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Statement of Mr James Gibbons, T.D., Minister for  
Agriculture & Fisheries, made to Chief Superintendent  
Patrick Malone on 18 May 1970.

At Mr Blaney's request, I met Captain Kelly twice or three times, probably only twice, about his proposed resignation from the Army. I had certain suspicions about Captain Kelly's activities from Colonel Hefferon, Director of Intelligence, and Kelly had told me himself that he felt a moral commitment to the people of the North of Ireland. I asked Charles Haughey to see whether some job could be found for him in the Government service with equivalent pay. I thought it better that he leave the Army without any feeling of being got rid of since he was party to a great deal of secret information. I also suspected him strongly. I also suspected Charles Haughey and Neil Blaney. These suspicions arose from information supplied to me by Colonel Hefferon, though this information was undefined. Shortly after St. Patrick's Day, Charles Haughey suggested to me that a job could be found for Kelly as a Pig Smuggling Prevention Officer. I later discovered that the job fell under the Department of Agriculture, and Neil Blaney was not very enthusiastic about getting Kelly into it. About this time (early April), I asked Charles Haughey if he knew anything about a gun project and he said he didn't, that his views on this were the same as mine and that any action would have to be taken by the Government collectively. Colonel Hefferon retired on the 1st April and was replaced by Colonel Delaney. The Department of Defence was rung on the 17th April 1970 from Dublin Airport about a consignment of arms for the Irish Army. On Monday, 20th April 1970,

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I spoke to Colonel Delaney and asked him to prepare a report for the Taoiseach. I spoke to Colonel Delaney on the 22nd April 1970. He now had some considerable detail. On the 23 April 1970, I met Mr Blaney in his office at his request, and Colonel Hefferon and Captain Kelly were present. There was some conversation about the breakdown of the gun project and the means by which the situation could best be handled. On the 24th April 1970, I submitted Colonel Delaney's report and my own to the Taoiseach. On the 1st May or the last day of April Captain Kelly submitted his resignation, and I sent for him and asked him had he any remarks to make and he said no, so I signed his resignation. At some stage, probably early April, I recall a conversation with Neil Blaney, generally on the subject of gun running, and he asked me if I knew that the Minister for Defence could authorise the Customs free importation of arms and if there were any circumstances in which I would consider issuing this authority. I told him I would not consider it under any circumstances. Queries were hypothetical. (I knew from the Minister for Justice that the Department had Captain Kelly under surveillance). He was also worried about our "colleagues" and he mentioned his intention of having a chat with the Taoiseach. This would be some time in early April. Army Intelligence were very dissatisfied with Captain Kelly's performance and failure to report over long periods.

Signed: James Gibbons

Witness: P. Malone, C/Supt.

Dated at Government Buildings on 18 May 1970.