

SECRET

Confidential Filing

PM's meeting with a group of ~~widows~~  
from South Fermanagh.  
Correspondence with Dr Ian Paisley MP.

IRELAND

June 1980

Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date
<del>2.7.80.</del>		<div data-bbox="631 1034 845 1245" data-label="Text"> <p>SB 8/80</p> </div>					
<del>4.7.80.</del>							
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<del>30.7.80</del>							
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<del>2.9.80.</del>							
<del>4.2.81</del>							
24-4-81.							

PREM 19/501

S  
806

Ireland



10 DOWNING STREET

Mr. Alexander

Widow Gfermanagh

What do you  
think about  
Nicks' suggestion  
that we should  
use ~~off~~ one of  
our planes?

CJ.

24/4

Fre Goodchild.

This letter can now  
go ~~to~~ out 27/4

CAROLINE

~~Nick~~  
advice please  
Cl. 21/4

Widows from Fermanagh - Trooping

Please see the letter from Mr. Hopkins Northern Ireland Office dated 28 July 1980 (at Flag A).  
Last paragraph of this letter mentions the question of financing the trip. Would it perhaps be necessary for the MOD and Northern Ireland Office to be warned in advance of the invitations.

Sue

~~CAROLINE~~

Check with MODBA O/R but I am sure that we should find a way of providing transport anyway - is there any possibility of putting them all together in one of our planes, or would we rather not do that?

16 April 1981

MS  
21/4

Addresses on CF File

DRAFT LETTER TO MRS. KERNAGHAN, MRS. HOWE, MRS. MORROW, MRS. LATIMER  
FROM MICHAEL ALEXANDER

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You will remember that when you came to see the Prime Minister on 7 July last year, she mentioned that she hoped you would be able to come to the Trooping the Colour and to be accompanied by one member of your family.

Trooping the Colour takes place on Saturday, 13 June and Mrs. Thatcher very much hopes to have the opportunity to see you again then.

*I should be grateful if you would* <sup>will be</sup> ~~Perhaps you would be good enough to~~ let me know if this is possible *for you.*

*Assuming that you are able to come, we shall be getting in touch with you about the details of the journey.*

FILE

R H

Ireland

MR ALEXANDER

PRIME MINISTER - Weekend Box

You will remember that when the four widows of Fermanagh visited you last Summer you promised them invitations to the Trooping. It was agreed that they would be accompanied by one member of their family or a friend. Trooping this year is on Saturday, 13 June, and I have checked with Sue Goodchild that there is space amongst the High Commissioners for these eight extra persons. There is in fact a rehearsal the week before but as at present you are not due to be in London.

Agree that they should be added to the guest list for the official date?

CAROLINE STEPHENS

4 February, 1981



10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

2 September 1980

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you, Mrs. Kernaghan, Mrs. Latimer and Mrs. Morrow for your letter of 9 August. She has asked me to reply on her behalf.

I can assure you that there has been no slackening whatever in the efforts of the Security Forces in the Newtownbutler area, or indeed anywhere else in Fermanagh. The Police, supported as necessary by the Army, remain dedicated to the elimination of terrorism and they are continuing to take all practicable steps towards this end. The operations of the Security Forces in the area are both real and intensive. There is a constant refinement of methods to ensure the best possible chance of deterring and arresting those who seek to carry out these terrible deeds. The efforts of the security forces have indeed been paying considerable dividends. There has been a significant reduction in terrorist activities in Fermanagh in recent weeks.

The closure of selected border roads is part of a combination of tactics used to deter cross-border terrorist activity. As you will know several further crossings in south east Fermanagh have been closed this year where security forces consider that closure will have a significant effect in hampering terrorist activity. The crossings which remain open are kept under constant review and further individual closures can be authorised as and when, in the professional judgement of the Security Forces, such action would have a genuine operational benefit. But closure of all border roads would have a most serious effect on the commercial life of Northern Ireland (as well as that of the Republic) and would also put at risk the vitally important co-operation between the forces of law and order on either side of the border. In the opinion of the Security Forces, with which the Government agrees, the disadvantages far outweigh the additional security benefit, if any, to be gained from the wholesale closure of border roads.

The effectiveness of permanently guarding open border crossings depends critically on the local circumstances. In some parts of the Province this is a useful tactic. But in places such as Fermanagh the substantial number of security force personnel who would be tied down in such an operation can, in the judgement of their operational commanders, be more effectively used in a mobile role: for instance by setting up surprise vehicle checks over a much wider area. Moreover

/it

98

it must be remembered that a permanent check point itself constitutes a target for the terrorists to attack; there have been several such attacks in the past. Nevertheless, as with the closure of border roads, the question of permanently guarding selected crossings is kept under constant review.

In conclusion the Prime Minister has asked me to say that she shares your continued deep concern at the security situation which has had such tragic consequences for each of you. There are no easy or instant solutions. But the Government is firmly pledged to bring terrorism to an end whatever the difficulties. Every possible step is being taken in the effort to ensure that all the people of Northern Ireland can once again live in peace and free from fear.

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Mrs. H. Howe

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

MOBBA

M Pattison Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

*Yours, now*

1 September 1980

*MA*

*Letter to mine.*

*Dear Mike,*

*Russ*

... Thank you for your letter of 19 August covering a letter from the group of Fermanagh widows seen by the Prime Minister on 7 July. I attach a draft reply which, as you suggested, has been put in the form of a Private Secretary letter.

My letter of 28 July to Michael Alexander contained a comprehensive survey of security operations in Fermanagh. The only significant change to report is that since then the Secretary of State has authorised, and the security forces have carried out, the closure of two further border roads. Security force activity in the area continues to be intensive and there has certainly not been any change which could be seen as a slackening of effort.

The closure or permanent guarding of more border crossings is kept under review in the light of assessments by the operational commanders on the ground. Undue interference with legitimate cross-border traffic, of which there is a great deal, would be counter-productive, not only economically, but also in security terms in that it would endanger the vitally important co-operation between the RUC and the Garda, as well as that between the respective police forces and the local people whose goodwill they are anxious to retain. Consequently the policy is to close those roads which would give genuine operational benefit.

Permanent vehicle checkpoints are expensive in terms of manpower and support, and it would be impractical to establish them at every open crossing. In some parts of the Province (particularly Londonderry) where traffic is concentrated into a few possible crossings they represent effective border control; but elsewhere, such as in Fermanagh, geography allows relatively easy crossings away from the road. Moreover, the personnel manning permanent checkpoints can be at significant risk both from terrorists firing at the checkpoint from prepared positions in the Republic and from the possibility of ambush on the route to or from the checkpoint.

Although I suggest you avoid being drawn into discussing particular crossings (and the draft has been written accordingly), the road from Newtownbutler to Cavan cited by the widows is a good example of the problems. (Its closure is, incidentally, not a new suggestion: Dr Paisley suggested it to the Secretary of State on





23 June; Mr Molyneux suggested it in the Emergency Provisions Act renewal debate on 22 July, and since then a deputation of local representatives have also met the local police to ask for it). In the campaign in the late 1950s and early 1960s it carried little traffic and was easily closed. But it now forms one of the main routes in the area between Northern Ireland and the Republic. It accordingly carries a high volume of traffic and serious disruption would ensue if it were blocked. There is little doubt that its closure would have serious effects on our relationship with the Irish authorities. In any case the security forces have found no over-riding security reasons to recommend closure, while a permanent vehicle checkpoint would in itself be unlikely to stop terrorists crossing the border in this area and would itself be vulnerable to attack. The security forces are, however, alert to the possibility that this road might be used by terrorists and considerable attention is paid to it, both overtly and covertly.

*Yours sincerely*  
*Mike Hopkins*

M W HOPKINS

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

<p>To</p> <p>Mrs H Howe Mount Darby Roslea Co Fermanagh Northern Ireland</p> <p>(Full Postal Address)</p>	<p>Enclosures</p>	<p>Copies to be sent to</p> <p>(Full Address, if Necessary)</p>
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LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PS/PRIME MINISTER  
(Name of Signatory)

The Prime Minister has asked me to thank you, Mrs Kernaghan, Mrs Latimer and Mrs Morrow for your letter of 9 August. She has asked me to reply on her behalf.

