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N.F. 8/8/3

SECRET

Secretary
1/2 like to discuss
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+ Security Files.

Assistant Secretary, *W* Lillis, *12/2/85*

1. Mr. Alan Roy of the US Embassy called to the Department today having requested a briefing on our impressions of the Provisional Sinn Fein Ard Fheis in November, 1984. You will recall that in making this appointment, Roy claimed that his call arose from an offer we had given to provide a briefing on the Provisional Ard Fheis at a recent lunch attended by the Secretary, Ambassador Kane, Mr. Jack Boyle and yourself. As instructed, I was prepared to discuss our general impressions of the November 1984 meeting and our attitude to more recent developments.

2. Mr. Roy began by stating that he wished to discuss a problem relating to confidential matters which concerned our two governments of which I might or might not be aware. He went on to say that there was no CIA "station" in Dublin and that his Embassy had consistently opposed the establishment of such an operation here. The Embassy was coming under increasing pressure from Washington to provide information about links between the Provisionals and terrorist groups elsewhere. This pressure reflected a heightened US interest in such links following recent terrorist attacks which provided evidence of coordination between different groups particularly in Europe. The problem he wished to raise with us was that information which they hitherto had obtained from Garda sources had not been forthcoming in recent months. Mr Roy claimed that the previous US military Attache, Colonel Dave Thompson had, after Provisional Sinn Fein Ard Fheiseanna from 1981 to 1983, received a

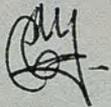
briefing from Garda sources on attendance by foreign observers. According to Roy some "interesting" personalities had turned up at these meetings including people from the Basque ETA organisation. After the last Ard Fheis however, the present Attache, Colonel Finstrom had not succeeded in obtaining the same account of information from the Garda sources. He had initially requested such information and had been promised a report. After some delay, according to Roy, he was eventually supplied with some listing of overseas visitors to the Ard Fheis, but the quality of this information apparently did not match that which had been provided in previous years. The Garda sources on this occasion, told Finstrom that they could not divulge the results of their contact with other police forces about some of the personalities who had turned up at the Ard Fheis. Roy said that Finstrom did not feel that this was a very fair response particularly as he had given the Garda some "good information" over the preceeding months. In effect, Finstrom felt that there was not an adequate quid pro quo.

3. Roy stated that his authorities felt that they had a legitimate interest in seeking such information on world wide terrorist links and instanced in support of this the various court cases relating to gun running in the US as well as evidence of Provisional IRA international contacts such as:
 - The sending of a wreath by the Provisionals to the funeral of German terrorist Ulriche Meinhoff.
 - The use of dead hungerstriker Patsy O'Hara's name in a recent terrorist attack.
 - Robert Fisk's account in one of his books of Provisionals being trained/present in Beirut.

- His own (Roy's) experience of being debriefed on the Libyan situation where he had become aware that Provisionals were being trained there until at least 1978.
 - Stating that the US authorities had "a definable need to know" in the present case, Roy said that the briefing they had previously obtained from Garda sources had also included a "general readout" on what went on in the private session at the Provisional Ard Fheiseanna. They had the impression that a Garda officer who had been actually at the private sessions was involved in these briefings.
5. Mr. Roy emphasised several times that it may be that the briefing provided by Garda sources was not the best way for them to obtain such information. In practice their defence Attache had contacts with Army intelligence and Garda sources. But if we wish them to go about things in a different way, through a more appropriate channel, they would be happy to do so. Information obtained by the military Attache was given to himself (Roy) and he analysed it before reporting to Washington and other interested US posts (Belfast, London, etc.). Mr. Roy stressed that the problem he had raised did not arise from any personality differences and that Finstrom and himself had recently had dinner with Steven Fanning. They had not discussed their difficulty with him, said Roy, nor had they approached their Garda sources about the problem. From the US point of view they would be happy to obtain information they needed through an Embassy/Department of Foreign Affairs channel if this suited us.
6. Mr. Roy said that he wished to raise a specific instance of visitors to this country on whom they wished to obtain any information we might have. He referred to the delegation from the American-Indian movement visiting Ireland and said that as far as the FBI, the US Agency

responsible for internal security, was concerned this organisation was a "quasi terrorist movement". The leader of the current delegation Russell Meanes had been an accessory to a shoot out with US Marshals and had served a term of imprisonment. The FBI man in London had been on to the Embassy here seeking information about the visitors. The American-Indian movement in the US had utilised some "interesting weaponry" in some of their activities and Roy tentatively speculated that their apparently developing links with the Provisionals might have something to do with the latter's desire for American sources of guns. His authorities would like to have a full list of the American-Indian movement delegation and as full an account as possible of their activities while here. (I remarked that much of their visit had been focussed on Northern Ireland).

7. In response to all of this I told Roy that operational security matters were not a matter for this Department and that I would have to consult my authorities before giving any response on the matters that he had raised.



Colm O Floinn

7.2.1985.

c.c. PSS - for info.

Mr. B. Davenport

Mr. J. Kirby, Department of Justice.