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Micheal Uas. O Cinneide, T.D.,
An Boinn Gnothai Eachtracha,
80 Stephens Green,
Ath Cliath 2.

RECEIVED

19 DEC 1978

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

"Rosbeg",
Bóthar Baile an Easpaig,
Corcaigh
Guthón (021) 41979

15 Nollaig 1978

A Aire, A Chara,

I am sorry that I was not at home when you 'phoned a few weeks ago. I presume that you intended to enquire about Crossmaglen Grounds.

You are aware that we visited the grounds and held a press conference in the club hall. It should be of interest also that a serious attempt was made to burn the hall during the night before the press conference. It is the general concensus locally that nobody other than the British Army could have made this attempt or at least whoever made it must have been seen by the British Army who have a lookout post overlooking the window which was broken to gain admission to do the job. My own conclusions are that it was the British Army. Luckily the premises had been treated with a fire resistant spray which prevented the whole premises going up in flames.

The press conference was a success from the point of view of publicity for what is going on and the damage being done by the British Army plus the erection of the wall to take in part of the G.A.A. property to form a base for the fortress which the army has erected there. It did not however stop the erection of the wall which is proceeding.

In fact as of now the grounds position is a lot worse. The British Army have covered the entire area behind the hall with about 18" of mud and debris which they have drawn from inside the barracks. Even the small access the club had on the lefthand side has been covered with mud. This is another blatant attempt to stop the club using the field. Surely this cannot be tolerated. We cannot stop this ourselves. We are asking everybody to refrain from violence. We need your Government's help and I hope that it will be forthcoming. I am enclosing a sketch of the most recent damage.

I am sorry to have to state that, apart from your initial efforts and those of Mr. Hugh Swift who indeed did his very best in the matter, there is a general feeling, which I now share, that sufficient pressure was not put on from your Government's end to prevent all that has gone on and is still going on. I know and fully appreciate that An Taoiseach and your goodself have a lot of pressing matters to deal with but somehow I have the very definite view at this point that the whole matter of Crossmaglen and my pressing for action has turned out to be a bit of a nuisance for you all and but for the continued efforts of Mr. Hugh Swift there would be nothing to show.

I am of the opinion that had An Taoiseach and yourself put all your ^{weight} ~~weight~~ behind the efforts to stop the erection of the wall etc., it would have had good results. As of now we have a fortress on the border which seems to interest nobody, a seriously damaged property and a local club which has acted with dignity and restraint humiliated plus a lot of frustration and embarrassment for the Association nationally and myself.

I have refrained from making public comment so far and as you know would be normally slow to do so for other considerations. However I have a responsibility to state the position as I see it and propose to do so at an appropriate time.



"Rosbeg",
Bóthar Baile an Easpaig,
Corcaigh
Guthán (021) 41979

contd./

In the meantime and at the risk of being regarded as the nuisance which I have mentioned, could I appeal to you to intercede with some determination to get the British Army to stop erecting the wall and all their other destruction.

I am also anxious to know the position regarding the Long Kesh prisoners. I was asked by An Taoiseach to refrain from doing anything in view of certain efforts being made to find a solution. You know that I have respected that request and having discussed the matter in confidence with our Management Committee, we agreed to make no move. Our units in the six counties are now under a lot of pressure and so am I, to make a statement on the matter. Some units have in fact made statements. As you know drugs are now being administered to the prisoners involved in the protest and I am led to believe that these drugs can do irreparable damage to those to whom they are administered. Surely this calls for action on humanitarian grounds. You can rest assured that neither the Association nor myself condone violent acts of any kind and I personally have said so to all concerned. We do feel however that two wrongs do not make a right and there should be a solution found to the problem or indeed our concern for human rights is nothing more than superficial or a facade.

I would be grateful therefore if you can let me know the up-to-date position from your end on this as well as the Crossmaglen affair.

Nollaig fe shean agus bliain nua fe mhaise dhuit.

Mise, le fíor mheas,
Seánach *Seánach*
Uachtarán.

PLAYING PITCH

WATER AND MUD WAS HERE ON LAST VISIT

NEW RUBBISH TIP
average dept 13" — 2ft

GATE

BARRACK AREA

BOUNDARY HEDGE

OUR NORMAL PATH TO PITCH FROM HALL

HALL

Front of Hall

If you can't see this sign

