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IMMEDIATE

~~W. H. C. Bentley~~

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~~Attn: D. L. Lippin~~  
~~F. Murray, Jr.~~

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PAGES: 6

(7ex) Ant, London

DATE: 3/6/94

TO: EQ

FROM: BELFAST

FOR: Pat Hennessy

FROM: Sinead N. Coakley

COMMENTS:

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STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE, SIR JOHN ANNELEY

I join with the Secretary of State and the General Officer Commanding in extending my very deepest sympathy to the families of all those who have died. They have suffered a devastating and appalling loss and first and foremost this morning our thoughts and condolences are with them at this terrible time.

You will understand that, as Chief Constable, I naturally wish to refer personally to those members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, my friends and colleagues, who have so cruelly perished. I say this of them: they were no ordinary men. They were extraordinary men. Individually and collectively they gave brave, outstanding service to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, to this community of Northern Ireland and, by reason of their special jobs, to the nation as a whole. Like all officers in the Royal Ulster Constabulary they gave themselves far, far beyond the call of duty and it was in the course of performing that duty that they died so tragically.



Together these officers had contributed more than 246 years of service to policing. In the course of that service they made an enormous contribution to saving life, protecting the whole community, and serving the cause of peace. This community owes them such a huge, huge debt of gratitude. On behalf of the RUC I thank all those people who have expressed their condolences to the families and to the RUC. We are comforted by the fact that this tragedy has evoked such sympathy and support.

RUC Headquarters  
3 June 1994

## STATEMENT BY THE GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING NORTHERN IRELAND

I join with the Secretary of State and the Chief Constable in extending my very deepest sympathy to the families of all those who have died. They have suffered a devastating loss and first and foremost our thoughts must be with them this morning.

Of course I wish to express my admiration for the ability, courage, and the outstanding service that all those who died have given to the community in Northern Ireland. My own officers were their close colleagues, and not only have themselves made an enormous and important contribution to countering terrorism, but also have served with distinction in the Army throughout their careers in various parts of the world. They would all want us to be steadfast in our resolve to continue to support the RUC in the protection of our community here in Northern Ireland, and that we will do.

I would like also to thank the many people who have expressed their condolences to the families of my officers and to the Army, which gives us great strength.

PM/BOFS/18650

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND SIR PATRICK  
MAYHEW QC MP

This has been a dreadful and tragic event. A terrible accident which has left 29 people dead.

I first wish to express my deepest condolences to the families of those who have lost their lives. The individuals concerned were very dedicated people engaged in vital work in Northern Ireland. I also wish to express my gratitude for the very many messages of sympathy we have received. HM The Queen has sent the following message:-

I was deeply shocked to hear of the tragedy in Scotland in which so many died. My heartfelt sympathy goes to the families and comrades of the victims. They will indeed be grievously missed.

The Prime Minister has sent me a personal message in the following terms:-

The loss of so many outstanding and dedicated people in the helicopter tragedy yesterday evening is dreadful news. I would like, through you and Malcolm Rifkind, to express my sorrow and deep sympathy to their families. Their grief will be shared through Northern Ireland and Great Britain, and their loss will be heavily felt by all friends and colleagues.

These officers and officials from the RUC, the Army, the RAF, the Northern Ireland Office and other Departments were all, in their different ways, carrying out work of vital importance to Northern Ireland. As I know from meetings during my visits to the Province, they made light of the risks in their daily lives. Their skill and determination had helped to save many lives in Northern Ireland. They

SOFS/TAT/18653



should be remembered with pride as people who were working to make the community safer.

There can be no better memorial than for others to follow their example and to carry on their fine work, as I know they will.

The passengers on board the helicopter comprised 10 senior members of the RUC and 9 Army staff officers of various ranks engaged on counter-terrorism activities, together with 6 civilian security specialists working in the NIC. The 4 RAF crew members also tragically died. They were en route to a conference in Scotland concerned with the fight against terrorism throughout the United Kingdom. We shall not be releasing the names of all of those who died for reasons which I think will be obvious.

They were travelling in an RAF Chinook helicopter, an aircraft which has a long-established reputation as a safe and secure means of transport, widely used in Northern Ireland. The aircraft had recently undergone refurbishment and modernisation by Boeing. There is no evidence of sabotage. This use of a single helicopter represented no departure from standard practice. There will be three separate inquiries held into the accident. These will be undertaken by the AAIB (Air Accidents Investigation Branch) of the DTE, the Strathclyde Police and the RAF on behalf of the Ministry of Defence. We shall of course be considering carefully whether there are lessons to be learnt from this tragic accident.

I have already referred to the grievous loss this accident has inflicted on the families. It has also been a severe blow to our efforts to combat terrorism but the operational effects will certainly be overcome: the work of these fine people will continue as they would have wished and indeed is continuing even now.

SOPS/TXT/18653