

C O N F I D E N T I A L

COPY

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FROM: NIGEL HAMILTON
US CENT SEC
DATE: 13 JUNE 1991

cc: PS/Mr Fell - B

Mr Ledlie - B

THE COAGH KILLINGS

1. In the last 24 hours - and totally unsolicited by CCRU - we have had feedback from a member of our own staff and a member of the Council staff who live in East Tyrone. The worrying feature commented on by both these contacts concerns the attitudes of the Police and the Army in the days that have followed the Coagh killings.
2. These are reported to us as being extremely triumphalist in nature, particularly in the relationships which the Police and the Army have with the young men in the district. It was suggested to us that the attitudes of the security forces in the past week have done more to strengthen the hand of PIRA than the killings themselves. It is recognised throughout both communities that several of those killed were known to be hard-line Republicans and involved with terrorism. To that extent, it was not surprising to the local community that they were intercepted in that way.

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3. I think this reinforces the comments made at our meeting earlier today about the need to identify the issues, to consider attitudes etc before we come up with practical proposals for the way ahead. I am sorry that this note is not more positive in nature but I think it does illustrate the type of problem which we must, in the long run, seek to address.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops that resemble the letters 'M' and 'A'.

NIGEL HAMILTON
CENTRAL SECRETARIAT
S/C 3248

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