

Special Report

SPECIAL BRANCH

31 day of May 19 72

SUBJECT Northern
Minority Defence
Force

Reference to Papers
588/UNREG/1014

1. The following information has been received from a reliable source:

2. "Following a general meeting of the Northern Minority Defence Force on Thursday 25 May 1972 at the Irish Centre, Camden Town (separately reported) a meeting of the Officers' Committee of the Military Wing was convened. The following persons were present:

Privacy

Ian CAMERON

Privacy

3. Privacy chaired the meeting and opened by saying that it had been their intention to send a unit of twenty men to Londonderry to help defend the barricades against possible attack from the 'Vanguard' Movement and contact had been made with representatives of both wings of the Republican Movement for 'safe conduct' through the barricades into 'Free Derry'. However, the situation had now changed and it appeared that 'Vanguard' would not carry out its threat to dismantle the barricades. It was still necessary, however, for the NMDF to establish contact in Londonderry and Privacy stated that it was now their intention to send across a small party of officers to set up a liaison with leaders of both wings of the IRA. He proposed that the party comprise himself, Privacy and Ian CAMERON and also suggested that they take a new member of the organisation, Privacy recently arrived in this country from the Creggan Estate in Londonderry, to act as a guide. They would leave London on the morning of Thursday 1 June, 1972 in Privacy car which he had already booked onto the Fishguard - Rosslare night ferry, drive through the Republic and cross the border at a convenient point for Londonderry. They would return some time after the following weekend. The object of the trip was to show support for the IRA (both provisional and official) and ask how the NMDF could most effectively be used both in Ireland and Great Britain. Final arrangements would be made on the day before departure.

3. There then followed a selection board for prospective members of the Military Wing of the NMDF. The following five persons were interviewed:

Privacy

4. [Privacy] [Privacy] aged 19 years, arrived in England in April 1972 from the Creggan Estate in Londonderry. At present he is employed as a storeman (no further details known at present.) Whilst in Londonderry he acted as a street 'vigilante' in the Creggan Estate and took part in several demonstrations. He gave as a reference [Privacy] [Privacy] who he said was a member of the 'Official' Wing of the IRA. [Privacy] said that he would be prepared to leave for Northern Ireland at an hour's notice if required to do so. He was accepted into the Military Wing.

5. [Privacy] [Privacy] aged 24 years, said that he had come to England from the Creggan Estate four years ago and was at present employed as a bricklayer. He said that when he was in Londonderry he had been involved in demonstrations and riots but not in an 'official' capacity. He said that he was a brother of [Privacy] and would also be prepared to leave for Northern Ireland at a moment's notice if necessary. He also was accepted.

6. [Privacy] [Privacy] aged 20 years, a friend of the previous two, had also travelled from the Creggan Estate to England in April and was now employed as a storeman. He said that he had been actively engaged in the Creggan, particularly in the Catholic ex-Servicemen's Association and in Citizen Defence Groups. He said that he received training in drill and weapon handling from members of the CESA and although he had not fired a weapon, he had been used in Vigilante groups, stopping and checking the identities of persons travelling through the 'Free Derry' area. He said that weapons were in fairly short supply in Derry and that when an action was taking place they could not receive training as all the weapons were in use. He gave [Privacy] a member of the 'Official' wing of the IRA as a reference. When asked what the people in Derry thought of the actions or lack of actions by ex-patriot Irishmen in London [Privacy] said that it was never discussed. He said that the only time England had been mentioned was immediately after 'Bloody Sunday' when some members of the IRA were demanding that the fight be taken to England. [Privacy] was accepted into the Military Wing.

7. [Privacy] [Privacy] aged 21 years, said that he had come to England from Co Sligo in April 1972 after being discharged from the Free State Army for 'political reasons'. On arriving in England he had applied to join the British Army but they had discovered his 'political convictions' and he had not been accepted. He was at present employed as a labourer. When asked why he had attempted to join the British Army he said it was for the same reasons as for joining the Irish Army - namely to receive training in firearms which he could then put to use within the Irish Republican Army. He claimed to have been very active within the 'Official' wing of the IRA and to have received basic training in the handling of .303 rifles and sub-machine guns whilst at an 'Official' IRA training camp in the Republic. He gave as his reference [Privacy] [Privacy] who he said was the Commanding Officer of the Western Region of the 'Official' Wing of the IRA. He was not pressed on his reasons for no longer being in the IRA and was accepted into the NMDF.

8. [Privacy] Irish Centre, [Privacy] [Privacy] said that he arrived in Britain in November 1958. On 11 April 1961 he joined the Irish Guards in which he had served for three years. His service number was [Privacy]. During this time he had received thorough training in weapons and had achieved marksman status. On leaving the army he gained employment as a labourer until 1971 when he again joined the British Army, Royal Pioneer Corps. For the next 5½ months he was stationed in barracks in Northampton but was discharged from the army for 'political reasons.' His service number on this occasion was [Privacy]. He is now employed as a pipelayer. [Privacy] boasted he could strip down any weapon given to him and could train any person in the handling of weapons. He said that he knew that he should not divulge such information as he was still covered by the Official Secrets Acts but he could draw a complete plan of the barracks at Northampton. He said that he knew the times of guard patrols and that the guards were armed with nothing more than wooden clubs. He said that he knew the location of the armoury and that it was an easy building to gain entry to. He was told by [Privacy] that he might be required to draw such a plan. [Privacy] also said that he was willing to do absolutely anything he was asked to do including 'silencing' anyone or to taking part in any raids or bank robberies. He was accepted into the Military Wing with reservations.

9. Although the applicants were told that they were not joining a unit of the IRA and would not receive training in weapons in this country they were obviously not convinced and genuinely thought that the NMDF was a 'front' organisation for IRA activities in this country. The last two persons interviewed, [Privacy] appeared virulent and are not likely to remain within the NMDF if they do not receive the training they are expecting. They seem quite capable of organising or taking part in violent unlawful activities.

10. As the time was now 12.30 am the Committee terminated its activities for that day. Several other applicants have still to be interviewed."

11. Special Branch references are given in the attached appendix.

[HN294] 1
Detective Inspector

Submitted: [Redacted] 2

[Redacted] HN294
[Redacted] Chief Inspector

[Signature]
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT





A P P E N D I X

Appendix to Special Branch Report dated 31 May 1972 concerning a meeting of the Officers' Committee of the Northern Minority Defence Force

Ian CAMERON ✓

Privacy

Mentions re NMDF ✓

Mentions re NMDF ✓

No trace ✓

probably Privacy

Privacy who, on Privacy at Derry MC was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment for disorderly behaviour Privacy

Privacy

Privacy

Unable to identify ✓

Privacy

Privacy

No trace ✓

RF Privacy

No trace

No trace

Mentions re NMDF ✓

Unable to identify