I can assure you that there has been no slackening whatever in the efforts of the Security Forces in the Newtownbutler area, or indeed anywhere else in Fermanagh. The Police, supported as necessary by the Army, remain dedicated to the elimination of terrorism and they are continuing to take all practicable steps towards this end. The operations of the Security Forces in the area are both real and intensive, ~~and~~ There is a constant refinement of methods to ensure ~~that there is~~ the best possible chance of deterring and arresting those who seek to carry out these terrible deeds. The efforts of the security forces have indeed been paying considerable dividends. ~~As I am sure you will have seen,~~ There has been a significant reduction in terrorist activities in Fermanagh in recent weeks.

The closure of selected border roads is part of a combination of tactics used to deter cross-border terrorist activity. As you will know several further crossings in south east Fermanagh have been

E.R.

closed this year where security forces consider that closure will have a significant effect in hampering terrorist activity. The crossings which remain open are kept under constant review and further individual closures can be authorised as and when, in the professional judgement of the Security Forces, such action would have a genuine operational benefit. But closure of all border roads would have a most serious effect on the commercial life of Northern Ireland (as well as that of the Republic) and would also put at risk the vitally important co-operation between the forces of law and order on either side of the border. In the opinion of the security forces, with which the Government agrees, the disadvantages far outweigh the additional security benefit, if any, to be gained from the wholesale closure of border roads.

The effectiveness of permanently guarding open border crossings depends critically on the local circumstances. In some parts of the Province this is a useful tactic. But in places such as Fermanagh the substantial number of security force personnel who would be tied down in such an operation can, in the judgement of their operational commanders, be more effectively used in a mobile role: for instance by setting up surprise vehicle checks over a much wider area. Moreover it must be remembered that a permanent check point itself constitutes a target for the terrorists to attack; there have been several such attacks in the past. Nevertheless, as with the closure of border roads, the question of permanently guarding selected crossings is kept under constant review.

In conclusion the Prime Minister has asked me to say that she <sup>shows</sup> ~~appreciates~~ your continued deep concern at the security situation which has had such tragic consequences <sup>each of</sup> ~~personally~~ for you ~~all~~. There are no easy or instant solutions, <sup>But</sup> the Government is firmly pledged to bring terrorism to an end whatever the difficulties. <sup>Every</sup> ~~All~~ possible steps <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ being taken <sup>in the effort</sup> to ensure that all the people of Northern Ireland can once again live in peace and free from fear.

FILE



Ireland RH

10 DOWNING STREET

*From the Private Secretary*

19 August 1980

BF 28.8.80

I enclose a further letter to the Prime Minister from a group of the Fermanagh widows whom she saw on 7 July.

I should be grateful for a suitable draft reply. This should probably go from a Private Secretary, although I shall wish to show the draft to the Prime Minister.

|| Could we please have something from you by 28 August.

M A PATTISON

M. Hopkins, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

MOUNT DARBY,

ROSLEA,

CO. FERMANAGH.

9th Aug. 1980.

Dear Prime Minister,

It is with strong memories of your sympathetic kindness to us, when we visited you in London, that we feel it necessary to write to you again.

After you had taken a personal interest in the terrible plight of ourselves and the even more terrifying position of the wives of members of the Security Forces who are still alive, we could see the beginnings of a real improvement in security precautions. We are saddened that these improvements did not continue and many border crossing places, including the main escape route for killers fleeing from the Newkounbiter area, are still open

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and are not guarded on a full-time permanent basis. The most dangerous of these roads is the road from Newbouldbitter to Lavan which should be permanently blocked at Baste Sanderson gates as it was for a number of years during our last troubles. We know that you have a lot of problems to deal with but we feel that your interest in us and the other women of this area is so genuine that we would implore you to interevne personally to see that security operations are no longer bluff, but REAL. We would stress that all border crossings which can be used by vehicles in the Newbouldbitter and Roslea areas must be either closed permanently by blocking or mining or guarded and controlled permanently on a twenty-

four hour a day basis until the  
 terrorists are beaten and the  
 murderous attacks on our husbands,  
 carried out from the Irish  
 Republic are over.

PLEASE Mrs Thatcher help us  
 as loyal British citizens.

Yours Respectfully,

Harriett Howe

Sylvia Kennaghan.

Bonnie Latimer

Martha Morrow.

SECRET

MFJ

2

Ireland

BF on 1 September

30 July 1980

Meeting with the Fermanagh Widows

The Prime Minister has read with interest your letter to me of 28 July, and its enclosure, dealing with the points raised by the Fermanagh widows. She would welcome an oral briefing by the Director of Intelligence as proposed in the penultimate paragraph of your letter. This might conveniently take place early in September: we shall get in touch with you nearer the time to fix it up.

MODBA

M.W. Hopkins, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office

SECRET



**SECRET**  
From THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London S W 1

28 July 1980

(1)

Prime Minister.  
The section in the Annex (paras 8-15) on Cross Border  
co-operation is well worth reading. Would you like  
me to arrange (perhaps in early September) an oral briefing  
on co-operation in the intelligence field (see 'A' overleaf)?

Yes please  
Dear Michael,

MEETING WITH THE FERMANAGH WIDOWS

Thank you for your letter of 7 July in which you recorded the main points which were raised with the Prime Minister that afternoon by four widows from Fermanagh, Mrs Kernaghan, Mrs Howe, Mrs Morrow and Mrs Latimer. I agree that there is no need to acknowledge the letters which the four ladies left with you.

... I attach (at Annex A) a report from the security authorities in Northern Ireland which sets out the views of the Security Co-ordinator and Planning Staff, the GOC and the Chief Constable. It includes a detailed commentary on the suggestions that the widows put forward and analyses the improvements in cross-border security co-operation. Its main points may be summarised as follows:

1. The political interest in security in Fermanagh has increased as the number of terrorist attacks (but not of course their lethal effect) has subsided.
2. Although the number of attacks is less, troop levels have been maintained at the point reached last December and will not be reduced in the immediate future. The RUC have introduced a Divisional Mobile Support Unit and have strengthened staff numbers in local police stations.
3. The Security Co-ordinator and Planning Staff are undertaking an "area review" of the Fermanagh problem as their next assignment (they are at present completing the Belfast review). Sir Brooks Richards' report will be sent to the Prime Minister. The existence of these area reviews is not, of course, to be disclosed.

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4. Of the 281 border crossings, 137 have been closed by the security forces. In deciding how many and which roads to close, a balance has to be struck between operational requirements and the need to avoid interfering with legitimate cross-border traffic. The main roads are watched, although not always obviously. 4 border crossings were closed earlier this year, and 8 more have been closed recently including 6 of those to which we think the widows were referring.
5. Cross-border security co-operation is good at all levels, having clearly improved since the advent of Mr Haughey. The Garda and RUC consult closely and frequently, with exchanges of intelligence and of CID investigation papers, and they both have increased their capability on the border. The Garda also operate more effectively now in the Republic and have considerably increased their finds of weapons and explosives; and they have just made significant use of the extra-territorial offences legislation.

A.

The most telling development in our campaign against terrorism lies in the field of intelligence work, and the detail of this, as you will appreciate, cannot be committed to paper. If, however the Prime Minister wishes to have a full understanding of the nature and effect of our current security operations she may need to know about this and I suggest that an oral briefing in London by the Director would be the most appropriate way.

...  
The Prime Minister expressed the wish, which Mr Atkins warmly endorses, that she might invite the four widows and their children to some such occasion as the Trooping of the Colour. I attach a list of their addresses (at Annex B). If there were financial difficulties, and unless No. 10 have hospitality funds of their own which could be called upon, it is likely that non-public funds such as the RUC Fund (administered by the Police Authority for Northern Ireland) and, in the case of the UDR widows, the Northern Ireland Special Relief Fund (a branch of the Army Benevolent Fund) or the GOC (Northern Ireland) Troops Fund could meet the cost of air fares and accommodation. Formal applications would need to be approved by their respective trustees; but we would expect no difficulty. MOD and ourselves could make the necessary applications if you would like to get in touch with us nearer the time.

