



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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Media Visit to Northern Ireland 22-23 July 1986

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1. I began the visit to Belfast with a call on Mr. Jim Dougal Northern Ireland correspondent of RTE. Dougal said that on the previous evening (Monday) he had dinner with Mr. Nicholas Scott. The dinner, which was also attended by Chris Ryder of the Sunday Times, Richard Ford of the Times, David Gilliland and Bob Tempelton of the N.I.O., had been organised at very short notice. He had received a telephone invitation to the dinner at 4.30p.m. on Monday afternoon. At the outset it was clear that the dinner had been organised at such short notice because of the "concern and confusion" which was being felt in the N.I.O. about "what was going on in Dublin". Scott said that they were finding it very difficult to read Dublin's strategy and he instanced the terms of the Minister's Portadown statement, the media briefing of the previous weekend (in particular the Kennedy, Barry and Holland reports) as well as the Taoiseach's interview with Sean O'Rourke in the Sunday Press. While he understood the reason for the Minister's reaction to Barry White's Belfast Telegraph interview with the Secretary of State he was also deeply concerned by Conor O'Clery's report suggesting that the Irish side had raised some eighteen points of serious disagreement with the interview.

2. According to Dougal, Scott made it clear that he had been "shocked" by the decision to allow a part of the Orange Parade to go down the Garvahy Road. He had been told of the decision on the Friday night in the BBC Newsnight studio. While he did not like it he respected the fact that the RUC have operational responsibilities and that they clearly had decided on the best compromise to avoid a potentially serious security situation. He was conscious of their concern not to over-stretch their resources in view of the threatened difficult situation in Dunloy as well as in Portadown on the Saturday. Dougal said that there was a clear sense that the RUC had been seriously

frightened by the demonstration at Hillsborough on the Thursday night. He understood from other sources that the group who went to Hillsborough had originally intended to stage a midnight demonstration in Portadown but had turned back because of heavy RUC activity in the town. They had then tried Lurgan but had decided against for the same reason. It was only at the last moment that they had decided on Hillsborough and were surprised by the absence of any significant RUC presence in the area.

3. Dougal said that he had learned that the Garvahy Road route had been offered to the Orange Order by the RUC early on Friday morning. This had been turned down by the Order possibly because they felt that in view of the "panic" RUC reaction to the demonstration at Hillsborough they might have been able to gain some concession on Obins Street or Woodhouse Street. It was at this stage that Harold McCusker intervened, possibly at the invitation of Whiteside the RUC officer who had responsibility on the ground for the operation in Portadown. Dougal suspects that if McCusker was invited into the process such a decision would have been made at least by Hermon but probably at political level. The negotiations with McCusker and Martin Smyth eventually resulted in agreement in the limited parade through the Garvahy Road. However much to the surprise of the RUC both Alan Wright of the Ulster Clubs and Paisley claimed the decision as a victory and both McCusker and Smyth were outmanoeuvred in claiming it as a victory for "constitutional unionism".

4. Dougal said that the conversation with Scott on Portadown had been "rough and straight". Ford in particular was critical of the Garvahy Road decision - indeed he said so in the Times. He told Scott that it was a decision which could have serious longer term implications for morale within the RUC - it was a significant setback to their developing relationship with the Nationalist Community since 15 November last; it boosted Loyalist hopes that they remained vulnerable to well

**National Archives Act, 1986, Regulations, 1988**

**ABSTRACTION OF PART(S) OF A RECORD PURSUANT TO REGULATION 8**

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**Section 8 (4) (a) (b) & (c) of the National Archives Act, 1986**

[These will be the reasons given on the certificate under section 8(4)]

Name: **Elaine Keller**

Grade: **Assistant Principal Officer**

Department/Office/Court: **Taoiseach's Department**

Date: **April 2015 29/11/2016**

Diplock Courts were surely necessary in view of the terms of the US-UK Extradition Treaty which made extradition subject to the establishment of conditions for a fair trial - something which would be greatly facilitated if the British could plead that they had the same trial procedures as the South. Scott simply shrugged his shoulders at this but from the drift of the subsequent conversation he got two strong impressions. First, that the British now regarded the Irish Government as moving into a pre-election phase and that they wanted to wait until the political situation here clarifies before making any major move in such a sensitive area as the administration of justice. Secondly, they are worried by the PIRA murder campaign on the border and will be inclined over the next few months to give priority to pressing us, including through media briefings, to increase Garda and Army resources along the border. While Scott made the point that there were much improved contacts between the RUC and the Gardai the commitment of additional resources - both in manpower and technology - did not seem to have materialised on our side.

7. Towards the end of the evening Richard Needham "put his head around the door" and engaged in small talk for some minutes before Scott invited him in. When he was eventually invited in he said to Scott "I thought you would never ask". There was a good deal of personal "needle" between the two and very shortly after Needham's arrival Scott called it a night. Dougal said that running throughout the evening there was a steady probing of Dublin's views, reactions and strategy. He did not recall a similar occasion in the past when there was such a "fishing expedition". The British side were clearly incensed by Dublin briefing over the previous weekend and in his view were uncertain about how to respond.

