

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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Secure Fax: 276

20 March 1997

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To: HQ
For: E McKee

From: Belfast
From: J Hackett

INCIDENT REPORT UPDATE

The British side have been provided with further details of two incidents recorded in this morning's Duty Officer's report.

Background

Aghagallon

2. The police have advised that a joint Army/police patrol carrying out a "rummage search" close to the Derryhirk Inn, near Lurgan yesterday (19 March) uncovered the following items: 3 loaded AKM rifles, 4 magazines (3 attached to the rifles), and 120 x .76 live rounds. The weapons are reported to be in good condition. The find was located in a field, 500 metres off Whitehall Road, beneath a tree lying on a hessian sack, partly covered with grass.

3. You will recall that on Friday 14 March, police fired a number of warning shots at persons acting suspiciously outside the Derryhirk Inn public house at Aghagallon, Lurgan. There were no reports of injuries. On Saturday 15 March, while the police were following up the shooting incident they were attacked by a hostile crowd in Kilwilkie Estate, and a soldier fired one baton round as the police were attacked. As a result one man was taken to hospital with a leg injury.

4. I understand that searches of the area have been ongoing since Friday night and witnesses have been interviewed in connection with the suspicious activity outside the Derryhirk Inn. I further understand that the investigation of the shooting incident is being supervised by the Independent Commission for Police Complaints.

5. The find of the AKM rifles and ammunition is a significant success for the security forces.

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Derrylin

6. On Tuesday 18 March, a telephone call was received by a journalist from a male caller purporting to represent the "Fermanagh IRA". He used an unrecognised code-word and stated that there were 2 devices in Derrylin. The area was immediately placed out of bounds and an overflight was arranged on Wednesday 19 March. The security forces located 2 x MK16 mortars, lodged in a hedge, near to a public amenity site close to St Aiden's High School, which had been evacuated.

7. The police have now advised that the mortars, cleared by ATO, were fully primed and ready to use with warheads and possibly semtex. Firing packs were also located some 15 metres from the mortars.

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