my officiating at the Airport on Friday, 17th. April, 1970 and went on holidays and I have not since heard from anybody ~~concerned~~ concerned in the shipment of these goods.

This Statement has been read over to me by Chief Superintendent Fleming and it is correct.

Signed Andrew J. Desmond.

witness. John P. Fleming.  
Chief Superintendent

Dated this 23rd. day of April, 1970.

*Wednesday*

*When Chief Supt Fleming went to Desmond for a statement he refused saying that he had a golf appointment & that Fleming could contact him next day. As the Garda authorities were afraid that there would be collusion in the interval I phoned the Chairman of the Revenue Comm. who was reluctant to intervene. In order to force an interview I told him that the Taborsach was aware of the police enquiries & that lack of cooperation would be disapproved of & that they took steps to the outcome to this place.*