8. I had lunch with Barry White Chief Editorial Writer with the Belfast Telegraph. While he was personally in good spirits and affable as always he was profoundly pessimistic about the political situation. He claimed that London and

Dublin have not grasped the fundamental reality that Northern Ireland is and will remain ungovernable. In such circumstances the overriding philosophy is one, not of operating by any set of principles, but, of pragmatic crisis management - "let's get by". While he understood the sense of hurt conveyed in the Minister's statement about Portadown he felt that it did not take account of the reality that in Northern Ireland everything is possible and that consequently we could have expected an operational decision by the RUC which took the course of least resistance. At the same time he thought the Minister was right to have stated his views. While this would run the risk of giving propaganda to the Loyalists it also gave support to the SDLP who found themselves in a very difficult situation locally in the aftermath of the Portadown decision.

9. White believes that the divisions between the two communities are now so profound that there is no hope for the foreseeable future in persuading them to agree on a form of devolved Government. He believes that John Hume is right when he argues that what we need is new political leadership in Unionism. But new political leaders are not available. The alternatives in the OUP will be no less reticent or more courageous than Jim Molyneaux. Robinson could be a disimprovement on Paisley. When the two communities "tribalise" they cling to entrenched positions and the moderates are isolated. He sees little prospect of this situation being turned around. He said that he has recently spent a good deal of time talking to John Robb whom he regards as somebody who has had the courage to develop new relationships and to commit himself to political persuasion and moderation. Robb tells him that he now feels totally isolated in his home town of Ballymoney and that his personal safety is only guaranteed by the fact that he is regarded locally as a compassionate and well meaning eccentric.

10. White said that in his recent interview with the Secretary of State he became convinced that King does not understand Northern Ireland. That he remains confused and uncertain is not entirely his own fault since he is "locked into" Stormont House where he receives conflicting advice from Northern Ireland Civil Servants some of whom support the Anglo Irish Agreement while others of whom oppose it. What however was clear from his interview with King was that the Secretary of State has a very different view of the Agreement from that of Dublin. White believes that at present the British have two basic objectives which King has been directed from Downing Street to deliver: the first is to get the Unionists into talks and to pay the necessary price for this; and the second is to defeat terrorism. Since White believes that the first objective can only, in the short term, end in frustration King will focus on the second and he will seek to achieve this through intensified security measures and not necessarily through relieving the alienation of the minority which he no longer sees as a central priority. White is not convinced that King was in any way confused between the Agreement and the Conference when he referred in the interview to the possibility that talks with the Unionists could result in changes in the Agreement. His efforts since 15 November last have been to persuade the Unionists to enter talks by emphasizing the flexibility, and guarantees to them, of the Agreement. This has at times resulted in him attempting to attribute one-sided interpretations of the Agreement, as for example to the Taoiseach (as in Brussels) or to dilute the meaning of the Agreement (as in the Belfast Telegraph) to the point of misrepresenting it. He did however think that King was genuinely confusing operational issues with issues of principle when he referred to Dublin's concerns about the impact of the marching season on the Nationalist Community.

11. White said that he was very disappointed with the result of the Divorce Referendum. He said that he was shocked recently to discover that nobody from Dublin had been in

contact with the Marriage Advisory Service in the North about their approach to couples whose marriages are in trouble. There are occasions on which they advise people whose marriages are clearly ended that their only option is to seek a divorce. Their considerable expertise in this area could have been of some help in the course of the referendum. The implications of the referendum defeat were serious for people like himself who were committed to the Taoiseach's policy of creating incentives for reconciliation. Nonetheless he would continue to support the Anglo-Irish Agreement because he believes that it is the right framework for "trying to do something positive about the situation". He thought that the Government did need to continue its efforts of persuading Unionists that reconciliation and the Anglo-Irish Agreement are in their best interest. He wondered if anything could be done about Articles 2 and 3 of the Constitution? He had raised this in a recent conversation with the Leader of the Progressive Democrats who thought not.

12. White said that he understood from his contacts in the N.I.O. that Dublin's hopes for an Autumn Package involving a movement to Three Judge Courts would not be realised. They argued that such a practice would be unprecedented in the British system and that Chief Justice Lowry was totally opposed. He heard that this message had been conveyed to the Taoiseach by the Prime Minister at their meeting in Brussels. He thought it was very unlikely that the Prime Minister would move on the issue without the agreement of Lowry who was, he heard, supported in his opposition by Hailsham and Havers. It was also the case that the recent supergrass verdict had effectively ended the supergrass system and it was felt that Dublin could see this as a positive step in the area of the administration of justice. The introduction of the Three Judge system could also suggest a criticism of the Northern Ireland Judiciary and this would be unacceptable to people like Lowry.

