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Ireland

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FM NIO BELFAST  
TO IMMEDIATE DUBLIN  
TELNO 020  
OF 051040Z DECEMBER 85

A good  
message  
CDD

IN DUBLIN FOR MR D HOLT FROM MR C MACCABE

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF THE CHIEF CONSTABLE'S MESSAGE TO THE RUC. IT WAS CIRCULATED TO THE FORCE BY TELEX ON 29 NOVEMBER AND LEAKED TO THE MEDIA SOON AFTERWARDS. THE CHIEF CONSTABLE IS STILL CONSIDERING IF HE SHOULD NOW RELEASE IT TO THE MEDIA:-

QUOTE

THE RUC AND THE ANGLO-IRISH AGREEMENT

AFTER DISCUSSION WITH HIS CHIEF OFFICERS, THE CHIEF CONSTABLE, SIR JOHN HERMON, HAS TODAY ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS OF THE FORCE:

1. POLITICS IS NOT THE BUSINESS OF THE RUC. OUR BUSINESS IS POLICING. IT IS A RESPONSIBILITY WITH WHICH WE ARE ENTRUSTED ON BEHALF OF ALL THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND.

2. I AM CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT WHILST THE RUC ITSELF HAS ABSOLUTELY NO POLITICAL STANCE, WE LIVE AND WORK IN A SHARPLY DIVIDED POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT WHICH MAKES OUR TASK EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT. IT IS NOT LIKELY TO BE ANY EASIER IN THE PERIOD AHEAD, FACED AS WE ARE BY CONTINUING TERRORISM AND BY COMMUNITY TENSIONS.

3. IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THEREFORE THAT I SHOULD ATTEMPT TO CLEAR THE AIR ON SOME QUESTIONS WHICH ARE BOUND TO ARISE IN YOUR MINDS.

4. THE ROLE OF THE RUC  
THE ROLE OF THE RUC HAS NOT CHANGED. OPERATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RUC REMAINS WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE.

5. THE INTEGRITY OF THE RUC  
I HAVE BEEN A MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY FOR 35 YEARS AND CHIEF CONSTABLE FOR CLOSE ON SIX YEARS. AS A POLICEMAN I HOLD FIRMLY TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT THE POLICE SHOULD BE FREE FROM POLITICAL INTERFERENCE AND DIRECTION. I DO NOT INTEND TO COMPROMISE OR SURRENDER THAT PRINCIPLE IN ANY WAY, NOR IS THERE ANY PRESSURE ON ME TO DO SO. THIS IS FUNDAMENTALLY IMPORTANT BUT NOT FOR SELFISH POLICE REASONS. IT IS A POWERFUL GUARANTEE AGAINST POLITICAL POLICING WHICH WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE PUBLIC GOOD AND ABHORRENT TO PROFESSIONAL POLICE OFFICERS. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN IS THAT WHILST WE PLACE A HIGH VALUE ON OUR FREEDOM FROM POLITICAL

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DIRECTION, WE MUST EMBRACE THE NECESSITY OF FULL ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE WAY IN WHICH WE DISCHARGE OUR DUTIES. THE SUREST SAFEGUARD OF THE INTEGRITY OF OUR POSITION AS A POLICE FORCE IS OUR OWN PROFESSIONALISM BY WHICH I MEAN SIMPLY, DECENT, HONEST, FAIR POLICING.

### 6. INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE

THE AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR THE SETTING UP OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE. AS AND WHEN INVITED BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE - WHO IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAS THE SAME GENERAL LAW AND ORDER RESPONSIBILITY AS THE HOME SECRETARY IN BRITAIN - I SHALL ATTEND THE CONFERENCE WHEN QUESTIONS OF SECURITY POLICY OR SECURITY CO-OPERATION ARE BEING DISCUSSED. I SHALL BE ATTENDING AS A POLICEMAN AND I SHALL BE ATTENDING WITH POLICE OBJECTIVES CLEARLY IN MIND. I REPEAT MY ABSOLUTE DETERMINATION TO SEE TERRORISM DEFEATED. I RESTATE MY RESOLVE TO DO ALL IN MY POWER TO ASSIST IN CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN WHICH PEOPLE CAN LEAD THEIR LIVES IN PEACE AND SAFETY. I CAN NOT AND WILL NOT ACCEPT THE INEVITABILITY OF CONTINUING LOSS OF LIFE. I AM COMMITTED, IN SO FAR AS LIES WITHIN MY RESPONSIBILITY, TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND BY COMBATING CRIMINALITY IN ALL ITS FORMS AND ENLISTING MAXIMUM PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR POLICING. SPECIFICALLY, BETTER CROSS-BORDER CO-OPERATION IS ESSENTIAL TO AN IMPROVEMENT OF THE SECURITY SITUATION AND IT WILL CERTAINLY BE A MOST IMPORTANT ITEM FOR DISCUSSION. TO THIS END I LOOK FORWARD, AS I HAVE ALWAYS DONE, TO ESTABLISHING CLOSER CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE GARDA SIOCHANA AND THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY AND TO DISCUSSION IN PERSON WITH THE GARDA COMMISSIONER.