Copied to  
net file

Yours sincerely  
Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS

**SECRET**

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SECURITY IN FERMANAGH

1. There was an increase in the number of terrorist attacks in Fermanagh last winter. This has now subsided to a level generally no worse, and in some respects better, than in other parts of Northern Ireland. But there remain considerable security problems in some areas of the county.
2. The RUC and the Army are continuing intensive efforts to prevent further terrorist attacks and to apprehend those responsible for earlier incidents. Although simple weight of numbers is by no means the complete answer, force levels in Fermanagh stand at the number to which they were increased at the end of last year and will not be affected by Army redeployments taking place this month when one roulement unit leaves without replacement. The RUC have recently introduced Divisional Mobile Support Units to give immediate reinforcement whenever it is required and one of these has been set up in Fermanagh; this has been welcomed locally. The RUC are also strengthening their staff in a number of police stations. They are paying special attention to the security of locally recruited members of the UDR and RUC (R), who are particularly vulnerable to attack, especially while off duty.
3. The Security Co-ordinator and his staff are about to start work on an area review of Fermanagh; which will include an examination of the strength and deployment of the security forces, the collection of information and intelligence, and cross-border security co-operation.

Local Support for PIRA in Fermanagh

4. The RUC agree that in some cases terrorists operating from across the border receive help from local inhabitants - a problem not confined to Fermanagh or even the border areas. When the RUC receive reports of such help they do all that they can to gather evidence against suspects, but the pattern of local support <sup>in Fermanagh</sup> is not so firm or regular as to make keeping a permanent watch on particular individuals an effective use of resources.

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It should be noted that the security forces receive 'some useful anti-terrorist information from the Catholic population in the county. There is indeed an upsurge in inter-sectarian bitterness (again not confined to Fermanagh, following the murders of 2 Catholics in Antrim and Belfast by Protestant paramilitaries. This inter-sectarian tension, which some Unionist politicians have recently inflamed rather than cooled, is of concern to the security forces and the Secretary of State, and it can only be dealt with by a calm even-handed approach to all criminal terrorist activity.

#### Road Closures

5. 8 more border crossings on the Fermanagh/Co Monaghan border have recently been closed, in addition to the 4 closed earlier this year. Of 281 crossings along the total length of the border 137 are now impassable to normal traffic. It is possible that the 23 minor crossings which the widows had in mind correspond roughly to a list of suggested closures which Dr Paisley left with the Secretary of State some weeks ago. The RUC and the Army carried out a comprehensive survey of all the crossings in the area before the recent closures; the 8 proposed for closure (including 6 of those we think the widows were referring to) represented those which the security forces considered could be blocked with genuine operational benefit, and without causing counter-productive interference to legitimate cross-border traffic, or irritation to those on both sides of the border whose co-operation and knowledge are needed by the security forces.

6. The security forces are, of course, alert to the possibility of the terrorist using main roads as his use of the lesser crossings is constrained. The mounting of vehicle check points on particular roads at particular times is a matter for the operational judgment of the local security force commanders in the light of the local circumstances, intelligence reports, and other operational demands. Because of the volume of traffic on some roads, checks are often more productively based on intelligence rather than speculation and surveillance operations are also mounted covertly. Ordinary citizens may thus conclude, as do the widows, that the security force effort

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inefficient; this is a difficult matter on which to persuade them otherwise.

#### Police Powers of Search

7. As regards Mrs Howe's comment about police powers of search under the Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act 1978, any police officer is empowered to enter and search any building other than a dwelling house. He may search a dwelling house provided he has been authorised so to do by an RUC officer not below the rank of chief inspector, i.e. a policeman has to consult the officer in charge of his sub-divisional police station first, but he can do this by radio very quickly. The RUC themselves are satisfied with their powers of search.

#### Cross-Border Security Co-operation

8. On 13 December, Mr Haughey told the Dail:

"Our Security Forces, our Garda and our soldiers will maintain the maximum security on the Border, preventing totally, if that is possible, any cross-border activity of any illegal or subversive nature. Cross-border security operations will be maintained to ensure the most effective action against violence within the rule of law."

9. The Secretary of State is in no doubt that, while there remains scope for further improvement, cross-border security co-operation, which centres on relations between the RUC and the Garda, has indeed increased since Mr Haughey became Taoiseach on 11 December 1979. It is difficult to persuade the public of this without simultaneously publicising the methods of co-operation - about which not only the Irish Government but also both police forces remain understandably sensitive - and, by so doing, jeopardising the very process which we all want to see develop and flourish.

10. But it is clear to the Secretary of State, from his consultations with the Chief Constable, that the Garda have firm instructions (and assurances of support) from their Government

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that they should co-operate with the RUC. The Garda's capability is less than that of the RUC in that, except for their Special Branch and specialist units, they are an unarmed force. Nevertheless, since the beginning of the year the RUC have sensed a more positive and helpful approach by the Garda to violent crime in Northern Ireland and a more obvious determination to come to grips with terrorist activity on their side of the border. Senior Garda officers have been willing to travel north for regular and frequent consultations and there has been a greater readiness to acknowledge the fact that terrorists use the Republic for "lying low" and as a springboard for attacks on targets in Northern Ireland.

11. Intelligence gained at interviews of terrorist suspects in Northern Ireland has been used to good effect in the recovery of explosives and arms in the Republic of Ireland, and independent action by the Garda has produced many more finds. In 1980 so far, in a total of 16 finds, 63 weapons, 6,000 lbs of explosives, 123 explosive devices and 10,000 rounds of ammunition have been seized in the Republic.

12. There is regular interchange of intelligence between the Special Branches of the two Forces. In particular, the activities of terrorist suspects on the run in the Republic are closely monitored and fed back to the RUC. There is also a great deal of co-ordinated covert activity on both sides of the border and a recent exercise designed to improve the skills of special units of both Forces in trailing terrorist suspects across the border has proved very successful.

13. The Garda Task Force (plain-clothed armed officers under Special Branch command who are used for operations against terrorists, bank raiders etc) has, since the beginning of the year, been increased from two to five units. There has been a proportionate increase in the strength of the Special Investigative Unit of the Technical Bureau. Both of these units have greatly enhanced Garda capability in border security operations. In the CID field there has been a matching improvement in co-ordination of effort. There is now a free exchange of investigation papers between the two Forces so that no useful evidence is being lost on either side. The most

encouraging result of this to date is the recent arrest in County Monaghan and charging with a murder in County Armagh earlier this year, of three of the most important PIRA terrorists operating on the border; these men are known moreover <sup>to</sup> have been directly involved in the past in operations into County Fermanagh and their arrest is likely to disrupt for some time their activities of the Active Service Unit in question. This is the first murder case mounted in the Republic under the extra-territorial legislation. Given the Republic's stance on extradition and the decisions of their Judiciary (which the widows raised and of which the Prime Minister is aware), this is the best way of dealing with fugitive offenders. This case shows that the legislation can be effective.

14. The two police forces now have established arrangements for co-ordination. The Chief Constable and the Garda Commissioner meet regularly - usually at 2-3 monthly intervals, the Joint Co-ordinating Committee of their deputies and others meets once a month, and the Border Superintendents meet jointly at six-weekly intervals. In all these meetings discussions are frank, uninhibited and effective. At an operational level, meetings to exchange information or to plan joint operations take place on a day-to-day basis. During operations full use is made of a direct inter-Force radio network.

15. The Garda's recent activity against terrorists in the border areas and their various finds and arrests have made it increasingly difficult for PIRA to use the territory of the Republic as a base for attacks in the North. There have been firm indications from sensitive sources that this has PIRA worried.

#### Compensation

16. The widows' comparison of the compensation awards they may receive for the murder of their husbands with the damages awarded to Mr O'Connor by the High Court in respect of alleged ill-treatment by the RUC is understandable.

17. The main conditions for compensation under the Criminal

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injuries (Compensation) (Northern Ireland) Order 1977 are that the widows should have been dependent, and should have suffered pecuniary loss as a result of her husband's death. Each claim is individually considered; lost earnings, pensions, and the details of the financial position of each person are carefully weighed. Any award is additional to the normal social security provision for widows.

