



Inishoneil
Carndonagh
Co. Donegal

23rd January 2012

FAO

The Chairperson & Committee Members

Eoin Kinane

Committee Secretariat

Committee of Public Accounts

Dear Mr Kinane,

I would appreciate it if you would circulate this letter to committee members of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC).

On Thursday last (19th January), I attended as an observer the meeting PAC held with representatives of the Dept. of Defence and the representatives of the Irish Red Cross Society.

I must state it is difficult as a committed member of the Irish Red Cross of some 38 years to observe the charade that was presented to the Committee. One might liken the evidence given by the Irish Red Cross to that given to a similar commission set up in the USA to investigate the events of 9/11. The evidence given to that commission is widely recognised as having blurred the facts as opposed to highlighting them. The Red Cross did not however present the facts to your Committee they waffled their way through the proceedings stating fiction as fact and presenting fact to support fiction.

The burglary of the Irish Red Cross head office in the 1980's was used to add credence to a belief that the failures to present property information in the Society's accounts were as a result of something that happened some three decades ago. Had

the time frame been added when the Irish Red Cross answered the property questions I am sure the Committee would have been less than impressed.

When the PAC produce a transcript of the hearing I will respond in detail why it is I firmly believe that most of what was presented to the committee is fundamentally flawed and much of it inaccurate.

I did find the comments less than amusing of how 'delighted' all the IRC representatives were to be sitting giving evidence to the PAC. I feel that they should be totally ashamed and embarrassed, that given the facts, they truly are responsible for a litany of unforgivable errors. They should be ashamed to have brought the good name of the Red Cross into disrepute, not delighted having to defend its good name and explain their financial and governance irregularities.

I will state for the record that prior to the official line that no one knew about the Tipperary money for a very lengthy period after its discovery in 2008 by Mr Declan O Sullivan the facts are that quite a few people knew, the matter was being widely discussed amongst the membership in 2008 and 2009 that the Vice Chairman of the Society had not only failed to declare the Tsunami money but that the Tipperary Branch had not made returns at all to head office in several years, in downright breach of policy at the time (this is noted in the internal review into the Tipperary bank account). This information was being widely discussed on the grapevine amongst staff and volunteers.

Might I also comment on the issue of staff failures to control the level of monies coming in for the Tsunami Appeal. For many years prior to this, with alot less staff, large appeals were held for Armenia, Somalia and Sudan: to name but a few. This excuse has no grounding. The failure was with the board and NOT with staff who are being targeted by those board members and one or two senior managers guilty and complicit in this cover up.

During my time over a several year period as Secretary of the Red Cross in Donegal, it was not as stated to you at the PAC, a practice to put Appeal money into Branch accounts, in fact this was frowned upon. All money was sent directly to Head Office.

This can easily be verified by production of Branch Accounts. It is very disconcerting that Red Cross staff are once again being blamed for what was an attempt to hide money.

I must congratulate the Committee for its respect of the good name of the Red Cross and the recognition of its vital role in our Society. I am sure the Committee were, as I was, stunned at the current Irish Red Cross leaders unwillingness to have the vice chairman stand down having held office for an inordinate period of twenty one years. They stated that they cannot get a single person out of the so called five thousand volunteers to take on the roles of the Treasurer and Vice Chairman. This is a derisible excuse.

I look forward to presenting my views in detail on the disgraceful performance of the Irish Red Cross at the PAC on the 19th January. It is important that the public record shows fact.

I am most concerned that the characters of a number of persons have been brought into disrepute by Mr Forde and Mr O Callaghan in the giving of their evidence. I trust the PAC will allow the records to show that these persons have been given an opportunity to respond to the allegations presented to the PAC. I have no doubt that these persons will in due course respond to the allegations by the Red Cross against them.

Sincerely yours

Gerard Moyne

Life Member Irish Red Cross