

## GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH UNEXPECTED CALLERS OFFERING DECOMMISSIONING OF ILLEGAL WEAPONS

1. The Commission's efforts will concentrate on decommissioning of weapons, ammunition and explosives in the hands of paramilitary groups who are observing the ceasefire.
2. However, in its draft report to the two Governments, the Commission has signaled that it has prepared contingency plans to handle unexpected contacts (by telephone or otherwise) from apparently unaffiliated individuals seeking to decommission illegal weapons, ammunition, or explosives.
3. The Commission proposes the adhere to the following guidelines in such cases:
  - a. If the Commission receives a telephone call or other information informing us that there are weapons, ammunition or explosives at a certain location, and the caller gives no further information or particulars (or refuses to do so), we will log the call (date, time, length, subject, initial assessment) and pass the raw information to the respective authorities in the appropriate jurisdiction.
  - b. If the Commission is contacted by a person requesting information on how an item or items could be decommissioned, but this person is reluctant or unwilling to meet with Commission representatives, we will suggest that the individual seek the assistance of a clergyman, solicitor, or other trusted person from the community who can contact the Commission on their behalf. Clergymen and solicitors are established public figures in any community, and they have legal privileges that allow them to act on behalf of penitents or clients. They could serve as a logical contact point to the Commission in such cases, but we do not rule out the possibility that there could be other valuable interlocutors from the community.
  - c. If the Commission is contacted by a person seeking a direct meeting with the Commission to discuss a potential decommissioning, we will as a general proposition suggest a transparent meeting with Commission representatives (eg at



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Commission offices in Dublin or Belfast during normal working hours), Such a transparent meeting would offer the Commission representatives an opportunity to explain the decommissioning process, establish bona fides, answer questions, and offer reassurance regarding no forensic testing and no use in prosecutions.

- d. If the Commission is contacted by a person who refuses to work within any of the possible options above, or insists on some unusual timing, location, or other conditions for a contact, the Commission's general rule will be one of prudent caution. The caller will be informed of our general willingness to hold transparent meetings as provided in section "c" above, and the call will be logged according to normal Commission procedures. Further action would depend on a careful weighing of potential costs and benefits by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.
- e. If the Commission is contacted by a person offering information about the location or possession of weapons, ammunition, or explosives in return for compensation, the Commission will decline the offer. The caller will be informed that the Commission has no mandate and no funds for such activities.
- f. If the Commission is contacted by a person requesting that Commission representatives be present to observe the destruction of weapons by a person holding them, we shall act as provided in section "c" above. The Commission will insist on a transparent meeting with Commission representatives (eg at Commission offices in Dublin or Belfast during normal working hours) to ascertain the bona fides of the person or the offer before making any commitment on Commission involvement. As a general rule, we will need to be well satisfied that a serious offer is being made. If a decommissioning is agreed, the Commission will make no deviation from its standards of safety, verification and control.
- g. Furthermore, the Commission will not agree to participate in any form of destruction of ammunition or explosives by individuals. However, it may consider assisting in the decommissioning of such items under the same type of safety,

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verification and control measures that will apply in the case of decommissioning by paramilitary groups.

- h. As a possible variation, if the Commission is contacted by a person offering to turn over the pieces or fragments of allegedly destroyed weapons, we will proceed as noted in section "c" above; depending on the circumstances involved, our suggestion may be for the person or his/her representative to contact the respective authorities in the jurisdiction to arrange for turning in the items.

- 4. The Commission does not pretend that these guidelines cover or have anticipated all of life's contingencies. Surprises cannot be ruled out, and Commission staff will have to be prepared for them. On the other hand, the guidelines hopefully make clear our general strategy: Accessibility, prudence, concern for bona fides, and transparency in our dealings.

October 28, 1997

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