*Paragraph 18 deleted and closed, 40 years,  
under a FOI Exemption.*

*Wayland*

*1 September 2011*

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Mrs Kernaghan  
16 Hill View  
LISNASKEA  
Co Fermanagh  
Northern Ireland

Mrs Howe  
Mountderby  
ROSSLEA  
Co Fermanagh  
Northern Ireland

Mrs Morrow  
Kilready  
NEWTOWNBUTLER  
Co Fermanagh  
Northern Ireland

Mrs Latimer  
Aghagy  
NEWTOWNBUTLER  
Co Fermanagh  
Northern Ireland

SECRET

~~DF 22-7-80~~



See below  
also

10 DOWNING STREET

GF

Can we take care not  
to lose sight of the  
Prime Minister's invitation  
to the widows to attend  
the Trooping next year.

Paul

This should be covered in  
MO reply to MORGAN'S letter  
of 7.7.80.

NB Re MORGAN'S note - ensure  
Jane Pansons has copies of  
correspondence re Trooping.

MRS. GOODCHILD

You may be aware that four widows from Fermanagh came to see the Prime Minister a short time ago. The Prime Minister wishes them and their families to be invited to the Trooping next year. Because of the High Commissioners there will obviously have to be a limit on numbers so it will probably be one widow plus one member of each of their families.

I have asked Confidential to bring this up at the beginning of February because we will have to contact the widows to warn them of the impending invitation.

*Cf: please note →*

CAROLINE STEPHENS

18 July 1980

R12

Prmie Minister  
+ fa.

②

Handwritten signature

NEWTOWNBUTLER  
Co Fermanagh  
N. Ireland

10 July 1980

Dear Prime Minister,

We would like to express our best thanks to you for giving of your time and listening so attentively to our plea for help. We trust you will be able to assist in this our hour of need and so give hope to the other wives and families of the Security Force Members.

Our families were delighted when we told them of your kind invitation to the Trooping of the Colours and we look forward to this event with great interest when we trust that circumstances will be more pleasant.

Caroline -  
When you join ladies  
come to the families meet-  
Troop meet year  
We will somehow  
raise the money  
for the James.  
mt.

Yours Sincerely,

Martha Morrow.  
Bonnie Latimer  
Sylvia Kernaghan.  
Harriet Howe.



Ireland LPS  
cc NIO

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

10 July 1980

Dear Mrs. Kernaghan.

I am writing to thank you for the crocheted basket which you left with me on Monday. It was a very kind thought. I hope you will also pass my thanks on to Mrs. Howe, Mrs. Latimer and Mrs. Morrow.

I know that our talk together caused you great distress. But I hope it will be some consolation to you to know that I took the most careful note of what you said and will bear it much in mind for the future.

Yours sincerely  
Margaret Thatcher

Mrs. Kernaghan.

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BF 21/7/80

cc Master set

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

7 July 1980

Meeting with the Fermanagh Widows

The four widows from Fermanagh, Mrs. Kernaghan, Mrs. Howe, Mrs. Morrow and Mrs. Latimer, called on the Prime Minister as arranged this afternoon. Dr. Paisley did not put in an appearance.

Most of the discussion, which on occasions was predictably emotional, was of a personal nature. But the widows, whose principal spokesman was Mrs. Howe, took the opportunity to make a number of substantive points. They said that it was clear to them that while the murders in their area were carried out by gunmen from the Republic, the planning was done by local residents. As a result relations between the Protestant and Catholic communities were deteriorating. If the Government were unable to do anything, it was inevitable that the local residents would take the law into their own hands. Mrs. Howe said in terms that she for one would not care if retaliation took place. The widows were not persuaded that there had been any improvement in cross-border co-operation since Mr. Haughey had come to power. They knew of members of the Garda who openly admitted to drinking with the IRA in public houses and to being unable to arrest those members of the IRA because they did not have the authority to do so from Dublin. When the Prime Minister referred to the difficulties of getting evidence that could be used in court, Mrs. Howe said that if the authorities waited until they had such evidence, the rest of the husbands still living in South Fermanagh would be dead first. She had welcomed Mrs. Thatcher's election victory because she had thought that it would result in a tightening up of the security situation in the six counties. She had been disappointed.

The widows also complained about the compensation they received for the deaths of their husbands. They contrasted what they were likely to receive with the £5,000 awarded to Mr. Bernard O'Connor by the High Court recently (I enclose a press cutting given to the Prime Minister by Mrs. Howe). They considered that Mr. O'Connor had got his money very cheaply and that many similar claims would follow.

/Asked

Asked by the Prime Minister what they thought should be done, the widows replied that the main things were the permanent closing of minor roads (they said that there were at least twenty-three that should be blocked); the maintenance of proper security on the main roads; and the real implementation of extradition arrangements from the Republic. A more detailed point raised by Mrs. Howe was that the local police should have permission to search buildings in the area on their own authority and without having to wait for search warrants. By the time they had got authority to make searches, it was usually too late.

As forecast the widows also left a large number of letters from the inhabitants of Fermanagh addressed to the Prime Minister. We shall open these here and I will forward to you any that are of interest. Subject to your views, we do not propose to acknowledge the letters.

I should be grateful if you could let me have the addresses of the four widows. The Prime Minister would like to make some further gesture of sympathy in due course. She would like to invite the families to some occasion such as the Trooping of the Colour, in London. If you see any objection to this perhaps you would let me know. There may be a problem over the fares of the families since at least one of the widows claimed that she would not be able to afford to come to London if she had to pay for herself and her children.

I should be grateful if you could let me have a detailed commentary on the suggestions made by the widows for action. It would be helpful if you could include an analysis of just how and with what concrete results cross border co-operation has improved since Mr. Haughey came to power. The Prime Minister has taken careful note of what the widows had to say.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Paul Lever (Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

M. O'D. B. ALEXANDER

Roy Harrington, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

NM

# £5,000 Award for Teacher

## Judge Thought He Grossly Exaggerated

### Certain Incidents

The Enniskillen teacher, Bernard O'Connor, who was awarded damages of £5,000 in the High Court, was thought by Mr. Justice Murray to have grossly exaggerated certain incidents and invented others with a political motive arising from his strongly-held Republican and anti-RUC views.

The judge added that Mr. O'Connor had claimed that he was accused of being a "god-father" in the IRA, getting young men to carry out crimes but avoiding active participation himself.

However, the judge "punished" the police for ill-treating O'Connor during five days of questioning at Castlereagh holding centre by making the award.

Mr. O'Connor, a Scoutmaster, subsequently appeared on a BBC Television programme, when he related his experiences.

At the end of a reserved judgment in the High Court lasting over two hours the judge awarded exemplary damages of £5,000 to 38-year-old Bernard O'Connor of Willoughby Place, Enniskillen.

The judge held that Mr. O'Connor was physically ill-treated by two detectives in one of 20 interviews conducted by a team of detectives over a five-day period in 1977.

He said he had been asked by counsel for Mr. O'Connor to award exemplary damages and it did seem to him that the case was a proper one for such an award by way of punishment of defendants.

Mr. O'Connor, a father of eight, had sued the former Chief Constable, Sir Kenneth Newman, for damages arising out of his arrest and detention at Castlereagh from January 20, to 24, 1977.

#### ILL-TREATED

He told the court during the trial of his damages action last May that he was ill-treated by detectives after he had been taken handcuffed from his home in the early morning and driven by car to Belfast where he was continually questioned until his release without being charged on

subjected to excessively long periods of interrogation and he was satisfied that this was so.



But he was also quite satisfied that the injuries the plaintiff suffered were comparatively minor and were disappearing by the time he arrived home in Enniskillen.

On the question of mental disturbance claimed by Mr. O'Connor, the judge said that an excessively long interview he had had with two detectives had left a mental effect on him for two years or more.

others with a political motive arising from his strongly held Republican and anti-RUC views.

Reviewing the evidence the judge said O'Connor had claimed he was accused of being a "god-father" in the Provisional IRA, getting young men to carry out crimes but avoiding active participation himself.

