

Date: 7 January 2003.  
From: Derek Wheeler

*(Handwritten: Derek)*  
*(Handwritten: cc'd to Will)*  
*(Handwritten: - as discussed)*  
*(Handwritten: 8/1)*  
*(Handwritten: 2)*

Evelyn Cummins

cc Mary Bunting

### PIPE BOMB AT HOLY CROSS SCHOOL

I have discussed the situation with a number of people including colleagues in NIO, DE, BELB and local residents in Glenbryn.

NIO (Mark McGuckin) seems reasonably clear that the incident at the school yesterday could have been carried out by a lone headcase, but they must really wait and see [REDACTED]

In claiming the attack, the Red Hand Defenders also demanded that the school be closed within the week. The Police informed Father Troy yesterday about both the claim and the threat. Father Troy is trying to keep the school and parents as calm as possible and found it helpful to have had Nigel Dodds statement yesterday and Mark Coulter's interview on radio this morning.

It is the threat to the school that is causing most concern. A parent teachers meeting is taking place this afternoon. This may either help to further calm the situation or it could see the incident take on a life of its own.

DE (Brian Hill) reports that Jane Kennedy has put out a statement covering both her security and education interests.

Some security responses have already been made. PSNI has arranged high visibility security presence of both police and army for as long as needed. BELB has also authorised the installation of special "black lighting" (i.e. infra red illumination) to film unwary attackers. (Unfortunately the installation company arrived, not in the discrete way that such a measure should be delivered, but with full advertising on their van and T-shirts, so everyone in Glenbryn knows about the new black lights.)

Barry Mulholland reports that the police feel the pipebomb was a message that was not intended to explode. It was placed on the gate to be found, not ignited. In such a case he feels it was meant to publicise the threat to the school rather than harm anyone. It did however contain real explosives.

The perpetrator failed to disrupt the school's activities on Monday as the children entered the school from the rear and classes were held at the back of the school until the pipebomb was defused and taken away for forensic examination.

No one in Glenbryn has offered any support for the incident. Nigel Dodds and Mark Coulter made public statements condemning the incident. Other interests in Glenbryn including [REDACTED] tend to think it was a Republican plot to inflame local people on both sides (or at least to publicise the BBC film on Ardoyne that was screened on Monday night - Billy Hutchinson MLA also took this line in his public statement.). Those said to be associated with the UDA are more concerned about how the Johnny Adair feud may develop. CRUA is certainly keeping a low profile for the time being.

Naturally Father Troy, Gerry Kelly MLA and Alban Maginness MLA criticised the attack and blamed the UDA/Red Hand Defenders. Most voices on that side of the house express the hope that it was an isolated incident, but the closure threat to the school has yet to be properly assessed.

We will keep a close eye on the situation.

Derek Wheeler