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Chun an Aire Dil agus Cirt : To the Minister for Justice

QUESTION: To ask the Minister for Justice whether in connection with the Orange Parade which was proposed to be held in Rosneamhlach, County Donegal on July, 12th he is aware that threats of incitement to violence were made; and whether he will make a statement on the matter.

- Michael O'Leary.

*Thursday*  
For answer on ~~Wednesday~~, 9th July, 1970.

ANSWER: I assume that the Question relates to statements reported to have been made at a meeting of Donegal County Council.

I have seen newspaper reports concerning these statements but they do not purport to give more than a very abbreviated account of what was said. The reports suggest that threats were made - which, it is scarcely necessary for me to say, I strongly deprecate - and that they were a factor in the calling off of the parade but I am personally aware that that was not why the parade was called off. The local officers of the Garda Síochána had already reported to me that it was not the intention to hold the parade.

It is a matter of public knowledge that the Government have strongly urged, in the interests of peace and community relations, that provocative Orange parades should not be held in the North at the present time. On the other hand, the Government would wish to distinguish very clearly between, on the one hand, those parades which, because of the places and circumstances in which they are held and the manner in which some of their adherents tend to behave, are likely to provoke even moderate and peace-loving people in particular areas and, on the other hand, parades such as the one referred to which are in an entirely different category, being no more than legitimate and reasonable expressions of the traditions of those who take part. That these traditions are not those of the great majority in the locality in no way diminishes the right of those who adhere to them to express themselves. Rather does it place on the majority a special

obligation to ensure that their right is respected and upheld and to ensure also that it is seen to be a right and not something that is only tolerated.

That the people concerned should have decided of their own volition, and before any question of a threat arose, to call off the parade this year in order to avoid any risk of giving offence to their neighbours is a gesture deserving of the highest praise and I am therefore glad to have this opportunity to give the facts to the House.