He had denied this and told the detectives interviewing him that he had no knowledge of any crimes and that they had got the wrong man. He had described one interview in a locked room at Castlereagh as a "mixture of hell and bedlam."

At the request of his wife, the family doctor went to Castlereagh and examined Mr. O'Connor who claimed that he was assaulted and ill-treated.

#### COMPLAINT

Was he physically ill-treated as alleged, the judge asked? He said that he found it a very difficult question. In Mr. O'Connor's favour it could be said that he made a complaint of ill-treatment while still in police custody. At the first opportunity he had to speak to someone wholly unconnected with the police.

Following his release he made a detailed statement of his complaint of ill-treatment to his solicitor and later a full detailed statement to the complaints and discipline branch of the RUC.

#### UNDESIRABLE

Mr. O'Connor's memory for detail in many of the undisputed facts was remarkably detailed.

Later in the judgment Mr. Justice Murray said it was an undesirable state of affairs that one of the detectives questioning Mr. O'Connor was friend of the

He was satisfied however, that other senior officers were not aware of this.

#### "I.R.A. WOLF"

Referring to his arrest and questioning Mr. Justice Murray said that he was satisfied that the police were absolutely convinced that Mr. O'Connor was an IRA wolf, masquerading in the sheep's clothing of a country schoolmaster.

When faced with repeated denials of any involvement in the crimes being investigated, a particularly intense atmosphere built up in the interview room — an atmosphere in which the detectives were sorely tempted to use physical violence to deal with what appeared to be a wrong.

Later the judge commented that he had found O'Connor evasive and devious when he questioned him about a civil rights rally in Tempo at which he was alleged to have said that "the only good policeman was a dead one."

#### "AMATEURISH"

What Mr. O'Connor was trying to make out unsuccessfully was that the police could not be trusted in civil rights matters.

The judge then turned to the question of medical examinations carried out on Mr. O'Connor by two Danish doctors who had concluded that he had suffered from organic brain damage as a result of his experiences.

He was not satisfied that Mr. O'Connor suffered from this condition and he described as "enthusiastic and amateurish" the way they had carried out their tests.

He concluded that the physical injury to Mr. O'Connor was not serious or lasting and the main effect of the ill-treatment was mental. He was satisfied that the plaintiff was disturbed for up to a



## IRA DEATH SQUAD SENT TO PRISON

# Terrorists meant to murder UDR man

Various IRA conspiracies to kill members of the security forces in the South Derry area last year were frustrated when those involved were arrested by police, Belfast Crown Court heard yesterday.

Three self-confessed IRA men were each jailed for 13 years when they pleaded guilty to conspiracy to murder a member of the UDR who lived near Bellaghy; conspiracy to murder members of a police patrol in Claudy village; and conspiracy to cause an explosion, again to catch members of the security forces, all in 1979.

The men were Hugh Fran-

cis Madden (19), Killycon Road, Portglenone; Eoin Raymond O'Boyle (20), Springfield Road, Bellaghy; and Michael Alexander O'Boyle (21), also of Springfield Road, Bellaghy.

Another man, 21-year-old Desmond James Laverty of Gloverstown Road, Toomebridge, admitted possessing a quantity of ammunition and explosive sub-

stances in May, 1979, and was jailed for five years.

## Hay

The court heard Laverty and another man not before the court were arrested on May 23, 1979, carrying a rifle and ammunition. Laverty is already serving a five-year sentence for possession of these arms.

Laverty made a number of statements to police, one of which led to the discovery of ammunition and explosive substances hidden under hay in premises near his home.

Yesterday, the judge ruled that the five-year sentence he was imposing on Laverty for possessing the explosives and ammunition should run concurrently with that he is already serving.

Madden and the two O'Boyles were arrested on June 4, and during interviews made a series of statements in relation to their part in terrorist activity in the South Derry area.

## Boy

Madden accompanied police to a hide in a bog where police discovered two M1 carbines, magazines and ammunition.

They told police the Bellaghy UDR man had been chosen because they knew more about him than others in the area, but they had decided to wait a while before carrying out the shooting as other members of their IRA unit had been arrested.

The Claudy ambush on an RUC patrol had not taken place because they needed a third gun which had not arrived from across the Border.

## Ambush

"The idea to ambush this car was because it was an easy target. The man who set it up told us we had to kill whoever was in it," Madden told police.

Crown counsel said the planning of the attack had reached a high level and was only frustrated by the non-arrival of the third weapon.

Referring to the charge of conspiring to cause an explosion, counsel said the three accused had contemplated this as the basic use for the explosives they had obtained. It was quite clear they had the capacity and the knowledge and experience to do it because in their statements there were admissions of receiving training and instruction.

## Carbines

All three also admitted charges of membership of the IRA, possession of two M1 carbines and ammunition with intent, and possession of explosive substances, detonators, timer-power unit and detonating fuse with intent.

Eoin O'Boyle also pleaded guilty to four charges of communicating information about members and vehicles of the police and UDR, and Madden admitted two similar charges.

Passing sentence, Judge Ian Higgins said all the offences committed by Madden and the two O'Boyles stemmed from membership of the Provisional IRA and had resulted from the evil influence of a much older man who was apparently still walking about the streets.

He did not think any distinction should be made between the three accused as they were equally and deeply involved in the conspiracy charges.

## Arrest

There might be some substance in the point made by defence counsel that they may have welcomed arrest because they made no attempt to get away to the Republic after other people were arrested.

Eoin O'Boyle received seven concurrent six year sentences for the other offences; Madden got five six-year concurrent sentences, and Michael O'Boyle got three six-year concurrent sentences.

A fifth man who pleaded guilty to having possession of two rifles under suspicious circumstances was sentenced to two years in a young offenders' centre, suspended for three years.

The court heard that 20-year-old Jas Gerard Walsh of Innisruch Road, Portglenone, had admitted driving Madden to Letterkenny to collect the M1 carbines and taking them to the hiding place in the bog.

The judge told him transporting guns was a serious offence and merited a three-year jail sentence. But Walsh had already spent over a year in prison, and he felt it would be more appropriate to ensure his good conduct in future.



★ The Lord Mayor Alderman John Carson with the National President of the Federation of Sub Postmasters Mr E. F. Mackenzie (second left) on a visit to Northern Ireland with the Northern Ireland President Mr N. Kennedy Mr D. L. Sleith (left) Treasurer and Mr I. Abernethy, Secretary.

# Council leader blocks support for GAA team

MR DAVID ROBINSON, the Official Unionist chairman of Limavady District Council, has claimed that the introduction of Gaelic football to Limavady would be "bringing politics in through the back door."

Mr Robinson was speaking at the monthly meeting of Limavady Sports Advisory Council, where SDLP councillor, Barry Doherty, asked for support in trying to persuade the district council to provide a playing pitch for a junior Gaelic football team.

Mr Doherty said the Limavady Wolfhounds Club had 120 members, all under 14 years old but it had only temporary use of a school pitch. He told the meeting the district council had turned down his request for a pitch.

He asked the sports body

## Bid for pitch thwarted

to support him by writing to Limavady District Council with a plea for a change of mind.

### Walked out

Mr Robinson said rule 15 of the Gaelic Athletic Association said no members of the security forces could par-

ticipate, and another rule said the national emblem should be displayed. "This means the tricolour," said Mr Robinson, "and this is bringing politics in through the back door."

Mr Robinson said many people in Limavady would object to this and advised members they should encourage the GAA to change its rules. After a long debate the sports body decided to take this course of action.

SDLP councillor, Roy King, walked out of the meeting, claiming the sports advisory council was discriminating against the GAA by writing to it and not to the district council.

On the flag issue, Mr King said he had seen many matches in the area but had yet to see a flag flown. Mr Doherty said the GAA rule on the security forces would not apply in this case, as all the members in the club were under 14. He said sons and daughters of members of the security forces were playing Gaelic sports all over Ireland.

# Government told to end segregation

AN OMAGH youth group has urged the Government to end segregation in education in Northern Ireland.

The Tyrone branch of the Irish Democratic Youth Movement said integration would benefit the people of Ireland.

The movement wanted religious orders to take a back seat in education.

