

no longer

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

cc PS/S of S (B & L) M
 PS/PUS (B & L) M
 PS/Mr Bloomfield
 Mr Brennan M
 Mr Stephens
 Mr Norris M
 Mr Buxton
 Mr Ferneyhough
 Mr Merifield
 Mr Gilliland
 Mr Bell
 Mr Reeve
 Mr Lyon M

20/1/84.
RA Prisons



Bertha pl. find out:

- ①. Wife & children's names
- ②. Address
- ③. Funeral details

Mrs

AP. 18/2.

PS/MR SCOTT (B & L) (MUFAX)

63
 Mr G Hewitt
 Mr Jackson
 Mr Kerr
 Mr D McNeill
 Mr Ginn
 Mr Cornick
 Mr Bickham M
 Mr Carlisle M

PRISONS: MURDER OF PRINCIPAL PRISON OFFICER PATRICK KERR

As the Minister already knows Principal Prison Officer Patrick Kerr of HMP Maze was murdered by 2 gunmen yesterday morning in the presence of 2 of his 3 young children as they came from Mass in Armagh Cathedral.

Mr Kerr had been Acting Chief Officer in the H Blocks and was well known to both prisoners and staff for his thoroughly professional attitude to his job and his resistance to threats or intimidation. Mr Kerr had been the subject of both intimidation and specific threats to his life from PIRA over a number of years.

In view of the cynical and inaccurate statement made by PIRA after the shooting we issued an immediate press statement in rebuttal (copy annexed).

It is too early to be certain about the real reason for this shooting but it is likely that it relates to the present control difficulties at Maze.

The Department's welfare officers are in touch with Mrs Kerr and she has been visited both by the Governor of Maze and by Mr Hilditch and Mr Murtagh from HQ.

I will keep the Minister informed of further developments including the funeral arrangements.

B D PALMER

18 February 1985



declassified

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

STATEMENT ISSUED BY NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE FOLLOWING MURDER
OF MR PATRICK KERR ON 17 FEBRUARY 1985

The Northern Ireland Office unreservedly condemns the murder of Mr Patrick Kerr the Principal Prison Officer shot in front of his children as they were leaving church in Armagh this morning. Mr Kerr, a courageous and thoroughly professional prison officer, had been awarded the BEM for his distinguished service and exemplary conduct.

The IRA's cynical statement seeking to justify this despicable and callous murder and to discredit a fine Prison Officer who sought only to do his duty in accordance with the law is both contemptible and totally without foundation.

17.2.85