



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

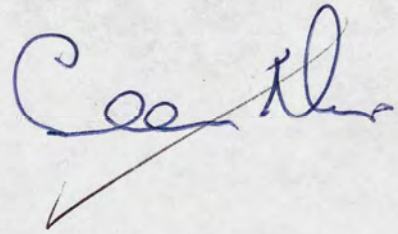
**Reference Code:** 2021/50/113

**Creator(s):** Department of Foreign Affairs

**Accession Conditions:** Open

**Copyright:** National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

Second Secretary O hUiginn



Northern Ireland - Parades Issue

12/10/96

1. You may wish to consider the merits of the following proposal; that the Tánaiste pay a short 3-stop visit to the following residents groups in Northern Ireland tomorrow followed by a meeting with the Secretary of State;

- the Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition
- the Lower Ormeau Concerned Community
- the Dunloy Parents and Residents Association

2. The purpose of the visit would be

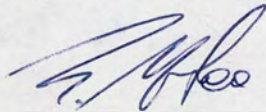
- to receive at first hand the views and opinions of local residents affected by recent developments.
- to provide some comfort and assurance that the rest of Ireland pays heed to their concerns and to convey the feelings of sympathy and dismay felt by many in the South..
- to ease the sense of isolation felt by these residents groups.
- to anchor the issue in the middle ground and provide reassurance that the issue is a central concern to the Government.
- to enhance the legitimacy of these groups as a genuine voice of the community with whom it is right and proper to conduct talks on the routing of parades.
- to convey the Tánaiste's views directly thereafter to the British authorities and impress on them the scale of the problem created by the turn of events and the need for tangible ameliorating action.

3. As to the argument that

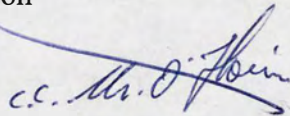
- such a visit may inflame the situation; the Twelfth marches are complete, the loyalists are satiated with victory and they have finished, and are unlikely to restart, civil disturbance in the wake of such a short visit which will have been completed by the time that news of it emerges.
- that it would be used by unionist leaders to disparage the local residents as pawns of the Government; this would be patent nonsense and easily dismissed by

noting that these groups have been met by the Church leaders and the NIO.

- that it would fuel unionist accusations that Dublin is manipulating the situation; that is self-evidently mistaken and contradicted by the calls from the Government for restraint and moderation; furthermore, such accusations should be considered insufficient deterrence to paying visits to bona fide groups in Northern Ireland.
- that the visit is gesture politics; gestures of support are important.



Eamonn McKee  
Security Section  
12 July 1996



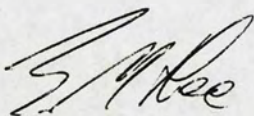
Second Secretary O hUiginn

*na parades*

Northern Ireland - Parades Issue

Further to the earlier note on the above and the possible security concerns, the following points are pertinent;

1. The question of proceeding should first be made on whether it is or is not advantageous to so in principle.
2. If it is agreed in principle that a visit as outlined should be made, it can then be considered as to how logistically it can be conducted.
3. The matter of the necessary logistical/security support should then be broached with the British authorities, it being impressed on them that the visit has the advantages as already outlined.
4. It would be conveyed to the British that there would be no advance publicity, that the visits to each area would be discrete, short in duration and would not entail any public meeting.
5. It should not be beyond the security ability of the British authorities to mount the necessary low key security arrangements, by the British Army if necessary, to ensure the visit proceeds in the manner intended.



Eamonn McKee  
12 July 1996

*cc. Mr. O'Huinn*