

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



Reference Code:	2014/105/753
Creation Date(s):	5 April 1984
Extent and medium:	3 pages
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Access Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

C91
IMMEDIATE
5/4/84

TO LONDON FROM HQ
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM H LILLIS

CODED MESSAGE
DATE 5/4/84 1300
INITIALS LB

I MET THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT MY REQUEST AT 9.00 A.M. IN
IVEAGH HOUSE.

I RECALLED TO HIM THE RUC STATEMENT ISSUED FOLLOWING THE KILLING
OF GREW AND CARROLL ON 12 DECEMBER. I SAID IT WAS NOW CLEAR THAT
THE STATEMENT HAD BEEN A FABRICATION.

I RECALLED THAT ON 1 FEBRUARY 1983 MR PRIOR HAD TOLD THE MINISTER
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAT THERE WERE NO NEW INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED TO
SECURITY FORCES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. MR BARRY HAD RAISED A NUMBER
OF KILLINGS BY THE SECURITY FORCES IN NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1982
THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF WHICH CAUSED US GREAT CONCERN. IN RELATION
TO THE KILLING OF GREW AND CARROLL THE SECRETARY OF STATE HAD GIVEN
MR BARRY A RESUME OF THE FALSE RUC STATEMENT. I SAID THAT WE COULD
ONLY TAKE IT THAT MR PRIOR HAD BEEN DECEIVED BY THE RUC.

I NOTED THAT THE STATEMENT OF ROBINSON IN COURT REVEALED THE
EXISTENCE OF A SPECIAL UNIT, COMPRISING ELEMENTS OF THE BRITISH
ARMY, THE RUC SPECIAL BRANCH AND THE RUC ANTI-TERRORIST UNIT.
I NOTED THAT ROBINSON SAID THAT HIS TRAINING AT AN SAS BASE, IN
ENGLAND HAD BEEN BASED ON "FIREPOWER, SPEED AND AGGRESSION".

I SAID THAT I TOOK IT THAT ROBINSON'S REVELATION OF THE COVER UP
HAD BEEN INTENDED TO SAVE HIS OWN SKIN. THE AMBASSADOR AGREED.
I SAID THAT LORD McDERMOTT HAD FOUND ROBINSON'S STATEMENT TO BE
TRUE AND THE ORIGINAL COVER UP STATEMENT TO BE FALSE. I SAID THAT
ROBINSON STATED THAT FOUR OFFICERS OF THE RUC INCLUDING A
SUPERINTENDENT AND CHIEF CONSTABLE HAD TOLD HIM TO GO ALONG WITH
THE ORIGINAL FALSE STATEMENT OR OTHERWISE HE WOULD BE PROSECUTED
UNDER THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT. I SAID WE NOTED THAT CHIEF CONSTABLE
HERMAN HAD SENT A LETTER TO ROBINSON IN JULY STATING THAT THE
ATTORNEY GENERAL WOULD GIVE HIM IMMUNITY FROM PROSECUTION UNDER
THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT FOR ANY REVELATIONS THAT HE WOULD MAKE.
I SAID THAT ROBINSON HAD ALLEGED THAT THE OBJECT OF THE COVER UP
HAD BEEN TO CONCEAL TWO THINGS:

- (I) THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF THIS SPECIAL UNIT; AND
- (II) THE FACT THAT RUC SPECIAL BRANCH WERE OPERATING IN OUR
JURISDICTION.

I SAID THAT THE DPP COUNSEL WHEN INVITED DID NOT CHALLENGE ROBINSON'S ALLEGATIONS. THIS WAS SEEN AS HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT AND CONSTITUTING AN ADMISSION BY LEGAL OBSERVERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

I SAID THAT LORD MCDERMOTT'S DECISION IN THE ROBINSON CASE WAS NOT UNDERSTOOD HERE. I DID GIVE ONE EXAMPLE: SEVERAL OF THE SHOTS THAT KILLED SEAMUS GREW WERE FIRED FROM A DISTANCE OF 30-35 INCHES. ROBINSON HAD ALLEGED THAT HE FIRED BECAUSE HE FEARED THAT THE OCCUPANTS OF THE CAR WERE ARMED. THEY WERE NOT ARMED. I SAID THAT THE EVIDENCE WAS THAT GREW HAD EMPTIED HIS WEAPON, HAD RELOADED AND CONTINUED TO FIRE. HIS DECISION TO RELOAD AND CONTINUE TO FIRE IN THE FACE OF THE FACT THAT HIS FIRE HAD NOT BEEN RETURNED WAS NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE JUDGEMENT THAT HE WAS FIRING IN SELF-DEFENCE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

I SAID THAT THE FAILURE OF LORD MCDERMOTT TO REFER THE EVIDENCE WHICH HE HIMSELF SAID HE BELIEVED OF AN RUC COVER UP TO THE DPP WAS NOT UNDERSTOOD HERE. I SAID THAT HIS STATEMENT THAT THE EVIDENCE OR OTHERWISE OF THE COVER UP WAS NO BUSINESS OF HIS WAS SEEN HERE AS EXTRAORDINARY.

I SAID THAT THE STATEMENT OF LORD MCDERMOTT PRAISING THE 'MARKSMANSHIP' OF ROBINSON WAS IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES SEEN HERE AS GRATUITOUS AND PROVOCATIVE.