### 7. ARMY/UDR PATROLS

THE ULSTER DEFENCE REGIMENT IS A REGIMENT OF THE ARMY AND REFERENCES TO THE ARMY IN THIS CONTEXT THEREFORE INCLUDE THE UDR. AN IMPRESSION HAS BEEN CREATED THAT NOW OR IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC MAY EXPECT NOT TO STOPPED BY AN ARMY PATROL OPERATING ALONE SEMI COLON THAT ALL MILITARY PATROLS WILL HENCEFORTH BE ACCOMPANIED BY POLICE. THAT IS NOT SO. OVER THE YEARS, AS THE STRENGTH OF THE RUC HAS INCREASED AND AS THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE HAS DECREASED, THE RUC HAS MORE AND MORE CARRIED OUT ITS DUTIES WITHOUT MILITARY SUPPORT. TO-DAY MOST POLICING IN MOST PARTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND IS CARRIED OUT BY THE RUC ACTING ON ITS OWN. OVER THE YEARS ALSO IT HAS INCREASINGLY BEEN THE PRATICE FOR MORE ARMY PATROLS TO INCLUDE A POLICE PRESENCE, PARTICULARLY WHERE COMMUNITY CONTACT AND ENFORCEMENT OF THE ORDINARY LAW ARE INVOLVED. THIS IS A HIGHLY DESIRABLE PROCESS, TO WHICH THE ARMY IS FULLY COMMITTED, AND TOGETHER WE SHALL INCREASINGLY ENSURE THAT IT IS ADVANCED. THIS IS NOT IN ANY WAY TO DIMINISH THE ROLE OF THE ARMY, WHOSE PRESENCE REMAINS INDISPENSABLE, BUT IT DOES UNDERLINE AND GIVE EFFECT TO ESTABLISHED POLICY OF THE MILITARY ACTING IN SUPPORT OF THE POLICE WHERE REQUIRED. IT IS AN EVOLVING PROCESS AND THE PUBLIC MUST STILL EXPECT TO FIND ARMY PATROLS UNACCOMPANIED BY POLICE.

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**8. RUMOURS**

RUMOURS AND ILL-FOUNDED REPORTS ABOUND IN THE PRESENT SITUATION. INSOFAR AS THEY CONCERN THE POLICE LET ME SAY THAT THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY WILL CONTINUE TO BE THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY AS PRESENTLY CONSTITUTED, WITH SOLE RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICING NORTHERN IRELAND. THE UNIFORM OF THE RUC WILL CONTINUE TO BE DARK GREEN AND EXISTING BADGES WILL REMAIN.

9. LASTLY, MAY I SAY THAT OVER THESE PAST 16 YEARS AND MORE, THE RUC HAS CARRIED A HEAVY BURDEN AND MADE GRIEVOUS SACRIFICES. I TAKE MUCH PRIDE IN THE FACT THAT OVER SUCH A PROLONGED PERIOD THE RUC HAS REMAINED STEADFAST AND UNSHAKEN. THAT PRIDE IS SHARED BY VERY MANY OTHERS OUTSIDE THE RUC. I BELIEVE THAT THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND CAN RIGHTLY REPOSE CONFIDENCE IN OUR COMMITMENT TO THEM. WE FOR OUR PART MUST DO ALL WITHIN OUR POWER TO ENHANCE THAT CONFIDENCE AND WE MUST STRIVE FURTHER TO PERSUADE THOSE PEOPLE WHO DOUBT OR QUESTION THAT WE ARE DESERVING OF THEIR CONFIDENCE. I BELIEVE THAT OUR FUTURE LIES IN OUR ABIDING DEDICATION TO SERVING ALL THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND IMPARTIALLY AND JUSTLY, WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR, WITHOUT REGARD TO RELIGION CLASS OR CREED.

STPHENS

**REPEATED AS REQUESTED**

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MR DEREK THOMAS  
SIR W HARDING  
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-3-

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