13. White also believes that the IRA Border Campaign is doing a great deal of damage. Unionists see themselves threatened in a vicious way and this is adding to the sense of "hatred" which is felt by both communities. In these circumstances the British were annoyed not only by the Minister's Portadown statement which they saw as a direct attack on the RUC but also by the briefings in Dublin which referred to the Garvahy Road decision as "treacherous". White understands that the Chief Constable was genuinely frightened by the Hillsborough demonstration and he expected serious trouble in Portadown. Because of this he did not want to stretch his resources and he opted for the "lets get by" approach. This has certainly led to a belief in the Loyalist Community that the Anglo-Irish Agreement has been seriously damaged and that both Governments will now be on the defensive. Their hopes have also been reinforced by the media assessment of the reactions to the events in Portadown and their belief that their attempts to influence the British media are meeting with some success.

14. I then had a brief conversation with Mr. Richard Ford of the London Times. He said that the security situation was now very quiet. He felt in fact that it might be ominously quiet. In a period such as this one wondered who was controlling the security situation. He thought that the situation in North Belfast was a particularly dangerous one. So far however the Provisional IRA have not gained a foot hold as the protectors of the Catholic community in the area. They had attempted to do this but the local community had told them that they had full confidence in the RUC and they gradually withdrew. However, before withdrawing they did occupy some Catholic houses at the interface in Manor Street during which they posed as BBC reporters. This further angered the local Catholic residents and after some further exchanges the IRA eventually withdrew. Ford felt however that the establishment of local vigilante groups in the area could give an opportunity to the IRA or the INLA to come back into the area particularly since individuals in the vigilante groups going out after dark

could become easy targets for the UDA or the UVF or indeed for the IRA themselves. He felt that the negotiations about the erection of the twelve foot corrugated iron barrier to separate Catholic and Protestant families in Manor Street was a successful piece of cooperation between the OUP, the SDLP and the RUC. However, even if the situation is contained in the Manor Street area there are further flash points of serious concern further up the Crumlin Road.

15. Ford thought that the British had seriously mismanaged the situation in Portadown. He understood that the assurances which the Irish side had sought namely that there should be no deterioration in the situation over last year had simply not been honoured. In the face of a frightened RUC Chief Constable, the Secretary of State had decided to back down to Loyalist threats and had decided to defer facing the situation until next year when the political environment might be more auspicious. King has also rationalised this to himself by arguing that he was in fact seeking to help members of the OUP namely, McCusker and Smyth to gain a negotiating advantage over the DUP and the Ulster clubs. However, the situation on the ground developed quite differently but even when he realised his tactical miscalculation, he failed to follow through and order Paisley's arrest for the inflammatory scenes at Hillsborough and a number of the statements he made during the period.

16. In Ford's view the Secretary of State has emerged from the whole Portadown affair in a very bad light. Ford argued that Hurd would never have allowed himself to have been outmanoeuvred by a combination of the OUP, the DUP, the Ulster clubs and the Orange Order. Last year when Hurd had to enter very difficult negotiations with the Orange Order who had at that stage the full support of the OUP, the DUP and the Loyalist community in Portadown he had "no cards in his hand" and yet he completely out-negotiated them. This year, although King had the benefits of the success of his predecessor he totally misjudged the situation and was out-

negotiated. King is also particularly insecure about his political position within the Conservative Party and within the Cabinet. He does not have the confidence of the Prime Minister nor does he have the authority to fight for individual issues arising within the context of the Agreement within the Cabinet. Whenever he senses that the Prime Minister may be displeased about a particular issue he panics.

17. With regard to future events Ford did not think that there would be any serious disturbances in this lull period prior to the internment day demonstrations around the period of the 9th of August. There were some warning signals coming from Sinn Fein that on this occasion, as opposed to the experience of last year, they were anxious to exploit the presence of the Noraid delegation which will again be led by Mr. Martin Galvin. There will also be a build up of tension prior to the Apprentice-Boy march in Derry on the 12th August, although he doubted that this would give rise to the same degree of difficulty as Portadown simply because the Unionists are in a minority in the city of Derry.

18. With regard to the political agenda Ford felt that it was still important for the OUP to sort out their thinking on their internal debate between integration and devolution. Integration still is an attractive concept within the party because it does not require them to sit down and talk with Nationalists. For this reason both Governments should be doing whatever they can to assist those within the OUP who are committed to devolution. Ford said that while it was very difficult to make any firm assessments during the marching season he got a feeling from contacts within the OUP that McCartney is losing a good deal of the influence which he had built up over the previous two to three months. This is partly due to the fact that he organised a number of rallies around Northern Ireland which in the event were very poorly attended. There was a very big build up to a major lecture which he was giving in the Ulster Hall in Belfast some weeks

ago which was only attended by 300 people. The British Government has already begun a policy of challenging the integrationalist approach within the OUP. Nicholas Scott's article in the London Times was, Ford felt, particularly well argued and should be reinforced by other strong statements. With regard to Scott, Forde believes that he now wants to leave Northern Ireland. He doesn't get on with the Secretary of State who tends to resent his expertise in Northern Ireland and indeed his very easy manner with a large number of members of the Nationalist community.