"The churches have dominated Irish education for centuries and we are not in any way closer to a truly Christian society.

"Let us take a cold hard look at the education system and the kind of future we

## Scheme to help life after death

CRAIGAVON — People here will be asked tomorrow to help someone live after they are dead.

Portadown Junior Chamber is promoting the use of kidney and eye donor cards by direct contact with

## Booklets offer help to tourists

THE NORTHERN Ireland Tourist Board has released two new booklets to help holiday makers in Ulster.

The first, "Northern Ireland — Stop And Visit" lists the addresses, hours of opening and entrance fees to ancestral homes, museums, country parks, forests and gardens, entertainments and events around the Province.

"Northern Ireland — Caravans and Camp Sites" details all the sites in Ulster, including the charges and amenities available.

# APPO

Turners Building Products of Cement-Roadstone Representative. Turners cement products at their

## CIVIL ENGINEER

to promote the use of Tegral pipes in Northern Ireland.

The Position: The person Company at the highest level Department of the Environment Engineers. He/she will provide information on the suitability supply and sewerage and drainage

The Person: The successful familiar with the Construction effectively promote a quality A technical knowledge of schemes would be desirable. must be able to work on his/ minimum of supervision after

The Rewards: An attractive experience of the person a progressive company with Applications should be made details to date, in confidence

The New York Times said yesterday that Ireland was afflicted, both north and south, by a similar destructiveness with both parts living under harsh emergency laws.

"The Irish Republic actively co-operates in combating terrorism with the same northern security forces that Congress feels are undeserving of 3,000

# NEW Y

handguns," it said in an editorial.

The editorial defended the Times' recent position in questioning whether Congress was wise to impose an embargo on the sale of 3,000 revolvers to police in Northern Ireland.

Many of its readers had expressed indignation over the Times' stance and the weekly Irish Echo had



Chris Uprichard (on right), Deputy Regional Advisor, the sponsorship of the Annual Schools Inter-Provincial and July 1 to Jim Kirkwood, Ulster Schools wick Union and Mr A

# Roman coin

A hoard of 7,800 Roman coins unearthed from a farm field by a man with a metal detector belongs to the land owners, not Cr

not Cr says i

COVERING CONFIDENTIAL

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

GREAT GEORGE STREET,

LONDON SW1P 3AJ

4 July 1980

Michael Alexander Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

*Primi Paisley*  
*[Signature]*

*Prms 4/7*

*Dear Michael*

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH FERMANAGH  
WIDOWS : 7 JULY 1980

I enclose a brief for Monday's meeting.

Something that could be raised by these ladies is the possibility of a visit by the Prime Minister to Fermanagh. If it is raised, Mr Atkins suggests that the Prime Minister simply assures the ladies that their kind invitation will be borne in mind. There is no doubt that the Prime Minister would be entering a political battlefield if she were to go. Dr Paisley would claim credit for arranging the visit and would turn it into a personal coup, to the anger of other Unionists (and the OUP in particular).

*Yours sincerely*  
*Mike Hopkins*

M W HOPKINS

**CONFIDENTIAL**

PRIME MINISTER'S MEETING WITH MRS. LATIMER, MRS. KERNAGHAN,  
MRS. MORROW AND MRS. HOWE

Line to Take

The Prime Minister will no doubt wish to express her total sympathy with these four widows/and her Colleagues' determination to rid the Province of the evil which caused their husbands' deaths. She might like also to make the following points:

a) The Government do understand what life is like for ordinary people in Fermanagh in the face of terrorist activity today. Of course they are concerned. It is impossible to provide complete protection to every individual who might be thought to be at risk. But they are doing everything that it is sensible and worthwhile to do, to improve matters.

b) The police and Army are in fact making inroads on the terrorists in Fermanagh as elsewhere. It is of little personal comfort, but there has been much less violence in the county since the early part of this year.

c) The Chief Constable and the GOC decide how best to deploy their men to combat most effectively the terrorist threat throughout the Province. The Government is committed to giving the Security Forces the fullest support in their tasks.

The Prime Minister might also wish to ask the widows whether there is anything that the Secretary of State and his officials could do to improve their personal situation and that of others like them. (We have no evidence to suggest that the system is not working satisfactorily, but the widows might appreciate being asked).

Background

The meeting is taking place on Dr. Paisley's initiative. All four ladies, together with Dr. Paisley and others, have already met the Secretary of State (on 13 June). They are expected to present the Prime Minister with a large number of letters complaining about security in Fermanagh.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Contd.....

There have been six terrorist murders so far this year which were concentrated in the first quarter (annexed are details of the deaths of the husbands of the four widows). There are still major problems; part-time members of the RUC and UDR, in particular, remain vulnerable to cross-border attacks.

There has been an intensification of the political interest in security in Fermanagh. It appears that this is being orchestrated by certain Unionist politicians. In particular, Dr. Paisley seems intent on strengthening his traditionally slim electoral support in Fermanagh, and there is evidence that he is succeeding. The political exploitation of security in Fermanagh is itself a matter of concern to us: it could give encouragement both to PIRA, and to the Protestants to take the law into their own hands.

In recent months the security forces have stepped up their efforts in Fermanagh. Troop levels in the county were increased substantially some months ago. The police have increased both their mobile capability and their manpower, and have plans to augment their numbers further. They have also been concerning themselves with the personal security of the part-time security forces, providing escorts to and from work, etc. The security forces have closed, and will keep closed, 6 border crossings between Fermanagh and County Monaghan (in addition to the 4 closed earlier this year along that border). 2 more are to be closed shortly (these are not yet public knowledge).

Suggestions have been made lately - and the 4 widows may reiterate them - for seemingly tougher or more dramatic security measures in Fermanagh. These include, for example, "sealing" or mining the border, and deploying large numbers of extra troops to man permanent check points on the border. As noted in the line to take, it is for the Chief Constable and the GOC to decide how best to use their available resources to combat most effectively the threat in all parts of the Province.

The widows may also raise the question of extradition from the Republic, particularly since those responsible for their widowhood are generally believed to be there. The Prime Minister will be aware of the difficulties of extradition. We are nevertheless

Contd.....

E.R.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 3 -

hopeful of more prosecutions of fugitive offenders in the South under the extra-territorial legislation. The Prime Minister will recall mentioning this to Mr. Haughey at the recent EEC Summit in Venice. We have recently followed this up with the Irish, both on the diplomatic net and through the Attorney General's link with his opposite in Dublin.

CONFIDENTIAL

DEATHS OF HUSBANDS OF MEMBERS OF DEPUTATION

15 October 1979 - HERBERT KERNAGHAN of Lisnaskea, a part-time Corporal in C Coy 4 UDR, was shot dead while delivering groceries to Cordoolagh Primary School, Rosslea. 3 armed men took over the school and held the staff and children hostage in the Dining Hall. When Mr Kernaghan arrived in his grocer's van on a routine weekly call, the gunmen went up to the van and fired a number of shots through the driver's open window. 16 shots hit Mr Kernaghan, killing him instantly. The gunmen escaped in the school caretaker's car.

11 February 1980 - Constable WINSTON HOWE of the RUC was a member of an RUC mobile patrol travelling from Rosslea to Lisnaskea when the vehicle in which he was travelling was blown up by an 800lb culvert bomb. Constable Howe and Constable Joe Rose were both killed outright. A command wire was found leading from the scene of the explosion to a firing point 250 metres away in a derelict farm. It is thought that 2 men were involved in the murder.

17 April 1980 - ROBERT VICTOR MORROW, a 62 year old ex-member of 4 UDR was shot dead while walking from his home in Newtownbutler to work in Lisnaskea. Two gunmen who were waiting in a hedge at the side of the road fired several shots at him, fired more shots at point blank range then escaped in a car towards the border. Mr Morrow's body had 14 strike marks in the back and wounds to the head.

