

## The International Body

Meeting with RUC Chief Constable Hugh Annesley  
January 12, 1996  
Belfast

### Summary

RUC Chief Constable Annesley reiterated to the International Body that in his view Sinn Fein cannot deliver on prior decommissioning under present circumstances and stressed the importance of progress on the political front to keep the ceasefire intact.

### Account of Meeting

Annesley reaffirmed his previous view that the IRA wants to hold the ceasefire and that Sinn Fein cannot deliver on prior decommissioning. Sinn Fein statements on the subject reflect reality. Annesley said that the RUC believes, and has consistently maintained, that the IRA cannot deliver on a permanent ceasefire. Gerry Adams would be politically finished were he to try to deliver. There is no question that decommissioning would be the first issue on the agenda of all-party talks.

Annesley said that 80% of the "punishment beatings" represent attempts to enforce internal discipline within the paramilitaries.

The IRA, Annesley noted, continues to train with arms, to produce explosives, and to target individuals.

Annesley said the ceasefire has been considerably more extensive than expected, but optimism that the ceasefire will can be held will wane in the absence of political progress.

Annesley said that drugs are a significant source of income for the republicans. The IRA wants to be in control of the drug trade in its territory.

Annesley acknowledged that Catholics are underrepresented in the RUC, especially at lower levels. He observed that any Catholic who joins the RUC is at considerable risk within his own community. Since the ceasefire, however, applications to join the RUC from Catholics have risen from 12.5% to 18.5%. The SDLP will not support the RUC until the RUC is more representative, but of course it is difficult to attract more Catholics to join the RUC if they run the risk of becoming pariahs within their own community. As long as the RUC is not acceptable in some areas, Sinn Fein will in effect fulfill a policing role.

Annesley, noting that until 1969 RUC officers carried no weapons, said the RUC cannot disarm until the terrorist threat disappears.