19. Another reason why Ford believes that the situation should remain quiet over the next number of weeks is that a number of the political leadership of the majority community will in fact be out of Northern Ireland. Martin Smyth intends to spend 6 weeks in Geneva, while Harold McCusker will holiday in France and Paisley will spend time both in France and in the United States.

20. With regard to progress on the Anglo Irish Agreement, Ford believes that Dublin will get "something" in the Autumn package but it will not be anything like the expectations which the Government seems to have invested in the package. He is now assured, although he did not refer directly to his dinner with Scott on the previous night, that the Three Judge Courts are simply not going to be conceded in the Autumn. He said that he understood that there was a slowing down in the implementation of the Agreement. He felt that this was due to a British re-assessment at the end of the first six months of the operation of the Agreement which concluded that the central priority of the Agreement as they saw it, namely moves towards devolution, were not simply taking place. They felt that they had not got the right mix during the conference meetings on the first six months, which had dealt very largely with the problem of Nationalist alienation from the security forces and the administration of justice. They are keen to move the debate away from those areas towards their particular priorities which

are focussed on devolution and cross border security. This assessment has been reinforced by two other developments, the most important of these Ford believes is the Prime Minister's view that the Agreement has not brought any of the benefits she particularly wanted. Her first priority with regard to the Agreement was that it would remove the issue of Northern Ireland from her personal political agenda and this has not happened. The second issue was the defeat of the Divorce Referendum in the Republic and the negative implications which it had for the position of moderate Unionists in Northern Ireland.

21. I then met with Mr. Chris Ryder, Northern Ireland Correspondent of the Sunday Times. Ryder said that he understood that the British Government had recently completed a comprehensive reassessment of their approach to the Anglo Irish Agreement. While the British Government remains committed to the Anglo Irish Agreement and to fully implement its provisions it will do so on an extended time-scale. The reason for the British Government's reassessment of its attitude to the Agreement has arisen from, first a recognition that Unionists opposition to the Agreement has to be softened. They believe that implementing a series of significant reforms designed to meet Nationalist concerns alone can only further alienate significant sections of the Unionist community. Secondly, the British have become increasingly frustrated by what they see as the failure of the SDLP to be totally committed to furthering talks on devolution. The British still perceive Hume as distant and indifferent to what they regard as a central feature of the Agreement, namely, the achievement of devolution. Thirdly, they believe that the political impact of the IRA border campaign runs the serious risk of pushing the Unionist community over the edge. Four out of

every five security incidents in Northern Ireland now take place in the border area. Fourthly, they have conducted a post referendum assessment of the electoral situation in the Republic and are not at present optimistic about the prospects of the present Government being returned to office. Finally, they are not convinced that the Irish Government has committed the same degree of intellectual resources to implementing the Agreement as it did to achieving it. According to Ryder the British have complained about not seeing any traces of Dublin's footsteps across the Northern Unionists' landscape in recent months.

22. Ryder said that on the previous evening he had had dinner with Nicholas Scott in the course of which he had made clear his views on the decision of the RUC in relation to the Garvahy Road. Ryder thought that it was a serious political miscalculation although in the context of the security situation on the ground in Portadown he greatly sympathised with the position of the RUC. He said there had clearly been a very strong sense of anger at the statement from the Minister for Foreign Affairs which was reinforced by weekend briefings of Mary Holland in the Observer, Geraldine Kennedy in the Sunday Press and Gerry Barry in the Sunday Tribune. Scott had been particularly offended at the use of the word "treachery" by sources in Dublin which he regarded as directed at himself because of the misunderstandings in relation to assurances which he had given to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Ryder's own assessment was that damage has been done to the Agreement and that a mending of fences should be undertaken without delay. He was told that the Prime Minister was annoyed with the Minister for having attacked the RUC. Ryder felt that language should have been found in our statement which enabled the Minister to criticise the decision to allow the Orange parade to go down the Gavahy Road but to clearly distinguish between the decision and the RUC officers and men who were operating on the ground in Portadown in very difficult circumstances. Ryder believes that the Chief Constable was

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ABSTRACTION OF PART(S) OF A RECORD PURSUANT TO REGULATION 8

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Name: *Elaine Kelly*

Grade: Assistant Principal Officer

Department/Office/Court: Taoiseach's Department

*17/11/16*

whom they would like to move against. However, they realise that they could not now credibly introduce internment in the North without it also being introduced in the South. However, if the border security situation deteriorates further Ryder believes that this is something which we will hear further about if not within the context of the Anglo Irish Conference, then certainly in hints and suggestions being put to the media.