I TOLD THE AMBASSADOR WE HAD THREE REASONS FOR RECITING OF THESE FACTS:

1. WE SAW THE JUDICIAL DECISION, THE EVIDENCE OF THE COVER UP AND THE ROBINSON REVELATIONS AS BEING DAMAGING TO ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS.
2. WE SAW THE ALLEGATION OF AN RUC COVER UP AND IN PARTICULAR OF RUC SPECIAL BRANCH OPERATIONS IN THIS STATE AS BEING POTENTIALLY DAMAGING TO GARDA/RUC RELATIONS.
3. WE SAW THE JUDICIAL DECISION, THE NON REFERRAL OF THE EVIDENCE OF A COVER UP TO THE DPP, THE EVIDENCE OF THE COVER UP ITSELF, AS CREATING SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN RELATION TO THE SHANNON CASE WHERE THE DEFENCE, AS THE BRITISH KNEW, WAS A SERIOUS CRITIQUE OF THE WHOLE SYSTEM OF THE SECURITY AND ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

I TOLD THE AMBASSADOR I HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO ASK HIM TO CONSULT HIS AUTHORITIES AS A MATTER OF URGENCY AND TO CLARIFY THE SITUATION ABOUT THE ALLEGED COVER UP. I SPECIFICALLY ASKED ABOUT THE ALLEGED OPERATIONS OF NORTHERN IRELAND SECURITY FORCES IN THIS STATE. I SAID WE WANT CLARIFICATION OF THIS PARTICULAR POINT TODAY. MY INSTRUCTIONS WERE TO REPEAT TO HIM VERY EMPHATICALLY THE POINT I HAD MADE TO HIM ON FRIDAY MORNING LAST VIZ. THAT ANY ACTIVITY BY THE SECURITY FORCES OF ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN OUR JURISDICTION WAS UNACCEPTABLE.

I SAID WE BELIEVED IT WAS NECESSARY THAT THE QUESTION OF AN ALLEGED COVER UP, THE EVIDENCE OF WHICH HAD BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COURT SHOULD BE INVESTIGATED AND ACTED ON IMMEDIATELY AND WE WOULD LIKE TO BE TOLD WHAT WAS BEING DONE. I SAID THAT WE BELIEVED IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT THE NECESSITY TO ACT ON THE SECTARIAN MURDER CHARGES AGAINST MEMBERS OF THE UDR IN ARNAGH HAD BEEN INCREASED AND I ASKED FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRESENT STATE OF PLAY.

THE AMBASSADOR TOOK A CAREFUL NOTE OF ALL THESE REMARKS.

HE SAID BY WAY OF REPLY, THAT HE COULD TELL MR FORMALLY THAT THE ALLEGATIONS OF A COVER UP ARE BEING FULLY INVESTIGATED AND WE WILL BE GIVEN INFORMATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

HE THEN TOLD ME THE FOLLOWING IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY. HE ASKED ME TO CONFINE THE INFORMATION TO THE TAOISEACH AND THE MINISTERS UNTIL HE COULD GIVE ME THE INFORMATION FORMALLY. I ACCEPTED THAT CONDITION. HE SAID THAT HE HAD NO REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THE ALLEGATIONS MADE BY CONSTABLE ROBINSON WERE NOT TRUE. HE SAID THAT THE ACTIONS TAKEN WERE "CONTRARY TO THE POLICIES OF MY MINISTERS" SPEAKING IN THE SAME CAPACITY HE SAID "I CANNOT ACCEPT ANY CRITICISM OF THE JUDICIARY IN NORTHERN IRELAND."

I SAID TO HIM IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT HE HAD SAID IN A PERSONAL CAPACITY I WOULD NOW ADD ONE FORMAL REQUEST: THAT IF THE ALLEGATIONS OF OPERATIONS IN THIS STATE BY THE RUC SPECIAL BRANCH WERE TRUE, THE PERSONS RESPONSIBLE SHOULD BE AND BE SEEN TO BE PUNISHED. HE SAID THAT HE HOPED THAT HIS FORMAL INSTRUCTIONS THAT HE WOULD HOPE TO HAVE LATER IN THE DAY WOULD CONTAIN SUCH ASSURANCES.

WHEN YOU SEE ANDREW IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO GO BACK OVER ALL THE GROUND COVERED IN MY DEMARCHE.

YOU SHOULD BE AWARE - AND ANDREW CAN BE TOLD - THAT THE TAOISEACH HAS ASKED TO SEE GOODISON. HE WILL SEE HIM AT 6.00 PM.

PLEASE EMPHASISE TO ANDREW THE FORMAL REQUEST ADDED AT THE END OF MY INTERVIEW WITH GOODISON. FAILURE ON THEIR PART TO PROVIDE THE DESIRED ASSURANCES ABOUT DISCIPLINARY ACTION WOULD CREATE A VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM IN ANGLO-IRISH RELATIONS.

FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE STATEMENT WHICH THE TAOISEACH WILL MAKE AT 3.30 PM IN THE DAIL.

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WAS FORMALLY TOLD LAST FRIDAY, FOLLOWING PRESS REPORTS OF THE TRIAL OF CONSTABLE ROBINSON IN BELFAST, THAT ANY ACTION IN OUR JURISDICTION BY SECURITY FORCES FROM ANY OTHER STATE WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE TO OUR GOVERNMENT.

FOLLOWING THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE VERDICT THE ALLEGATION OF A 'COVER-UP' WAS RAISED WITH THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR AT A MEETING AT WHICH OTHER ASPECTS OF THE MATTER WERE ALSO RAISED. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THE ALLEGATIONS OF A 'COVER-UP' WERE BEING FULLY INVESTIGATED BY HIS AUTHORITIES AND THE RESULT OF THESE INVESTIGATIONS WOULD BE CONVEYED TO US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE WAS INFORMED THAT WE REQUIRED IMMEDIATE CLARIFICATION OF THIS MATTER.

CORRECTION IN PARA BEGINNING

I SAID THAT LORD McDERMOTT'S DECISION.....

IN 2ND LINE DELEVE 'DID GIVE' AND INSERT 'GAVE'

IN SAME PARA 6TH LINE 'GREW' SHOULD READ 'ROBINSON'