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Government Statement on alleged R.U.C. activities in this State

The Taoiseach, in the absence of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who is on an official visit to the Holy See, saw the British Ambassador this evening in relation to allegations of R.U.C. activities in this State.

On Thursday last, 29th March, a defendant in a murder case in Belfast, Constable John Robinson, a member of the R.U.C., stated that he and other members of the R.U.C. had been involved in a 'cover-up' of the existence of a special anti-terrorist group in Northern Ireland and also of the fact that members of the R.U.C. Special Branch had operated outside the jurisdiction of Northern Ireland, presumably in this State.

On learning of this statement on Friday last, the British Ambassador was called to the Department of Foreign Affairs and formally reminded that any action in our jurisdiction by security forces from any other State would be unacceptable to the Irish Government.

Following the announcement of the verdict in the trial of Constable Robinson, the allegation of a 'cover-up' was raised at a further meeting with the Ambassador in the Department of Foreign Affairs at which other aspects of the affair were also raised.

At his meeting with the British Ambassador this evening, the

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Taoiseach said that the Government viewed the allegation made by Constable Robinson that the R.U.C. had operated in this State with deep concern and as a very serious departure from normal rules of inter-State conduct, harmful to the spirit and the practice of security co-operation and damaging to Anglo-Irish relations.

The Ambassador conveyed the apologies of the British Government to the Taoiseach.

He said that it is, and will continue to be, R.U.C. policy, enshrined in explicit instructions, that members of the R.U.C. should not cross the Border while on duty. He said that the British Government is very concerned and regrets that these instructions should have apparently been violated.

The Ambassador added further that the question of possible criminal and/or disciplinary proceedings arises, and that that issue cannot be pre-judged until the necessary enquiries have been carried out.

The Taoiseach expressed the concern that the enquiries should be expeditiously carried out and that the Irish Government should be kept fully informed of developments in relation to them.

5th April, 1984.

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