



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2018/28/2806
<b>Creation Dates:</b>	5 September 1988
<b>Extent and medium:</b>	2 pages
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs
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Gibraltar Inquest

David Donoghue rang from London.

Further to British media stories today that the SAS soldiers involved in the shootings will appear, there has been briefing on the nature of the evidence they will give which should be reflected in further stories tonight and tomorrow. The four main elements seem to be:

- the three IRA members were inadvertently alerted by a local policeman;
- they could not be apprehended downtown (why?);
- the shootings were spontaneous, not premeditated;
- challenges were made.

Declan O'Donovan

5 September 1988

cc'd: *James O'Keefe (fax)*

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Gibraltar Inquest

cc: PSM  
Attorney General  
Mr. Russell  
PSS  
Mr. Gallagher

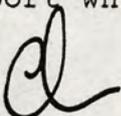
Donagh McDonagh rang shortly before 1pm. The contacts we gave him in the Coroner's office (Kirk and Fortunato) have been very helpful. He and Deputy Andrews will be given court passes to facilitate access to the inquest. He has met Paddy McGrory, a Belfast barrister with McGrory, Duncan O'Neill, and McGrory's local helping solicitor, Christopher Finch. He has raised the question of a courtesy meeting with the Coroner and he expects that will be arranged.

The forecast for duration of the inquest is still six weeks. There are 65 witnesses, 15 of them military (not necessarily the men involved in the shootings - their appearance is still not certain).

Four stenographers have been assigned to the case; their record will probably be made available to him. Channel 4 has also hired stenographers to keep a full record for the purpose of a film.

Security in Gibraltar is intense. So is the media presence on the Rock and in La Linea. When he called to a taxi firm, his name was recognised and a woman immediately told him that if a bomb had gone off her daughter would have been killed on 6 March. He has seen a letter in the Gibraltar Chronicle noting his appointment as observer and asking if he would have attended a mass funeral if the IRA had succeeded. This prompts him to think that the the likelihood of finding an unbiased jury is very slim. (McGrory has already asked for the inquest to be held without a jury for this reason.)

He will keep in touch with us daily so far as possible. We dealt with some practical difficulties concerning his hotel and transport which are recorded separately.

  
Declan O'Donovan  
5 September 1988

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Mr O'Donovan  
The Taoiseach asked me to  
convey appreciation to you  
for the helpful note.  
D.S./ix