



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2018/28/2806
<b>Creation Dates:</b>	July 1988
<b>Extent and medium:</b>	4 pages
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs
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SECRET

A/Sec Gallagher

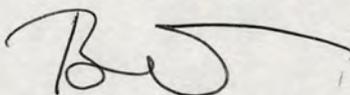
Paddy McGrory has arranged for a meeting with the Tanaiste at 11.30 A.M. on Thursday, 28th July in Iveagh House. ( I have advised the Tanaiste's office .) It will not be clear until tonight whether either of the Farrell parents will be available - he suspects that they are currently on holidays in the West of Ireland. In any event he feels it would be preferable to go ahead with the meeting at this stage rather than in September whether or not the Farrells are available.

At present the delegation will have the parents of Sean Savage and the widow and mother-in-law of Danny McCann, plus McGrory himself. McGrory told me that their only request, as far as he knows, is for the Government to be represented at the Inquest. While the need for the meeting to <sup>be</sup> kept confidential has been stressed to the families, McGrory is not optimistic that confidentiality will in fact be maintained, given the dependence of the families on Sinn Fein. ( In that context, in order to forestall them asking Sinn Fein for their travel costs to Dublin, I have asked McGrory to make all necessary travel arrangements and I will reimburse him.)

McGrory now has the Pathologists report which apparently confirms what had always been suspected -viz- that some of the shots were fired from as close as between 2 and 6 feet and that some of the shots were fired into the backs of the victims. In addition, there are apparent indications that some of them may also have been shot while on the ground. However, he described the report as being very badly written (possibly deliberately) and he has referred it to Harbinson for an expert opinion. Incidentally, you should note that he is continuing to press that Harbinson be allowed to act as his advisor for the Gibraltar Inquest.

McGrory will be assisted at the Inquest by an experienced Junior Counsel from Northern Ireland (McCrudden) and I understand that Dessie Boal is actively involved in the background in advising McGrory . However, Boal will only become openly involved should McGrory become unable to conduct the case. (You will be aware in that context that McGrory has a serious heart condition.)

Brendan McMahon, Anglo-Irish Division





AN ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2

DUBLIN 2

5 July, 1988.

Dr. Martin Mansergh,  
Department of the Taoiseach,  
Government Buildings,  
Merrion Street,  
Dublin 2.

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Martin,

The Taoiseach spoke to me on a personal basis some time ago about arranging a private meeting with members of the families of the Gibraltar victims. This was in response to a letter from the families for a meeting.

The issue is clearly very sensitive, given the Sinn Féin involvement with the families - Danny McCann's brother, for example, is a Sinn Féin Counsellor in Belfast - and the very great likelihood that any such meeting will be leaked to the press.

In the circumstances, I asked Brendan McMahon of this Division, who is completely discreet and who travels regularly for us in the North (particularly in Belfast and South Armagh), to have a quiet word with P.J. McGrory, the solicitor for the families. McMahon knows McGrory very well and sees him on a weekly basis. McGrory has suggested, and I am inclined to agree with him, that he and McMahon meet the families together and organise a meeting in this way. He suggests that we think in terms of the parents of the three, plus the widow of Danny McCann, the only married member of the group. This, in his view, would constitute a logical and what he called a "civil" grouping.

If the Taoiseach agrees, I will ask McMahon to act on this basis and to think in terms of a meeting in Dublin towards the end of July.

Yours sincerely,

Dermot Gallagher,  
Assistant Secretary.

SECRET

A/Sec Gallagher,

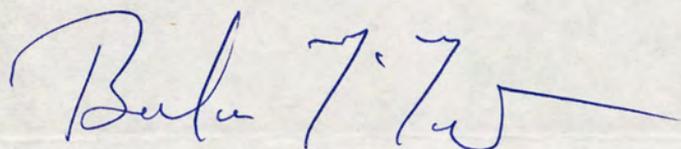
I spoke yesterday (29th) with P.J. McGrory regarding the families of the Gibraltar 3. All the families at this stage, to one degree or another, have developed a dependence on Sinn Fein and tend to work very closely with them. McGrory thought that in the event of a meeting, their tendency would be to consult with Sinn Fein beforehand even to the point of seeking suggestions as to what approach to take, what to say etc. For this reason, the confidentiality or otherwise of any meeting will more than likely be at the discretion of Sinn Fein.

McGrory thought that in order to attempt to minimise the likely Sinn Fein influence in any meeting it would be best to make any approach through him and on the basis that he is acting as their Solicitor. He could arrange to meet with the families (preferably with an Irish Government official) to put the proposal of a meeting to them on the understanding that the meeting be kept confidential etc. Even on this basis he thought the chances of any meeting remaining confidential to be problematical at best. He also thought that it might be appropriate to reinforce this arrangement by having McGrory accompany the delegation to Dublin.

On the question of the composition of any delegation, he thought that it would be best if we dictated the composition of the delegation. Leaving it to the families he thought would result in a possibly unstable delegation. In the case of the Farrell's, it would result in the choice of Mairead's brother Niall who, while intelligent, was nonetheless unpredictable. (You might wish to note that he is a member of the Communist Party, married and living in East Germany.) He thought we could choose the parents of all three plus the widow of Danny McCann (the only married member of the group.) He thought this would be a logical choice and would be what he described as a "civil group". He thought the families would be deeply appreciative of such a meeting.

As to the families themselves, all of them would be politically of a Sinn Fein complexion. The parents of both Savage and McCann he described as quiet but bitter. Danny McCann's widow is apparently a more forceful personality and is very bitter. The Farrell parents are also quiet though you may wish to be aware of the fact that Mrs Farrell is a sister of Billy McKee, former O.C. of the Provisional I.R.A. in Belfast in the 1970's.

On the question of timing, McGrory will be in Gibraltar for the preliminary hearing next Monday, 4th July, but should be back in Belfast by Wednesday the 6th. If a meeting were to be scheduled perhaps we should think of sometime during the week beginning 11th July.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Brendan McMahon', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Brendan McMahon,  
Anglo-Irish Division,  
30 June 1988