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From: Lieutenant-General Sir Desmond Fitzpatrick, KCB, DSO, MBE, MC

LISBURN
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DPO TO SEE 359.

HEADQUARTERS
NORTHERN IRELAND COMMAND,
LISBURN,
CO. ANTRIM.

SECRET

124/2/G

26th April 1966

Lieutenant-General Sir Geoffrey Baker,
KCB, CMG, CBE, MC
Vice Chief of the General Staff
The Ministry of Defence
Whitehall Building
Whitehall, London S.W.1

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My dear George,

As you will have noticed in the papers last weekend passed off in Belfast without incident but the same cannot be said of Dublin! The opinion here is that the lack of serious trouble in Northern Ireland during the past fortnight is attributable to the energetic security measures taken by police and military both sides of the border. It is believed that IRA plans were totally disrupted and that any IRA action in Northern Ireland will be postponed for the time being. On the other hand there is no indication that the IRA leaders have permanently cancelled their plans for action in the North of Ireland, but rather that they will await a more propitious opportunity when it seems to them that security measures have been sufficiently relaxed. Incidentally some highly inflammatory and seditious speeches were delivered during the period.

Chief credit for the comparatively satisfactory situation at the moment must go to the Royal Ulster Constabulary. At the same time I have not the slightest doubt that the known presence of troops in Northern Ireland did much to deter IRA action. I have been shown an interesting report by Brigadier Magan (MI 5) which he wrote after spending the weekend 15th/18th April in Belfast, and I enclose a copy for your information.

Ministers and officials here are extremely appreciative of all that the Army has done to help and I very much hope that you in the Ministry of Defence do not feel that we cried wolf. I myself believe that it was a model "operation" insomuch as that the information was available and that the precautions which were taken proved to be effective. Again, thank you very much for your interest and support.

your ever

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Desmond

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