

**CONFIDENTIAL**

29

POL.F.281-25/C4/FJS

8 April 1969

Dear Sir,

Sabotage of E.B.N.I. Sub Station at  
Castlereagh

The evidence at the time of my visit on the 2nd April indicated that the charges used in this attack were of the nitro-glycerine group and Dr. Martin informed me that the two most common explosives in Northern Ireland were Polar ammon gelignite and plaster gelatine. The following paragraphs are written on the assumption that polar ammon gelignite was used for the attack.

2. There were clear indications in the wreckage that explosions had occurred at six places:

- (a) in the control mechanism boxes of No.1 and No.2 transformers;
- (b) in the neutral earthing bushing on the earthing transformers associated with No.1 and No.2 transformers;
- (c) on the concrete plinths of two of the steel lattice cable support structures of No.1 transformer.

3. There were no other indications of explosions but it was impossible to inspect under the collapsed cooling bank of No.2 transformer. I think the collapse was due to heat and not to an explosion but that cannot be decided finally until the wreckage is cleared.

4. The charges placed in the control mechanism boxes appear to have been about 15 lbs. each. E.B.N.I. engineers said that the loss of the boxes without any associated damage would not have been disastrous.

/5. The charges ...

Inspector General,  
Royal Ulster Constabulary.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

© Crown Copyright

cu/kmp  
B. 4. 69

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 2 -

5. The charges placed on the earthing transformers appear to have been about 8 lbs. E.S.W.I. engineers said that the loss of the transformers alone which were separated from the main transformers by brick walls would have been serious but not disastrous.

6. The charges on the plinths of the cable support structures appear to have been about 2 lbs. each. These charges by themselves would probably have caused very little real damage.

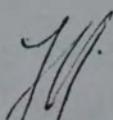
7. There were several excellent positions for charges on the transformers themselves. These positions were easily visible and accessible and it is difficult to understand why they were not used. It is possible that the running temperature of the transformer cases which is quite high, deterred the saboteurs.

8. Most of the damage at the sub station was caused by fire fed by about 23000 gallons of oil in each transformer. The cooling bank of No.1 transformer was pierced in several places almost certainly by fragments from the control mechanism box. The transformer case and the oil header tank of No.2 transformer were pierced again almost certainly by fragments from the control mechanism box. Destruction was therefore a consequence of the explosions rather than a direct result.

9. I was unable to discover the cause of ignition. The flash and heat of the explosions appear unlikely causes. Electrical causes seem more likely; the fragments which penetrated the case of No.2 transformer may well have reached the core.

10. The sabotage could have been carried out by one man with difficulty but on the basis of what I saw at the site a small team is more probable. The saboteurs need not have had any knowledge of transformer sub stations to carry out the attack but they were sufficiently skilled in the use of explosives to make up a multiple charge and detonate it successfully. They used about 18ft. of safety fuse as a time delay. As this would give them 90 minutes delay, they were confident of their ability to leave the area undetected.

Yours faithfully,

  
for Director General

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~