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Oifig an Taoisigh
Office of the Taoiseach

29 September 1988

The Rt. Hon. Mrs Margaret Thatcher MP FRS
Prime Minister.

Dear Margaret,

When writing to you on 29 July 1988 I enclosed two papers dealing with the matters in which, at our meeting in Hanover, I undertook to take a close personal interest - the effort to improve pre-emptive intelligence and the matter of Garda training in the whole area of intelligence gathering skills.

I am happy to tell you that some new initiatives are now being taken in the training field.

Arrangements have been made for three F.B.I. Instructors from Washington to run training courses here for up to 30 selected members of the Garda Siochana in various aspects of intelligence gathering. These courses are planned to commence towards the end of next month. Three main areas will be comprehensively covered - intelligence gathering, surveillance and instruction on the specialised equipment that is available in this field and on its uses.

Contact has also been made with the police authorities in the Netherlands, Denmark and Canada to see whether they can offer anything in the line of specialised training that would be helpful to the Gardai.

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In addition, the Garda have been offered a number of places on a course in Special Search Techniques being run by British military personnel at Chatham, from 13 to 25 November 1988. It has been decided to send two Instructors from the Garda Training Centre on this course. "Search Techniques" is already included in the Garda Training curriculum and any new skills or ideas that emerge from the Chatham course can be passed on either to specialist Garda units or to operational Gardai in general.

I am hopeful that positive results will come from these developments and I will continue to keep a close personal interest in this area of specialised training.

The second paper which I sent you, dealing with pre-emptive intelligence, set out the organisational changes that have been introduced with a view to making Garda effort in this area more effective, including the creation of extra Special Surveillance Units dedicated to intelligence gathering. Personnel for one of these extra units have already been selected and are at present undergoing training. In addition, Garda officers are under instruction that renewed emphasis must be placed on the intelligence gathering responsibility of all personnel and the Force in general has been placed under constant pressure to produce results. I believe it is too early to expect dramatic results from what is being done and indeed, as you appreciate, such results are exceedingly difficult to achieve no matter what the effort expended. However, I am satisfied that some



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very worthwhile results have been achieved in recent weeks - the finds of arms, ammunition and explosives that are being made quite regularly are in many cases the result of an improved information flow to the Gardai. I will see that there will be constant monitoring of this whole area.

In your letter to me dated 26 August 1988 you raised certain other matters relating to operational cooperation between our respective security forces. I believe that these are matters that can best be dealt with by direct contact between the police themselves, with any necessary encouragement or assistance being provided through the agency of Anglo-Irish Conference meetings, where all aspects of security are regularly discussed. I am conveying these additional points which you raised to the Minister for Justice, who in turn will have them considered by the Garda Commissioner.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Charles Haughey