

FROM: R OSBORNE (MRS)  
SECURITY POLICY AND OPERATIONS DIVISION 1  
17 NOVEMBER 1993



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cc PS/SofS (B&L) - B  
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B  
PS/PUS (B&L) - B  
PS/Mr Fell - B  
Mr Legge - B  
Mr Thomas - B  
Mr Steele - B  
Mr Williams - B  
Mr Bell - B  
Mr Leach - B  
Mr Maccabe - B  
Mr Marsh - B  
Mr Caine - B  
Mr McCaffrey - B

1. Mr Perry [NP 17/11] Parliamentary Section - B  
2. Mr Walker -  
for file  
Done  
7/11

SECURITY BRIEFING FOR PRIME MINISTER - OPENING OF PARLIAMENT ON  
18 NOVEMBER 1993

As requested, I attach lines to take and an up-date on the security situation in Northern Ireland, for the Prime Minister on the opening of Parliament on Thursday 18 November.

Signed

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LMCI/SPOBGEN1/2495

**ity Policy has failed?**

The Government's security policy is absolutely clear: terrorism will be met with stern and unyielding opposition. The security forces will continue to receive all the support they require from the Government. The police and Army, acting always within law, conduct operations designed both to prevent terrorist attacks, and where crimes have been committed, to track the perpetrators down and bring them before the Courts.

It would be quite wrong not to give the security forces full credit for the very significant successes they have achieved in recent weeks, in terms of intercepting bombs and armed terrorists, and finding arms and explosives. Their efforts have been reinforced by important arrests and finds in Britain and the Irish Republic. Serious charges have been brought against a number of people following recent atrocities.

Clearly we keep the detail of the policy under review: security force operations and resources, and the legislative framework, are adjusted where necessary to take account of the changing threat. The policy itself, however, I believe is right - bringing terrorism to an end by the even-handed and energetic enforcement of the criminal law.

**[Surely the terrorists are winning?]** No political objective will be advanced by a single inch in this democracy by the use of violence.

**[What about Internment?]** Internment is an option which the Government believes it must retain while the terrorist threat remains active, and the possibility of reintroducing it is kept under review. Obviously it would be a very serious and difficult step, to be taken only after very careful consideration and in particular circumstances. I am not prepared to discuss what these might be.

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[What is the Government going to do?] The security forces are working tirelessly to protect the community from terrorist attack. They are adopting a high profile to deter and prevent further crimes, and to reassure the community. The Chief Constable has referred to a number of specific measures that have been taken - additional police mobile support units have been brought into the city; there are high levels of Special Branch and CID activity: the police are working 12-hour shifts; additional military manpower has been deployed. High levels of operations are being conducted across the Province, concentrated particularly in areas of high risk.

- [Defensive] There is no question of the security forces 'losing control' of the situation.

[Inability to prevent attacks] In a democratic society it is simply not possible for the police to be present on every street corner all the time. But they are conducting, day in and day out, well targeted operations, some necessarily unpublicised. These are not simply reactive, but are designed to preempt terrorist operations. Their aim is to deter as well as detect.

[Force levels] The Government will continue to devote all resources necessary to enable the police and Army to carry out their task. Obviously we keep force levels under careful review. I am not prepared to speculate about future changes.

[Untie the security forces' hands?] There are no political constraints upon the operational freedom of the security forces under the law.

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#### AS TO THE LAW?

The suggestions made by the Chief Constable are receiving the fullest consideration by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. There is, however, always a careful and sensitive balance to be struck between measures intended to secure the conviction of the guilty and measures which in practice may increase the likelihood of innocent people being convicted.

The consequences for the character and reputation of the criminal justice system in Northern Ireland must also be considered at a time when the support of sensible and decent people is as important as the duty to support the RUC, assisted by the Army, in eradicating terrorism by bringing terrorists to justice.

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## ROUND - UPDATE ON SECURITY SITUATION

The security situation in recent weeks has been dominated by the bombing on the Shankill Road by PIRA on 23 October, which resulted in the deaths of 10 civilians, including one of the bombers, and the retaliatory shooting incident by the UFF at Greysteel, which resulted in the deaths of 6 civilians. Consequently, since 1 October, 28 people have died as a result of terrorist activity in Northern Ireland. The highest number there has been in such a short space of time since [1985]. Of the 28 people killed since 1 October, PIRA have been responsible for 12 and Loyalist terrorists 16. Apart of Greysteel, the UFF/UVF murders in recent weeks have included two Roman Catholic council workmen at Kennedy Way Depot on 26 October; and two brothers, Rory and Gerard Cairns, in their home in front of their 11 year old sister on 28 October.

Apart of the Shankill Road bombing PIRA killed one other civilian and was responsible for a sniper attack on Reserve Constable Brian Woods at a VCP in Newry on 31 October. R/Constable Woods subsequently died on 2 November.

There have been no further murders since Constable Wood's death, but there have been a number of attacks. These include a MK15 mortar attack on RUC Caledon on 7 November. The device, launched from an Isuzu Trooper, contained 80kgs of HME. It landed on the grounds of Caledon Presbyterian church and exploded, causing extensive glass damage to the church and other buildings up to 150 metres away.

Incidents involving the Security Forces

There have recently weeks, been two incidents in which the army have shot and injured two civilians. The first was on 26 October 1993 when a soldier fired three bursts of automatic gunfire from his SA80, seriously injuring Eddie Copeland, a leading PIRA member - NOT FOR DISCLOSURE, as an army mobile patrol was passing a crowd of mourners outside the house of Thomas Begley (the PIRA bomber killed in the Shankill explosion). The second incident occurred on

7 November. Mrs Seline McCloskey was seriously injured when a soldier attached to 4 Royal Irish appeared to accidentally discharge 2 rounds from his General Purpose Machine Gun at a VCP near Loughmacrory as he stumbled and fell climbing over a fence to attempt to provide cover for a VCP (near Loughmacrory).

## Successes

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In spite of the increased violence, the security forces have had significant successes recently. To date, one man remains under police guard in hospital in connection with the Shankill incident; 5 people have been charged in connection with the Greysteel shooting - 4 with murder (2 gunmen and drivers of the 2 getaway cars) and 1 with withholding information; 2 people have been charged with the shooting incident at Kennedy Way - 1 man with murder and 1 female with aiding and abetting.

Other recent charges include two men with attempted murder and possession of firearms following the shooting of a man in Antrim. A man was charged with the murder of Jason McFarlane at the Derby House Restaurant. Also 5 people were charged with possession of explosives, and one of a firearm following arrests at Dill House/Artillery Flats. Also 7 men were convicted of serious charges, 4 with the murder of a former soldier and 3 with conspiracy to murder; and on 19 and 23 October gunmen were intercepted in Belfast and 4 men have subsequently been charged. A man has also been charged with the murder on 7 September of Sean Hughes, at his hairdressing business on the Falls Road.

So far this year [as at 14 November] 336 people have been charged with terrorist-related offences, including 58 with murder or attempted murder.

attempted murder.

There have also been a number of arms and explosives finds, most recently the recovery of a primed radio-controlled IED, containing 225kg ANS, from an Austin Maestro van inside a garage on Essex Street, in the Markets area of Belfast on 9 November.