7 June 1980 - WILLIAM LATIMER, a part-time member of the UDR, was shot dead in his shop in the Main Street, Newtownbutler. Mr Latimer was alone in the shop when a man entered, produced a handgun and fired several shots killing Mr Latimer instantly. The gunman escaped by car in the direction of the border.

c. Mr. Alexander

C/V

NOTE FOR FILE - Widows from Co. Fermanagh

It is possible that Mrs. Latimer will bring her sister-in-law with her who is also called Latimer. The reason for this is that she has only shortly been widowed and is in a very emotional state and when she saw the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at Stormont she took along her sister-in-law for support.

*[Handwritten signature]*

3 July 1980





Wed 2/7

Dear Sir,

I wrote the Prime Minister about the meeting on Monday next at Downing Street.

In case the letter is delayed I enclose names of widows and their escorts.

The men folk will wait for them and then bring them back to the House. I hope facilities will be available for their escorts.

Sincerely



Widows

Mrs Harriet Howe

Mrs Shiva Kernaghan

Mrs Bonnie Latimer

Mrs R. V. Morrow

Accompanied by Mr Geo. Johnston }  
Mr Roy Kells }

PPS

R 3/7.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Parsonage,  
17 Cyprus Avenue,  
BELFAST BT5 5NT.

1st July 1980.

Dear Prime Minister,

This is to confirm the meeting with the Fermanagh widows and yourself on Monday next, 7th July at 3 pm in Downing Street.

They are: Mrs. Bonnie Latimer,  
Mrs. Harriet Howe,  
Mrs. Sylvia Kernoghan,  
Mrs. Morrow.

Mr. Roy Kells and Mr. George Johnston will accompany them to Downing Street and wait for them while you have your meeting.

Ami Stephens:

Has the new time been confirmed with Mr Pasley?

Sincerely

Jim Pasley

~~James Alexander~~ Ami Stephens

Yes - my letter to Rev Pasley attached. Ch. 4/7



10 DOWNING STREET

Cambridge

Am I right in  
thinking that  
no special briefing  
is required?

TURISH

3.7.

Yes - but N10  
are sending  
a brief note  
about how husband  
was murdered.  
cf. 3/7.

Ireland

2 July, 1980

Further to our telephone conversation this afternoon I am writing to confirm that the Prime Minister is looking forward to seeing the four widows from Fermanagh at 1630 on Monday, 7 July.

I must apologise again for the inconvenience that will be caused to these ladies by the change in timing.

CAROLINE STEPHENS

The Reverend Dr Ian Paisley, MP

B17

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Nick Sanders Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

20 June 1980

Dear Nick, <sup>MODBA</sup>

NBON yet  
Phms - W/6

Following our recent correspondence  
I understand the Prime Minister has  
agreed to meet some South Fermanagh widows.  
Although Mrs Moore was not one of the ladies  
who met Mr Atkins, she is clearly an associate  
... and you should perhaps see the enclosed  
correspondence.

Yours sincerely  
Mike Hopkins  
M W HOPKINS

Group/Class..... PREM 19.....

Piece..... 501.....

Letter from Linda Moore

dated 13 June 1980

(enclosure to letter from Hopkins  
to Sanders dated 20 June 1980)

Paper extracted and

temporarily retained

under Section 3(4)

Pending completion of  
review.

(date)..... 1 September 2011.....

(Signed)..... Wayland.....



C. 1010

JS

CF to note

10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

20 June 1980

Dear Mr. Paisley,

Thank you for your telegram of 10 June asking me to meet a group of ladies from South Fermanagh who have been widowed as a result of attacks by terrorists.

As my Private Secretary explained to you, it was not possible for me to meet them last week, and I therefore asked Humphrey Atkins to do so. He has reported to me the meeting which took place on 13 June. I know that he reiterated to you my own determination to eradicate terrorism throughout Northern Ireland. I also know that the security forces are taking all possible steps to combat the threat in South Fermanagh and I hope the coming months will see an improvement there.

Of course I share the grief of those who have lost family and friends through acts of terrorism. I should like to convey this personally to the four widows who attended the meeting at Stormont Castle and who, I understand, have a number of letters they wish to give me. Since this will be an occasion when I shall be expressing my personal sympathy to those who have suffered, I should prefer the widows to come to No. 10 unaccompanied. I am sure you will understand.

Perhaps someone would be good enough to contact my office to make arrangements for this visit.

Yours sincerely,

MT

The Reverend Dr. Ian Paisley, MP.

IMP



Group/Class ..... PREM 19  
Piece ..... 501

Letter to Mrs L. Moore  
dated 18 June 1980

Paper extracted and  
temporarily retained  
under Section 3(4)  
pending completion of  
review.  
(date) ..... 1 September 2011  
(Signed) ..... A Wayland

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
GREAT GEORGE STREET,  
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

18 June 1980

Nick Sanders Esq  
10 Downing Street  
London SW1

Dear Nick,

In your letter of 11 June you sought a draft reply to Dr Paisley's request to see the Prime Minister with a delegation of South Fermanagh widows.

As you know, Mr Atkins did in fact see the three DUP MP's and six ladies (four of them widows) last Friday. A note of the meeting is attached and you will see from this that it was a fairly emotional occasion. The delegation appear to have decided before the meeting took place that the large number of letters they had inspired about the Fermanagh security situation should not be handed to the Secretary of State, but should be presented personally to the Prime Minister (as originally intended).

The best course would seem to us to be for the Prime Minister to see a small number of widows - perhaps the four who attended on Friday - and take receipt of the letters. But we would suggest that the DUP MPs should not be invited to accompany them. As I explained to Michael Alexander in my letter of 10 June prior to the meeting with Lord Brookeborough, Unionists of various shades are engaged in a political battle for the favours of isolated Protestant families in South Fermanagh, and the DUP seem to us to be behaving particularly cynically over these widows. They would be able to make much of a visit to No 10, and Mr Atkins would hope this can be avoided.

We do recognise that a meeting with just the widows could prove difficult to arrange. However, if the DUP do dig their heels in and insist on being there, we hope you would be equally resolute: Dr Paisley's only link with South Fermanagh is as an MEP and he has already accompanied the party (with his two colleagues who have even less of a locus) to a long and thorough meeting with the Secretary of State. The proposed visit to No 10 should be on a rather different basis.

I attach for consideration a draft reply to Dr Paisley on these lines.

Yours sincerely  
Mike Hopkins

M W HOPKINS

London Papers by  
Refer

10/5

NOTE OF A MEETING AT STORMONT CASTLE ON FRIDAY 13 JUNE 1980

Those present: Secretary of State      Dr Paisley  
Mr Wyatt                                      Mr Robinson  
Mr Gilliland                                 Mr McQuade  
Mr Burns  
Mr Harrington                                Mrs R Latimer  
Mr Hargetts                                   Mrs D Latimer  
    Mrs Kernaghan  
    Mrs Morrow  
    Mrs Howe  
    Mrs Hutchinson

Prologue

1. Dr Paisley had previously sought the Prime Minister's agreement to a meeting with himself and women from County Fermanagh. The Prime Minister had been unable to arrange such a meeting and had asked the Secretary of State to see Dr Paisley. During the afternoon preceding the meeting (which started at 1800 hours) Dr Paisley had repeatedly attempted to expand the membership of the delegation to include some men to reinforce the womens' points. This demand was steadfastly refused.

2. The party of women, whose names are shown above, included four widows whose husbands had been the victims of terrorist violence. Mr Latimer, p/t UDR, shot dead 7 June 1980; Mr Kernaghan, p/t UDR, shot dead 15 October 1979; Mr Morrow, ex-p/t UDR, shot dead 17 April 1980 and Constable Howe, RUC, killed by a bomb, 11 February 1980. The remaining two women were Mrs D Latimer who was attending her grief-stricken sister-in-law, and Mrs Hutchinson whose husband is a member of the part-time security forces.

The meeting

3. Dr Paisley opened the meeting by reading to the Secretary of State one of many letters brought by the women as a petition to the Prime Minister. The letter which had been written by Mrs Latimer before the death of her husband and which sought immediate action to tighten up security in County Fermanagh caused a great deal of distress amongst the women. Mrs Kernaghan explained that these

letters were not to be handed to the Secretary of State for onward transmission to the Prime Minister; the delegation still wished to see Mrs Thatcher and to hand the letters over personally. The Secretary of State said that he would pass this request to the Prime Minister and asked whether the women had any specific ideas for improving security in County Fermanagh.

