

E.R.

CONFIDENTIAL  
COVERING SECRET

Murphy

14

- 1. Mr Buxton
- 2. Mr D A Hill,

*Row 13.9.*

PWJB 5892 Z cb: 1  
SIL (M)  
13 SEP 1985  
N.I.O. BELFAST

- Mr Stephens
- Mr Chesterton (M)
- Mr Bell (M)
- Mr Blackwell o/r
- Mr Radcliffe

MR KING'S MEETING WITH MR BARRY

- 1. As requested, I attach briefing on the following issues:  
A1 - cross-border security co-operation;  
A2 - Lacky Bridge; and  
A3 - Border incursions

2. As regards brief A4 (shooting incident on CIE bus), Mr Maccabe has spoken to Mr D A Hill and explained that he has nothing to add to his minute of 6 September.

3. It is just possible that brief A1 may require some amendment in the light of yesterday's meeting of Chief Superintendents; if so we will feed that in as soon as possible.

*David Hill*

D J R HILL  
Law and Order Division

13 September 1985

HEAD OF DIVISION  
2591 13 SEP 1985  
POB-NIO BELFAST

*Mr Mr King see 19/7 (?)*  
*Mr [unclear] 17/9*

*Jim:*  
*File subby, J.*

ENC

*Return to MRK*

*C.*

HL

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## CROSS-BORDER SECURITY CO-OPERATION

Points to Make

1. Pleased to hear of recent meeting between RUC and Garda Chief Superintendents. Hope this will again become a regular feature of co-operation between the two professional police forces. I also want to see closer contacts at Headquarters level.
2. I have noted the useful work on Home-Made Explosives being done by the NIO/Department of Justice. I look forward to a positive outcome.
3. I would value a meeting with Mr Noonan (Irish Minister for Justice) to see what we can jointly do to encourage and sustain co-operation between our respective security forces, and to discuss whether there are any other steps which could be taken to defeat the common enemy - terrorism.

Background

1. Cross-border security co-operation is vital to the eradication of terrorism and at operational level it remains very close and effective. Co-ordination and contact at Headquarters and operational commander level, however, is less good than it should be.
2. This is particularly <sup>worrying</sup> ~~significant~~ as the main hope for countering cross-border terrorism (an increasingly significant aspect of the terrorist campaign as a whole) lies in better co-ordination of the intelligence effort on either side of the border (ie between the Special Branches at Headquarters, Regional and Divisional level). Better communications and surveillance equipment for the Garda would also help, as would the deployment of more appropriately-trained Garda officers to the border area; but the Irish might well be unable to afford much in that line.
3. Meetings between RUC and Garda Superintendents from the border area were once regular but have been intermittent for some time; a meeting between Border Chief Superintendents (Divisional Commanders) took place in Dublin on 12 September - the first <sup>since late in 1982;</sup> ~~for some time~~; there have been occasional meetings between senior Headquarters officers on specific issues but there have been no meetings between the

Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner and no formal HQ-level discussions of cross-border security issues for ~~over~~<sup>nearly</sup> three years.

4. In these circumstances we have been seeking to move forward on three fronts by

- (a) encouraging RUC/Garda contact where possible (The DOJ has been assisting this)
- (b) maintaining official-level contacts between the NIO and DOJ. (One useful result has been the sponsoring of a joint programme of research on both sides of the border into ways of inhibiting the terrorists' ability to manufacture Home-Made Explosive from fertilisers); and
- (c) seeking a meeting between the Secretary of State and the Irish Minister for Justice.

5. Naturally we would expect any general agreement arising from the Anglo-Irish discussions to lead to an improvement in cross-border security co-operation, with new opportunities for communication and a removal of the political inhibitions about co-operation which undoubtedly affect some Garda (particularly those outside Headquarters.)

6. Two recent murders in the Republic may have helped to bring home to the Irish the need to co-operate with us against terrorism. Seamus McAvoy, a Co Tyrone building contractor who had worked on a number of security forces bases, was murdered in Dublin by PIRA on 20 August. The Garda arrested two men on 11 September. On 9 September INLA murdered James Burnett for allegedly giving information to the Garda. His body was found north of the border but he is believed to have been killed just outside Dundalk.

~~D J R HILL~~

Law and Order Division

13 September 1985

## LACKY BRIDGE

Line to Take (Defensive)

We remain willing to consider rebuilding the bridge and reopening it to vehicular traffic. But the RUC have as yet had no response from the Garda to their proposals for securing the far bank so that our PVCP could safely be moved forward.

