

S E C R E T

GRS 540

SECRET

FM WASHINGTON 130008Z FEB 82

TO IMMEDIATE FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 481 OF 12 FEBRUARY

INFO NIO LONDON, NIO BELFAST AND DUBLIN

NORTHERN IRELAND : PIRA ARRESTS

1. FIVE IRISHMEN, TRAVELLING IN TWO CARS FROM CANADA, WERE ARRESTED IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK, ON SATURDAY 6 FEBRUARY ATTEMPTING TO ENTER THE US ILLEGALLY. DETAILS OF THE FIVE, WHO ARE DUE TO APPEAR IN COURT IN BUFFALO ON 16 FEBRUARY CHARGED WITH IMMIGRATION OFFENCES, WILL ALREADY BE AVAILABLE TO YOU ON OTHER CHANNELS.

2. AS YOU KNOW, ONE OF THOSE ARRESTED HAS TURNED OUT ON INVESTIGATION TO BE DESMOND ELLIS, WHO WAS ARRESTED IN DUBLIN IN MAY 1981 FOR POSSESSION OF ELECTRONIC REMOTE-CONTROLLED DEVICES. WE UNDERSTAND THAT ELLIS IS LINKED BY FORENSIC EVIDENCE TO SOME FIFTY MURDERS IN NORTHER IRELAND AND THE REPUBLIC, *

3. WE HAVE TOLD THE STATE DEPARTMENT THAT, WHILE WE WERE NOT YET IN A POSITION TO SAY WHETHER ELLIS WAS WANTED IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WE DID KNOW THAT HE WAS WANTED IN DUBLIN AND THAT, GIVEN HIS RECORD, WE HOPED THAT STEPS COULD BE TAKEN TO ENSURE THAT HE WAS NOT SIMPLY SENT BACK TO CANADA FOLLOWING NEXT TUESDAY'S COURT HEARING AND THUS ESCAPE FROM JUSTICE.

4. STATE DEPARTMENT HAD HEARD ABOUT ELLIS FROM THE US EMBASSY IN DUBLIN FOLLOWING AN APPROACH FROM THE IRISH AUTHORITIES WHO HAD EXPRESSED KEEN INTEREST IN HIS BEING RETURNED TO THE REPUBLIC. IN THE ABSENCE OF A US/REPUBLIC OF IRELAND EXTRADITION TREATY, IT MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR THE US TO HOLD ELLIS MUCH BEYOND TUESDAY'S HEARING. UNLESS SENT FOR TRIAL HE COULD EITHER BE SENT BACK TO CANADA OR POSSIBLY DEPORTED TO A COUNTRY OF HIS CHOICE. EVEN IF SENT FOR TRIAL, HE COULD EXPECT TO BE RELEASED ON BAIL. STATE DEPARTMENT ARE, HOWEVER, WILLING TO HELP AND WILL DO WHAT THEY CAN TO AVOID AN EARLY OUTCOME WHICH WOULD ALLOW ELLIS TO GO FREE.

S E C R E T

/ 5. IF ELLIS

~ Passage deleted and closed, 40 years,
under FOI Exemption.

Wayland
2 October 2012