

# NATIONAL ARCHIVES

## IRELAND



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Action by the U.S. Administration against the supply of arms to the Provisional IRA

(i) Long running investigations by the FBI, US Customs and Immigration authorities into the activities of supporters of the PIRA in the U.S. have begun to show results. Mr. Michael Flannery, one of Noraid's three joint treasurers was arrested last October on charges of supplying \$16,000 to FBI undercover agents for the illegal purchase of weapons for the IRA. The charge followed the arrest in June 1981 of three Irish Americans on charges of purchasing weapons for the PIRA. Amongst the weapons seized in this operation were 15 M15 automatic weapons, a considerable amount of heavy calibre ammunition, a 20m.m. cannon and a flame thrower. This case is the latest of a number of instances where Noraid personnel were directly linked to gun running charges. The last major case was in 1977 when two Noraid officials, Denis Cahalane and Neil Byrne, were convicted of illegal exportation of arms and were sentenced to one year imprisonment.

(ii) The U.S. Immigration services in co-operation with the Canadian authorities have recently claimed that they have broken what is described as a smuggling ring which apparently arranged for IRA supporters and activists to enter the U.S. illegally from Canada. Irish citizens do not require a visa to enter Canada for a short visit and the immigration controls along the land frontier between the U.S. and Canada are not as effective as those at U.S. ports and airports. It came to the attention of both the Canadian and U.S. authorities that IRA supporters and activists who had been refused U.S. visas were taking direct flights from Paris or Amsterdam to Toronto and, with the aid of sympathisers who were resident in Canada were then entering the U.S. from Canada on forged documents.

(iii) On 21 January 1982 Mr. Owen Carron, and Mr. Danny Morrison together with two Canadian residents were arrested at Niagra Falls and were subsequently charged with possession of false documents while trying to enter the U.S. illegally. The purpose of their visit was to address the Annual Dinner of Noraid in New York and to counter the propaganda effects of Operation U.S.A. - the visit of a Unionist delegation to the

U.S. (D above) Mr. Carron and Mr. Morrison were remanded in custody until 29 January, when they were deported to Canada following an administrative hearing by the Immigration and Naturalisation Service. However they still have to face Criminal charges which carry a maximum sentence of five years imprisonment and a fine. A condition of the deportation was that they would agree to return to Buffalo, New York to face trial and that they each post a \$10,000 secured bond in Buffalo. Following his return to Ireland Mr. Carron has said that the U.S. Government will have to pay his travel and other expenses if it expects him to stand trial. The hearing has most recently been set for St. Patricks Day itself.

(iv) Two Irish residents and three Canadian residents were arrested while trying to slip into the U.S. at Niagara Falls on 8 February 1982. The U.S. authorities found what appeared to be a shopping list of weapons and \$8,000 to \$10,000 in Irish and U.S. currency. The Irish residents were identified as Desmond Ellis from Dublin and Edward Howell from Belfast.

Ellis has appeared before the Special Criminal Court on two charges under the Explosive Substance Act. Bail was set at £25,000 and he was due in court on 4 February 1982. Following his failure to appear a bench warrant was issued. Howell was deported from the U.S. to Canada and the Canadians subsequently provided an escort to deport him to this country. However he evaded this escort at Paris airport and has disappeared. Ellis is still in jail in Buffalo while awaiting trial on a variety of immigration offences. He has indicated that he intends to seek political asylum in the U.S..

(v) The U.S. authorities have arrested several members of the IRA or suspected members of the IRA who have been resident, illegally, for some time in the U.S. and have attempted through the Courts to have the people in question deported to Ireland or Britain. However in these cases the legal proceedings tend to be lengthy and complex with defence lawyers arguing either that the alleged offences are political or seeking to establish a legal right to remain in the US.

A case at present before a New York court is that of Michael O'Rourke, who while serving a six year sentence for possession of explosives, blasted his way out of a cell in the Special Criminal

Court in 1976. He was arrested in Philadelphia in November 1979 on charges of illegal entry. O'Rourke has sought political asylum and claimed eligibility to resident status on the grounds that he married a U.S. citizen in a common law ceremony in 1979. Further hearings in his case are expected this month.

Department of Foreign Affairs

March 1982

1) Owen Carron and Danny Morrison were arrested on 21 January 1982 while attempting to enter the U.S. from Canada. They were held in New York City for 24 hours and then released on \$10,000 bail. They were charged with attempting to smuggle weapons to the P.I.R.A. They are expected to appear in court in Buffalo, New York around 22 March.

2) Desmond Ellis and Howell, two Irish men, were arrested on 8 February 1982 while trying to enter the U.S. from Canada. A bench warrant had been issued in respect of Ellis for his failure to appear in the Special Criminal Court to face charges under the Explosive Substances Act. They had \$8,000 to \$10,000 in their possession and were charged with attempting to smuggle explosives to the U.S. from Canada. They were held in Buffalo, New York for 24 hours and then released on \$10,000 bail. They are expected to appear in court in Buffalo, New York around 22 March.

3) A case is present before New York court that of Michael O'Rourke, who was held out of the Special Criminal Court in 1976. He was arrested in Philadelphia in November 1979 on charges of illegal entry. O'Rourke has sought political asylum and claimed eligibility to resident status on the grounds that he married a U.S. citizen in a common law ceremony in 1979. Further hearings in his case are expected this month.