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TO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN

TELEGRAM NUMBER 8 OF 9 JANUARY

YOUR TELNO 771: DEATHS OF DOHERTY AND FLEMING



1. THE FOLLOWING BRIEF SUMMARY OF EVENTS IS THE BEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON HOW THE ENCOUNTER AROSE. THE SECURITY FORCES HAD BECOME AWARE THAT PIRA TERRORISTS WERE PLANNING AN ATTACK IN THE VICINITY OF GRANSHA HOSPITAL ON ONE OR MORE PART-TIME MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES. THEY COULD NOT BE SURE WHEN OR WHERE SUCH AN ATTACK WOULD TAKE PLACE: NOR COULD THEY BE SURE WHO THE TARGETS WERE. HENCE, THE SECURITY FORCES KEPT THE WHOLE AREA UNDER SURVEILLANCE.

2. ON THE MORNING OF 6 DECEMBER, A SINGLE MOBILE UNIT OF THE ARMY (ONE CAR) IDENTIFIED POSSIBLE ATTACKERS APPROACHING THE HOSPITAL ON A MOTOR CYCLE. ON THE INFORMATION THAT THE SECURITY FORCES HAD RECEIVED THERE SEEMED GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THEY INTENDED TO CARRY OUT AN ATTACK. IF THE ARMY UNIT FAILED TO INTERVENE AT AN EARLY STAGE THEY WERE WELL AWARE THAT THE ATTACKERS MIGHT WELL HAVE KILLED THEIR TARGET, WHO MIGHT HAVE BEEN ANY ONE OF A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO WERE THEN ARRIVING FOR WORK AT THE HOSPITAL. THEY DECIDED TO HALT THE MOTOR CYCLISTS BY CHALLENGING THEM, SINCE IT WAS THEIR ASSESSMENT THAT, OTHERWISE, THE SECURITY FORCES WOULD HAVE LOST CONTROL OF THE SITUATION AND THAT LIVES WOULD THEREBY HAVE BEEN PLACED AT RISK.

3. PRECISELY HOW THE TWO MEN MET THEIR DEATHS IS UNCLEAR AND IS THE SUBJECT OF A POLICE INQUIRY WHICH IS ALREADY UNDERWAY. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE AT PRESENT TO SAY WHETHER THE USE OF FORCE BY THE SECURITY FORCES WAS WITHIN THE LAW. AS IS REQUIRED IN ALL CASES IN WHICH SECURITY FORCES ACTION LEADS TO DEATH OR INJURY PAPERS WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS NORTHERN IRELAND WHO WILL DECIDE WHETHER IT IS NECESSARY TO REFER THE MATTER TO THE COURTS.

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