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SIR JOHN HERMON, O.B.E., Q.P.M.
CHIEF CONSTABLE

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Your ref: KS 17801

13 December 1988

Our ref: COMM SEC 7/7(4450)

Dear Sir,

MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN RUC TRAINING

I note with considerable disappointment the decision communicated in your letter of 28 November 1988.

Whilst I appreciate fully that no other Force, apart from the Metropolitan Police Diplomatic Protection Group, has sought training from the SAS, I would point out that no other Force, including the Diplomatic Protection Group, faces the situation pertaining in Northern Ireland over the past 21 years. Those under protection in London or elsewhere, and their protectors, do not face the continuing threat of murder by bomb or bullet which confronts us here.

In the current climate of increasing terrorist attacks and especially murder attempts surely it is imperative that we are well prepared and have received the best training available. I respectfully suggest that the SAS are the experts in this field and that no other Force in the United Kingdom or elsewhere could provide adequate training for the Royal Ulster Constabulary. That the training is for purely defensive life saving purposes must surely remove the apparent political sensitivity which exists despite the reassurances of my letter of 11 November 1988.

That there is apparently no such sensitivity over the training of the DPG seemingly places the protected and protectors in Northern Ireland in some unstated but lesser category. Unless it is solely that the RUC enjoy a lesser degree of trust or status than that of the Metropolitan Police.

In the absence of a reconsideration of my request I think it better that we provide our own training in this as in many other fields and where Mainland Forces turn to us for guidance and advice.

Yours sincerely,

John Hermon

Chief Constable

The Rt Hon Ian Stewart MP
Minister of State
Northern Ireland Office
Stormont Castle
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Minister of State

Sir Jonn Hermon OBE QPM
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cc Mr ~~Shannon~~
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HEAD OF DIVISION
3662 NOV 1988
FBI-NIO BELFAST

28 November 1988

UNDER SECRETARY (SECURITY)
S190
20 NOV 1988
NIO BELFAST

Dear Jack,

MILITARY ASSISTANCE IN RUC TRAINING

Thank you for your letter of 11 November about training for members of your 'E' Department Mobile Support Unit which we discussed recently.

I do, of course, understand the reasons why you wanted to provide your force with the best possible training but as you are already aware I was unable to agree to the proposed attendance at Hereford. Apart from the Diplomatic Protection Group of the Metropolitan Police, no other force has turned to the SAS for courses of this kind and I hope you will understand why, in current circumstances, I should prefer the RUC to continue to look elsewhere for their training needs.

You will I am sure be aware that it was necessary for me to thoroughly investigate this request with the MOD and Home Office and I am sorry that these considerations took longer than expected. In particular the Home Office concluded that with training of a high standard already available in both VIP protection and intervention techniques from a number of mainland forces a special case should not be adopted for the RUC. As I told you however, my officials

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stand ready to provide advice about other courses which are available.

I am sorry not to be able to give you a more favourable response under current circumstances.

Yours sincerely

Ian Stewart

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