

From: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

Indirect. CF?



NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE
GREAT GEORGE STREET,
LONDON SW1P 3AJ

Michael Pattison Esq
Private Secretary
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

26 May 1981

Type for PM's signature

Am

Dear Mike

You asked for a draft letter for the Prime Minister to send to Mr Molyneaux in reply to his letter to her of 12 May about the mortar bomb attacks on Newtownhamilton and Rosslea RUC stations in County Fermanagh on 8 and 9 May respectively. Ten mortar bombs were fired at each police station and both stations were extensively damaged. There were five army casualties. Preliminary forensic tests have indicated that the mortars used in these attacks were of a kind manufactured by the Provisional IRA.

The correspondence has of course been largely overtaken not only by Mr Molyneaux's question to the Prime Minister at question time on 12 May, but by the meeting the Prime Minister and my Secretary of State had with Mr Molyneaux on ¹⁴14 May when this subject was raised. Mr Atkins said then that there had been some evidence of test firing in the Republic and if Mr Molyneaux had proof of this it would be put to the Irish authorities at once. However you may still think it worth sending Mr Molyneaux a simple reply in the lines of the draft attached.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Francis Richards (FCO) and David Wright (Cabinet Office).

*Yours sincerely
Mike Stephens*

M W HOPKINS

DRAFT LETTER

FILE NUMBER.....

ADDRESSEE'S REFERENCE.....

To

James H Molyneaux JP MP
House of Commons
Westminster
London
SW1A 0AA

(Full Postal Address)

Enclosures

Copies to be sent to

HIDDEN COPIES:

PS/Secretary of State

(Full Address, if Necessary)

LETTER DRAFTED FOR SIGNATURE BY PRIME MINISTER
(Name of Signatory)

You wrote to me on 12 May about recent mortar attacks on the security forces in County Fermanagh, and the subject came up at your meeting with Humphrey Atkins and myself on 14 May. I invited you then to send me whatever information you had on the attacks.

The evidence so far is that the mortars appear to have been manufactured by the terrorists themselves. But the final results of the forensic tests which are being conducted will not be available for a while yet.

SD