24. Because of their new approach to the Agreement Ryder felt that it was now highly unlikely that the Irish Government would get anything close to what it had expected from the Autumn package. In their conversation the previous night Scott had firmly ruled out the possibility of getting the Three Judge Courts in Northern Ireland. Other major developments which we had anticipated were also unlikely to materialise. However a package would be delivered and it would include the Repeal of the Flags and Emblems Act, stricter monitoring of UDR patrols where these are not accompanied by the RUC and new proposals in the area of regulating difficult parades during the marching season. He said that he understood that we were having some difficulty with the British in getting statistics on the number of UDR patrols which are accompanied by the RUC. The reason for our difficulty lay in the fact that the UDR are refusing to cooperate with the RUC in giving them advance notice of specific patrols which they are undertaking. There is also a general reluctance on the part of the RUC to delve too deeply into the affairs of the UDR. As Ryder sees it, it's "the problem of turning over the stone and being anxious about what one finds underneath". In relation to marches there is no great support within the NIO for Sir John Hermon's proposal of an independent tribunal to decide on the routes of Orange marches. This would in fact pose the difficulty of taking operational police decisions away from the police and yet leaving them with the problem of imposing whatever an independent tribunal might decide. What apparently the NIO have in mind is the extension of the Public Order Act to Northern Ireland which would do away with the present system of

the notification of traditional marches. Under the British system a march or a demonstration needs at least a minimum period of three days notification. Traditional marches in Northern Ireland require virtually no advance notification.

25. Ryder said that there is considerable disquiet within the OUP about the amount of money which the SDLP are receiving from the National Democratic Institute in America. The OUP apparently have got a number of documents relating to the arrangements which the SDLP have made with the National Democratic Institute which they claim compromises the SDLP's independence in terms of the formulation of its own party policy positions. They have also been suggesting to a number of journalists that there are divisions within the SDLP about the receipt of money from the NDI. They are claiming that Seamus Mallon is particularly upset about the behaviour of the NDI and he is deeply suspicious of the arrangements which have been entered into with them by John Hume. Ryder privately suspects that the Unionists are angered by the relationship between the SDLP and the NDI which excludes them from receiving any similar monies from the Institute. While Ryder did not explicitly say so, I got the impression that he intends to write an investigative piece about the subject for the Sunday Times which will probably not be helpful to the SDLP.

26. Ryder believes that the Chief Constable will find himself in serious difficulty when the review of the Stalker Report is completed. Ryder understands that the attempt to cover up the entire affair is now directly traceable to the Chief Constable. At a meeting which took place about three weeks ago attended by the Attorney General Sir Michael Havers together with the Northern Ireland Director of Public Prosecutions Sir Barry Shaw and the Inspector of Her Majesty's Constabulary it was decided that the only way to clear the air about the shoot-to-kill allegations is to bring them out in open court. Initially Hermon had sought to have ~~the~~ the

Stalker report shelved by arranging briefing for the officials and lawyers at the DPP's Office on the background to the shootings and the very difficult security situation which the RUC found themselves in at the time in Northern Ireland. On this basis Hermon hoped that the DPP would be prepared to decide that against the security background there was no case to answer on this particular occasion. According to Ryder this briefing highlighted the involvement of the security services in the North since they operate in support of the RUC Special Branch and have a network of agents operating not only within Northern Ireland but, according to Ryder also South of the border. Ryder believes that one of the people now pushing hardest for the prosecution of the case is Sir Michael Havers who had initially disagreed with the decision to appoint Sampson, the Chief Constable of West Yorkshire to investigate both the allegations against Stalker and to conclude the investigation which Stalker had undertaken into the RUC's alleged "shoot to kill" policy.

27. In the course of our conversation Ryder argued very strongly that Dublin now needs to intensify our media campaign and to direct it at persuading the Unionist community that we were strongly committed to cross border security. He felt that not enough was being done to emphasise the actual resources which we have committed to the border. His basic argument was that statistics and rational argumentation are simply not getting across to the great bulk of Unionists in Northern Ireland. He felt that we should develop a much greater management and control of news reporting in relation to specific border incidents. For example, he suggested that when an incident occurs on or near the border we should alert the news media to the fact that an operation is taking place also on the southern side of the border to seek to apprehend those who were responsible. On a recent occasion an ITN film crew happened to be on the border when an incident occurred and they were able to film an impressive Irish army operation which was mounted immediately following news of the incident. The film of that occasion had a very considerable impact not only

in Northern Ireland but also in Britain.