Background

1. Under local political pressure and in line with their general opposition to the closure of border roads the Irish Government has been pressing for this bridge to be rebuilt and reopened to vehicular traffic. Mr Barry and Dr Fitzgerald have both publicly offered to take additional security measures on the Southern side if that would allow the bridge to be rebuilt.
2. There is a large and active PIRA ASU based in the Donagh/Clones area on the Republic's side of the bridge which has shown itself capable of attacking targets in the SE Fermanagh area including:
  - (a) security force personnel, using landmines, small arms and the new PIRA projection grenade;
  - (b) security force bases, using mortars; and
  - (c) soft targets living in the area (off-duty security force personnel or pro-Union politicians: there are 600 "soft targets" in the Lisnaskea Sub-Division alone).
3. Lacky Bridge is on the direct route from Clones to Rosslea (where there is an RUC Station). Because of the topography (high ground to the south) it was not deemed possible to control the crossing with a PVCP so the bridge was partially destroyed in the summer of 1980. This was welcomed by the mainly Protestant community north of the bridge. The bridge remained passable for pedestrians (though somewhat dangerous, eg in bad weather, until the NIO installed a new footbridge with handrails earlier this year) and as there remained a possibility that weapons, explosives or personnel could be transhipped a PVCP/Observation Post was set up some distance back from the bridge to monitor movements across it. This directly controls one of the two routes away from the bridge on the northern side.

4. If the bridge were rebuilt the PVCP would need to be moved forward to control both routes, but that would leave it exposed to attack from the southern side of the bridge. (The existing PVCP/OP has been fired on once this year already). The security forces would be content to contemplate moving the PVCP if the Irish authorities would agree to set up a Garda PVCP with armed (ie Irish Army) top cover on the southern side.

5. The Garda have not responded to the RUC proposals, either to agree them or to propose alternative measures.

6. The Irish are the demandeurs and must face up to the implications of what they are asking. We have offered to rebuild the bridge, resite the PVCP and deploy a policeman to it (to facilitate contact with the Irish PVCP) but they must first undertake to fulfil the necessary security requirements. The discussions are very properly going on between the two police forces though we have ensured that the DFA and Department of Justice know what has been proposed. The Irish have asserted that the local RUC don't want the bridge reopened; this is probably true but it doesn't invalidate our commitment to rebuild the bridge if the Irish can meet the necessary conditions, or to consider alternative Garda proposals. It does underline, however, the need for the discussion to be conducted at headquarters level.

## BORDER INCURSIONS

Points to Make

The security forces are clearly instructed not to cross the border on operational duties. We take a very serious view of any deliberate incursions. But the security forces must operate close to the border. Inevitably members may mistakenly cross the border, particularly where it is ill-defined. The same is true for members of the Irish security forces.

Formal protests about accidental incursions are seen by many in Northern Ireland as intended to inhibit operations and put lives at risk. Both Governments should avoid drawing attention to accidental incursions in either direction.

Background

Attached are statistics on the numbers of border incursions in the first eight months of this year. Our security forces have made 23 accidental incursions into the Irish Republic and the Irish have made 7 into Northern Ireland. On 9 other occasions, where the Irish alleged our security forces had crossed into the Republic, subsequent investigations showed this was not so and the incursion was denied.

Incursions are almost inevitable when soldiers and policemen are operating very close to an ill-defined frontier in difficult and dangerous circumstances. Although we do not formally protest about Irish incursions, they frequently make formal (and sometimes strident) complaints about even very minor incursions and alleged incursions, by our security forces.

In normal circumstances such protests would be of only minor importance, and official apologies by HM Government would be sufficient to satisfy the Irish Government. However, in Northern Ireland our security forces have to operate close to the border. In many areas members of the protestant population, and particularly members of the security forces, who live very close to the border are at risk.

There is therefore a constant worry on the part of the protestant population as a whole - who see the terrorist campaign along the border as being a planned campaign of genocide - that the operations of our security forces might be inhibited in some way as a result of these criticisms. Indeed, it has been mischievously suggested on occasions that such criticisms are intended to inhibit the operations of our security forces and thus facilitate terrorist activities across the border.

It is clearly in the interests of both governments to reassure those living in border areas that the Irish Government are as concerned as our own to inhibit and prevent terrorist operations and thereby protect their lives. A more moderate approach by the Irish Government to border incursions may go some way to achieving this.

BORDER INCURSIONS

	BRITISH	IRISH
JAN	2	-
FEB	1	1
MAR	2	-
APR	3	-
MAY	6	1
JUN	1	1
JULY	4	4
AUG	4	-
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TOTALS	23	7
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