4. There was a great deal of support for closing border roads and sowing them with landmines. It was no good just cratering these roads since they could be quickly filled in; something permanent was required which would ensure that terrorists could not speedily escape across the border after carrying out the attack. It was further pointed out that vehicle checkpoints such as the one at the airport should be set up on a very restricted number of "approved" crossings. The Secretary of State said that he understood how blocking the roads would be a psychological boost to the morale of people near the border and added that he was currently studying the possibility of further road closures in the area and would welcome a note from the delegation specifying which roads they would prefer to see closed.

5. The delegation then turned to extradition as a means of resolving the cross-border terrorist threat. Mrs Morrow was obviously distressed by the "knowledge" that one of her husband's murderers was presently seen to be at liberty in Monaghan. The Secretary of State explained the difficulties involved in extraditing suspects from the Republic and said that pressure was being brought to bear upon the southern authorities to bring prosecutions under the extra territorial jurisdiction legislation.

6. The Secretary of State was then asked whether there was any possibility that the few remaining members of the security forces living in the Newtownbutler area could be afforded special protection. The Secretary of State said that he would talk to the Chief Constable

E. R.

and GOC about the possibility of such protection and asked if details could be given about the persons under threat. The delegation immediately reacted by giving the following details.

Bertie Hutchinson )  
Henry Johnston } p/t UDR  
Alan Moffett }

Desmond Wilson - EUC(R)

John McVitty )  
Ernest Johnston } HUC  
Robert Norman Morrow }

7. The discussion then turned to the possibility of reintroducing capital punishment or, at worst, stiffer prison sentences for terrorists. The Secretary of State explained the difficulty attached to reintroducing the death sentence, given that there had long been a parliamentary majority in favour of its abolition. He added that since the life sentence was indeterminate it could not be extended.

8. Just before they left the Secretary of State was handed copies of the attached Notice which illustrates the mood of the delegation.

#### Epilogue

9. The meeting with the delegation having ended, the Secretary of State agreed that he would give the County Fermanagh menfolk a few minutes. He outlined very briefly what he had discussed with the women and explained how he required a full list of the roads to be closed and a full list of members of the security forces needing protection in the border area. He further explained that it was impossible to apply any economic sanctions against the Republic and Dr Paisley accepted that no progress would ever be made on extradition.

*Jonathan Margrett*  
JONATHAN MARGRETT  
Private Secretary

16 June 1980

# IT'S NOT FAIR!

On Sunday morning I went into the Lattimer House in Newtownbatter. The first words I heard from the distressed young widow were "Oh, it's not fair"! Since then I have thought a lot about these words, and now I can say with conviction - "It's not fair"!

It's not fair that a few young men are out patrolling our roads and towns at night while others lie secure in their beds. It's not fair that some women have to wait in fear to see if their husbands come home alive. It's not fair that some children have to ask the question "Will Daddy ever be home again" ? while others have no such fears.

I say to you in all sincerity -

**IT'S NOT FAIR.**

What can YOU do to help?

You are not being asked to join any force or organisation, only to stand up and be counted as a Protestant - as a Protestant who cares, and as a Protestant who can say from the heart -

## IT'S NOT FAIR.

From

**A CARING MOTHER.**

Distribution:

PS/S of S (B & L) - 07.

PS/Mr Alison (B & L)

PS/PUS (B & L)

Mr Hannigan

Mr Wyatt

Mr Gilliland

Mr Burns

Mr Hanson

Mr Buxton - 01.

Mr Davenport

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

<p>To</p> <p>The Rev Dr Ian Paisley MP</p> <p>House of Commons</p> <p>London SW1</p> <p>(Full Postal Address)</p>	<p>Enclosures</p>	<p>Copies to be sent to</p> <p><i>cc 19</i></p> <p><i>Type for signature</i></p> <p>(Full Address, if Necessary)</p>
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LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY THE PRIME MINISTER  
(Name of Signatory)

Thank you for your telegram of 10 June asking me to meet a group of ladies from South Fermanagh who have been widowed as a result of attacks by terrorists.

As my Private Secretary explained to you, it was not possible for me to meet them last week, and I therefore asked Humphrey Atkins to do so. He has reported to me the meeting which took place on 13 June, ~~and~~ I know that he reiterated to you my own determination to eradicate terrorism throughout Northern Ireland. I also know that the security forces are taking all possible steps to combat the threat in South Fermanagh and I hope the coming months will see an improvement there.

*Share the grief of*  
~~Meanwhile I do~~ Of course ~~have the greatest sympathy~~ with those who have lost family and friends through acts of terrorism. I should *convey ~~express~~ this personally to the four widows who attended* like to ~~suggest that, by way of a follow up to the meeting at Stormont Castle, a small group of widows should now come to see me at No. 10.~~ *and who, I understand,*

~~I understand they have a number of letters they wish to give me. In~~ *Since this will be an occasion when I shall be expressing my personal sympathy to those who have suffered,* ~~this situation I should like to suggest that they see me unaccompanied.~~ *refer the widows to come to No 10*



I am sure you will understand.

Perhaps someone would be good enough to contact my office to make arrangements for this visit.

PRIME MINISTER

cc:- Mr Alexander

FERMANAGH WIDOWS

You will remember that earlier in the week you agreed that Mr Atkins should see the group of widows from County Fermanagh ~~last~~ who had asked via Peter Robinson and Ian Paisley to come and see you. Mr Atkins saw the group this afternoon. They had with them a thousand letters addressed to you and, repeated their request to have a meeting with you personally. Mr Atkins' Office described the meeting as emotional but, at least in part, constructive.

The Northern Ireland Office will be letting us have early next week some considered advice on how we might handle the next steps. They may suggest that you should see a representative group, without Ian Paisley present. In the meantime, we have alerted our Press Office in case Mr Paisley seeks publicity over the weekend.

MS

13 June, 1980

file

ds

Mr Ian PAISLEY  
(widows)

11 June 1980

Chase?

coming this week

- promised by NIO

MS W/C

I attach a copy of a telegram the Prime Minister has received from Ian Paisley about the proposed delegation of widows from South Fermanagh. As you will know, the Prime Minister has decided to decline to see this group. I shall be telephoning Peter Robinson later today to let him know of this decision and to offer him a meeting with your Secretary of State instead. I should be grateful if you could let me have as soon as possible a draft reply for the Prime Minister to send to Mr. Paisley.

I will of course let you know when I have been in touch with Mr. Robinson.

N J SANDERS

Mike Hopkins, Esq.,  
Northern Ireland Office.

MS

11 June 1980

I am writing on behalf of the Prime Minister to thank you for your telegram dated 10 June. I will place it before her and you will be sent a reply as soon as possible.

N J SANDERS

The Reverend Ian Paisley, M.P.



2

10 DOWNING STREET

PRIME MINISTER

This telegram from Ian  
Paisley is about the  
request from the South  
Fermanagh widows to come  
and see you. We will let  
you have a draft reply.

MS

Requet

mb

11 June 1980

299992 PO TS G  
747651 PO BE G

B56 1940 BELFAST T 80

OVERNIGHT  
THE PRIMEMINSTER 10 DOWNING STREET LONDON

A DEPUTATION OF WIDOWS FROM THE STRICKEN BATTLEFIELD  
OF COUNTY FERMANAGH HAVE ASKED ME AS THEIR  
EUROPEAN MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT TO REQUEST AN URGENT MEETING  
WITH YOURSELF STOP THERE MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT IS A REPUBLICAN  
AND WILL NOT HELP THEREFORE I MUST ACT ON THEIR BEHALF STOP  
THIS DEPUTATION REPRESENTS SOME FIFTY WOMEN WHOSE HUSBANDS  
HAVE BEEN MURDERED BY THE IRA AND THOSE MURDERERS ESCAPED  
SAFELY ACROSS TO CHARLIE HAUGHEYS REPUBLIC  
IAN PAISLEY

COL 10

299992 PO TS G  
747651 PO BE G

10 JUN 80 0593

69



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'R. G.' or similar, written over the bottom portion of the teletype message.