28. I then had a meeting with Mr. Alan Murray, Northern Ireland Correspondent of the Irish Press. Murray said that a very dangerous security situation now exists in North Belfast. The present conflict in North Belfast was not a straight sectarian clash between the two communities but a struggle between the UDA and the UVF for control and prestige in the area. There was, however, a serious risk that the struggle between the UDA and the UVF in North Belfast would spill over into the Shankill Road area where there is a very tense atmosphere because of the heightened competition between the two Loyalist paramilitary organisations. According to his sources the present situation has been brought about by the UVF seeking to have protection money which is at present going to the UDA channelled into their own funds. For some years now the UVF's income has in no way matched that of the UDA. Recently the UVF sought to negotiate with the UDA over particular building site protection money in North Belfast but the UDA refused to negotiate. By way of retaliation the UVF began attacks on the black taxis which are under the protection of the UDA in the area. Murray said that the nature of the present conflict which is well known to the RUC must also be known to the senior Unionists politicians. For this reason he was astonished when Ken Maginnis attacked the Minister for Foreign Affairs in a recent Unionist party press conference for provoking these sectarian attacks. (On a personal and confidential basis Murray gave me his tape recording of the press conference which he thought would be of interest to us and a copy of the typed transcript of which is attached). The Provisional IRA had sought to take advantage of the situation in North Belfast but so far their approaches

have been rebuffed by the Catholic community in the area. The INLA have also sought to move in but these have equally been sent away. Murray, however, believes, that the vigilante groups which are being formed locally in North Belfast could give rise to serious difficulties for the RUC and could in fact provide for the pretext for the IRA to move in to Catholic areas.

29. Murray said that he sensed recently that morale difficulties were beginning to arise within the RUC. These difficulties did not relate to differences about the Anglo Irish Agreement but resulted from Loyalist intimidation tactics which had involved in a number of RUC men seeking transfers out of housing estates to safer quarters. Difficulties have arisen about the amount of money which the Northern Ireland Office has made available to the RUC for these rehousing programmes. A number of RUC families have now been in temporary accommodation for prolonged periods and they are beginning to become anxious about the prospect of staying on a permanent basis in temporary accommodation. Murray also believed that there are serious morale implications for the RUC in the outcome of the Stalker enquiry. Everything now points to the fact that the RUC Chief Constable had sought to cover-up the initial findings in the Stalker Report. Hermon's difficulty was that he had wanted to show strong support for the operational decisions made by his officers in the Armagh area during the period under investigation. However he seemed to have gone beyond what a Chief Constable should have been prepared to do in sending senior officers to brief the Director of Public Prosecutions on the implications for the RUC of the prosecution of senior officers and of seeking also to influence the course of their consideration of those cases in which there were specific recommendations for prosecutions.

30. Murray said that he recently had a conversation with McMichael of the UDA. He was surprised by a new moderate tone in a number of the things said by McMichael including a

suggestion that it was time for the Unionist political parties to sit down and to work out a detailed strategy for negotiation with the SDLP on the future of Northern Ireland. McMichael was particularly adamant that the growing support for integration within the OUP should be stopped and reversed. He felt that the integration approach being advocated by Robert McCartney would not only result in deepening the divisions between nationalists and unionists and that it was also designed to break the present fragile relationship between the OUP and the DUP. Murray believes that there is greater support within the DUP for a return to some form of devolved Government since most of the DUP's influence derives from locally elected representatives since they do not have the support on the ground to significantly increase their presence at Westminster. In addition the DUP are not as successful as the OUP in cultivating contacts within the Conservative Party in Westminster. Most Conservatives including those sympathetic to Northern Unionists have no liking for the DUP. He also understood from a conversation which he recently had with Frank Miller of the OUP that he was continuing to be concerned about the measure of support for integration within the Party.

31. Murray said that he understood that there were at present some tensions within the Sinn Féin/IRA structure in Belfast. While these were within the range of normal tensions between the Army Council of the IRA on the one hand and the political leadership of Sinn Féin on the other they revolve to some extent around the question of how the Provisionals and Sinn Féin should respond to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. Adams again was at the centre of the controversy in advocating a more political approach to the Agreement. He was at the same time fully supportive of the Provisional IRA's campaign along the Border. Nonetheless he felt that this should be politically controlled and exploited to the best advantage. There were however some maverick units operating along the Border and while they seem to be within the control of the Army Council they were not always operating within the guidelines of

political activity set out by Adams. Murray also understands that it is now certain that Sinn Féin will decide, at their forthcoming Ard Fheis, to contest the next General Election in the Republic. There are still some within Sinn Féin who are apprehensive about the size of their overall vote in the South. While they believe that they would get a not insignificant vote in border counties they are concerned that their vote might emerge as a very small percentage of the overall. Nonetheless they would hope that on the basis of being prepared to enter the Dáil they might win one or two seats in Border constituencies. There were some suggestions that Adams might seek a seat in the Republic but Murray doubted this very much since if he was elected then this might result in a By-election in West Belfast which Sinn Féin are not entirely confident of holding against a strong SDLP campaign supported by a still popular Anglo-Irish Agreement.

