



Northern
Ireland
Office

THE INQUIRY INTO HISTORICAL INSTITUTIONAL ABUSE 1922 TO 1995

Witness Statement of the Northern Ireland Office

Introduction

1. This statement responds to the letter from the Inquiry dated 26 September 2016 and addresses the issues relating to the NIO raised by the HIA Inquiry in that document. I have responded to these to the best of my knowledge. Given the passage of time this is constructed from my understanding of procedures at the time.
2. Background information in relation to how the Daily Intelligence Summary report (DIS725A) was identified by the HIA Inquiry is set out in the sixth supplementary statement to the SIS witness statement. The SIS statement also provides details of searches conducted by SIS at the request of the HIA Inquiry to identify any records held that relate to the DIS reports, their origins and who they were distributed to.
3. DCI Staff would have been responsible for the handling and circulation of the Daily Intelligence Summary. The documents show that distribution would have included the Northern Ireland Office. However given the passage of time, there can be no guarantee that this intelligence report (or any others) would, as a matter of course, have been seen by specific officials within the Northern Ireland Office. I am informed none of these reports has ever appeared on NIO files and indeed it would have been regarded as a serious breach of security if anyone in NIO had taken a copy of an intelligence document of this kind and classification and put it on one of our files. This would therefore explain why no copy of any such document was found in the papers held by the NIO.



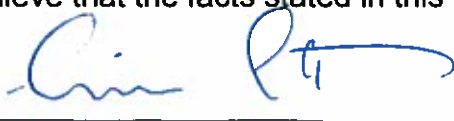
Northern
Ireland
Office

4. It can of course be speculated that the report might have been circulated at senior level within the Northern Ireland Office under secure conditions, with it being returned to the originator as we understand was the case with some other intelligence documents. But, regrettably, some 40 years after its production, there is no way in which this can now be verified. In this sense, therefore, we can see no sound basis on which the NIO can provide answers to the questions posed.
5. It should also be noted that the report is very highly classified. It is our understanding that documents of this sensitivity were very unlikely to have been made available to the DHSS or any other Northern Ireland Department.
6. We would draw the Inquiry's attention to the fact that these DIS reports were summaries which contained many individual reports on discrete topics. Readers of DIS reports would have been likely to have focused their attention only on those items of relevance to their specific areas of responsibility at that time. There would be no guarantee therefore that the recipient of any particular report would have read its entire contents.

Statement of Truth

7. I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed



Dated

1.12.2016
