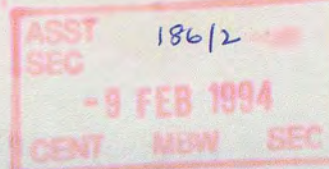


1: B R D WHITE
DIRECTOR OF REGIMES
8 FEBRUARY 1994



cc: PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L)-B
PS/PUS (B&L)-B
PS/Mr Fell-B
Mr Legge-B
Mr Thomas-B
Mr Bell-B
Mr Lyon-B
Mr Shannon
Mr Steele-B
Mr Watkins-B
Mr Wood (B&L)-B
Mr Daniell-B
Mr Leach-B
Mr Maccabe-B
Mr Marsh-B
Dr Power
Miss McGowan
Mr Treharne

Mr J Stephens-B

PAUL HILL - APPEAL HEARING

In response to your note of 7 February I attach a draft briefing note for No 10.

2. I am liaising with other interested Divisions about the handling of the case and will submit further advice.

(signed)

B R D WHITE

DEPT FOR PS/SECRETARY OF STATE

Roderick Lyne Esq
Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1A 2AA

PAUL HILL (ONE OF THE GUILFORD FOUR)

You asked for some briefing about this case. Paul Hill is now married to Courtney Kennedy, a daughter of the late Robert Kennedy.

2. Hill was committed to custody in England in connection with the Guilford pub bombings on 19 March 1975. He was temporarily transferred to Northern Ireland the following April and sentenced on 26 June 1975 to life imprisonment for the murder of ex-soldier Brian Shaw on 2 July 1974 in Belfast. He also received 4 years for intimidation. On 26 June 1975 he was returned to England to await trial on the Guilford charges and was sentenced there on 22 October 1975.

3. Hill's sentence in the Guilford bombing case was quashed on 19 October 1989 on which date he was transferred to prison in Northern Ireland. He was released on bail the following day.

4. When the hearing of Hil's appeal against conviction of the Belfast murder was thought to be imminent 4 years ago the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, in consultation with

Brian Hutton, the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, decided that in the event of Hill's appeal being unsuccessful, he would not be returned to prison to continue serving his life sentence. Instead he would be released on licence. It was considered that he had already served a term of imprisonment which under the release policy in Northern Ireland would have been appropriate for his peripheral role in the murder. He was neither the planner nor the gunman.

5. Because Hill was on bail, a licence could not lawfully be signed by the Secretary of State. However Hill was told by letter on 19 January 1990, through his solicitors, that if his appeal were unsuccessful, the necessary documentation to release him on licence would be completed at once. There was no response from Hill or his solicitors. The hearing of the appeal has been delayed by the investigation into the conduct of the Surrey police who first arrested him.

6. If Hill's appeal is successful he will leave the court as a free man. If not, we will arrange to have a licence, signed by the Secretary of State, releasing him from the life sentence handed to him on the court premises so that he is not returned to prison.

7. The case will undoubtedly attract media attention particularly because of the Kennedy connection. We are therefore taking steps to ensure that it is handled with the utmost sensitivity.