32. Murray also understood that Sinn Féin are nervous about the discussions which he understands are taking place within the Conference on the future of the Divis Flats Complex in West Belfast. He has been told that it was now almost certain that Richard Needham will go along with proposals which the Irish side have put forward within the Conference. This decision however will be based on the availability of money from the International Fund partly in order to save the embarrassment of going back to the House of Commons and facing questions on the considerable investment which has already been made by the British Government in the Divis Complex. Murray has been told that Bishop Daly had also been involved in the representations to Needham about Divis. However a number of NIO civil servants were inclined to discount these approaches on the basis that some "quid pro quo" was involved in relation to the building of schools and churches in the area.

33. With regard to the international fund Murray said that he had heard from sources in the NIO that the names of the Bord of Advisors for the Fund would be announced in the very near future and while they were particularly secretive about the names of the individuals they were nominating he understood that a prominent official from the Northern Bank was among them. He has however detected some irritation on the part of the NIO that details of the fund had been given to the newspapers in the South without the agreement of the NIO.

34. I then had a meeting with Willie Graham, Political Correspondent with the Irish News. Graham said that the Minister's statement on the situation in Portadown had been necessary and important. He said that there was a strong sense of hurt particularly in Portadown about the decision of the RUC to allow some sections of the Orange Order Parade to go down the Garvahey Road. If the Minister had not made a strong statement indicating his concern about the impact of Orange Parades on the nationalist community he would have given Sinn Fein a particularly important propaganda opportunity to attack the Anglo-Irish Agreement. There was, he felt, a genuine disbelief among the nationalist community in Portadown that a section of the Orange Parade had been allowed to go down the Garvahey Road this year when last year no parade was allowed and indeed no Anglo-Irish Agreement was then in existence. He had been in touch with Brid Rogers on a number of occasions in the course of the Portadown week-end and her strong sense of anger and frustration was a reflection of views on the ground in the area. It was equally the case that nobody could accuse Brid Rogers of coming from the "green wing" of the SDLP. The sense of triumphalism demonstrated by Loyalist politicians after the RUC had announced their "compromise" decision was a serious blow to local nationalists. He also felt that the statement by the Secretary of State in an interview with Eamon Malley on Downtown Radio that nobody had been in direct contact with him about the situation in Portadown had left a large number of nationalists in Northern Ireland deeply concerned

about the role and interest of the Irish Government in the entire affair. In these circumstances it had been particularly important for the Minister to clarify the view of the Irish Government and to state his concern about what had happened in Portadown.

35. Graham said that he had no sense that support for the Agreement was waning among the nationalist community. While there have been no dramatic results from the Agreement at the same time he believes that a large number of nationalists accept that what the Irish Government is involved in is a process of continuing negotiation about the implementation of specific measures which cannot be achieved overnight. A large number of nationalists still consider it a remarkable achievement that the agreement has survived and that the Secretariat is still in place at Maryfield.

According to Graham the SDLP is about to undergo another major reorganisation. It now seems certain that Eamon Hanna the General Secretary of the Party will be succeeded in the very near future by Mark Durkan. Graham believes that Durkan will bring a greater sense of order into the affairs of the SDLP and will more effectively streamline the organisation. He will also have a much closer and happier relationship than his predecessor with the Leader of the party. The relationship between Hanna and Hume was said at times to have been cold and distant. Durkan is also said to have a better feel for political organisation and Hume believes he will be able to take advantage of the funds and training which are being made available by the NDI. Dan Keenan, the Press

Officer of the SDLP together with a number of others were on an NDI training programme in the United States over the last couple of weeks.

37. I then had a brief meeting with Ray Hayden, Acting Political Correspondent of UTV. Ray Hayden is in fact the Economics Correspondent for UTV but because of the illness of Norman Stockton he has been temporarily appointed Political Correspondent. Hayden had visited Washington while working with the BBC in 1984 for the joint visit of Hume and Paisley who were seeking to encourage U.S. investment in Northern Ireland. Hayden felt that the 1984 visit had been a particularly well-organised one although he was disappointed at the lack of follow-up. He also remarked that he thought it would be very difficult for the two individuals to make a similar visit at this time. Commenting on the general situation Hayden felt that on the security front there was considerable calm despite the expectation that July was going to be a particularly violent month. In his view the OUP and the Orange Order had worked very determinedly together to minimise the efforts of the hooligan element within the Loyalist community from exploiting Orange parades during the marching season. He also felt that individual members of the OUP were now seeking to work in a far more constructive manner for the broader interests of the community and he instanced the work of Carson and Redpath within the City Council and OUP member Cobain in the North Belfast area. He felt that there was constructive cooperation between the SDLP and the OUP in seeking to contain the very difficult sectarian situation which had arisen in North Belfast.

38. He said that a number of contacts with the RUC had revealed that they were very disappointed about the Minister's criticism of the Portadown decision. There was a good deal of resentment about his reference to "unequal treatment under the law" and at senior level he understood that there was concern that this reference was a set-back to the progress which they

were making over recent months in developing a better relationship with the minority community. He had heard from one senior RUC officer in Derry that for some time there had been a significant increase in the use of the confidential telephone line by members of the nationalist community. There was also in the RUC and at political level a very real concern about cross-border IRA activity. Real fear was now evident in sections of the unionist community in border areas.

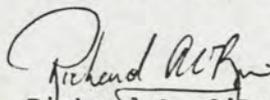
39. With regard to the Minister's statement on Portadown he thought that the decision by the Minister to be interviewed on BBC on the following day had placed his concern in a much more constructive context. There was considerable appreciation within the RUC for his recognition of their efforts in recent months to protect the nationalist community from sectarian violence. Hayden then asked whether or not it was true that the Chief Constable of the RUC had walked out of the last meeting of the Anglo-Irish Conference in protest at the fact that the conference was moving into operational areas. This is a story which has been raised with me on a number of occasions in the past and was leaked first to David Watson Political Correspondent of the Belfast Telegraph by somebody in the NIO Press Office in Belfast. I told Hayden that as far as I was aware there was absolutely no foundation to this story. The Minister for Foreign Affairs did not and would not raise operational issues within the conference since operational issues were excluded from the competence of the conference by Article 9(b) of the Agreement. Hayden then went on to criticise the Press Office in the NIO. He said that they never gave any briefings and that they only leaked what they wanted to leak to specific "pet" journalists. Hayden qualified this by saying that he had considerable respect for David Gilliland who was the only worth while Press Officer in the NIO. He had heard recently that he was to be succeeded at the end of the year by Andy Wood the present NIO Press Officer in London. Hayden added that while he did not particularly like Wood he thought that he would be preferable to Bob Templeton who is at

present Gillilands's deputy in the NIO.

40. At this stage we were joined by John Cushnahan the Leader of the Alliance Party. Cushnahan told Hayden that he wanted to raise a private issue with me and Hayden temporarily left us. Cushnahan was very emotional about the text of the Minister's statement. He said that he considered the Minister's attack on the RUC to be a grave miscalculation of the mood in Northern Ireland. Apart from Seamus Mallon and Brid Rogers every other member of the SDLP with whom he has spoken had told him that they were very surprised by the Minister's statement and indeed were concerned that it would damage morale within the RUC. He added that the statement had also made life very difficult for him within the Alliance Party "and even people like Will Glendenning " were approaching him with the message that he should distance himself from the Anglo-Irish Agreement. He felt that there was very little appreciation in Dublin that he was the Leader of a party which contained within it a large number of Unionists and that it was the only party with a Unionist membership which supported the Anglo-Irish Agreement. I talked through the background to the Minister's statement with Cushnahan and emphasised in particular the number of occasions on which the Minister had deliberately praised the RUC for their courageous defence of the Nationalist community in recent months. I said that the particular circumstances in Portadown together with statements made by the Secretary of State and briefings given by the NIO as well as the triumphalist language used by Paisley and Alan Wright of the Ulster Clubs had made it impossible for the Minister not to make his views clear on what had happened in Portadown. Cushnahan said that he accepted all of that and indeed went on to say that he had on the previous Sunday met with the Taoiseach <sup>with</sup> whom he had had a very full and useful discussion on the subject.

41. Cushnahan then went on to talk at some length about his "difficult" relationship with Dublin. He said that he recognised that the SDLP would always have a special relationship with Dublin but at the same time he was concerned that he and the Alliance Party were not getting the sort of treatment which a party supportive of the Agreement might expect. Prior to the Anglo-Irish Agreement he had spent 18 months waiting for a meeting with senior political figures in Dublin. Even after the Agreement he was not briefed by the Irish Government on its terms. While the British had briefed him it was well into the late afternoon of the 15th November when they eventually got around to talking to him.

42. Returning to the Minister's statement he said that he thought that I should be aware that John Hume had been talking to a number of journalists in Belfast and telling them that he had not been consulted in advance about the statement nor did he particularly like it. On the other hand Seamus Mallon was also speaking to journalists in Belfast and leaving them with the impression that he had urged the Minister to make the statement and indeed that he might well have been involved in the actual preparation of the statement. At this point Hayden returned and rejoined the conversation. Cushnahan spoke very highly of officials from the Department of Foreign Affairs and his contacts with them over the years but as I was departing he again returned privately to the subject of his disappointment at the lack of political interest in the Alliance Party in Dublin and he said that while he very much valued his contacts with Liam Canhiffe in the Anglo-Irish Division of the Department for whom he had both great respect and affection, he nonetheless also would like to develop further political contacts in Dublin. I took this as a suggestion by Cushnahan that he would like to have an early meeting with the Minister.

  
Richard A. O'Brien  
28th July 1986