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Title: Copy note by HJ McCann, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, of a meeting between CV Whelan, Minister Plenipotentiary at the Embassy of Ireland to Great Britain, with Denis Greenhill and Kelvin White of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, regarding the use of British Army troops at an upcoming civil rights march in Newry, County Down, and an Irish government suggestion that British paratroopers be withdrawn from Northern Ireland.

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ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Foreign

BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2

DUBLIN 2

3 Feabhra 1972

Dear ~~Private~~ Secretary

I enclose a copy of a note of a conversation Mr. Whelan had in the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office yesterday.

With regard to the request at the top of page 2 which we understand the British Ambassador may raise with the Taoiseach at his meeting this morning, we suggest that the Taoiseach might consider "turning" the request by using some of the argumentation in the attached document marked "A".

Yours sincerely

H. J. O'Dowd, Esq.
Private Secretary to the Taoiseach
Department of the Taoiseach

Seen by the Taoiseach

NOTE

Mr. Whelan, the Chargé d'Affaires in London, telephoned me at 12.45 p.m. He said that he had just returned from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office where he had been called to see Sir Denis Greenhill. Mr. Kelvin White was with Sir Denis. Mr. Whelan said that the British side had expressed grave concern to him regarding the safety of the Embassy premises, the Ambassador's residence and the staff of the Embassy in Dublin. They said that they considered that the Irish authorities should take special exceptional steps to avoid any "castastrophe". They were concerned at the damage already done to the Embassy Chancery and asked Mr. Whelan to convey to Dublin their view that maximum precautions should be taken to protect the Chancery and also the residence. Mr. Whelan said that he would convey this message to his authorities.

Mr. Whelan then brought up the question of the Civil Rights Parade in Newry on Sunday 6th February about which he had received instructions from the Department. He said that the Irish Government expected the British authorities to take the most stringent precautions to ensure that the Newry Parade did not bring a recurrence of anything like what happened in Derry. He said that there was an onus on them to ensure that the Security Forces had the clearest instructions from the highest level in connection with the Parade. After some references to the illegal nature of the Derry Parade, the presence of a hooligan element there, the exploitation of the situation by violent elements, etc. Sir Denis Greenhill said, and he repeated this ~~a second time~~, that every possible precaution would be taken on the British side in relation to the Newry Parade.

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Sir Denis then said that it was the view of his authorities that the protest in Newry should be confined to a rally and that this would greatly help to avoid incidents. They thought that it would be helpful if the Taoiseach would issue an appeal to the organisers to hold a rally in a sports field in Newry rather than go through with the projected Parade. He asked Mr. Whelan to pass this view on to Dublin.

Mr. Whelan said that he saw considerable difficulties about the idea but that he could not prejudge Dublin's attitude and that he would pass the request on without delay.

As Mr. Whelan was leaving Mr. Kelvin White said to him that the request from the Irish side in relation to Newry and the counter-suggestion from the British side might be mentioned to the press if the latter pressed for news about Newry.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K. White', written in a cursive style.

Department of Foreign Affairs

3rd February 1972

A.

~~LEFT COPY FOR TRANSMISSION THROUGH LONDON GESSY~~

In face of current British and Stormont policies in the North and the absence of a serious political initiative for a just solution of the problems of the North the Taoiseach ~~cannot~~ ^{can scarcely be} ~~expected to~~ make any effort to persuade the suffering people of Northern Ireland to submit to these policies. British policy consistently pursued has produced a situation in which the Northern minority can assert themselves and defend their rights only through protest.

The Taoiseach has already suggested that the British Paratroopers should be withdrawn from Northern Ireland in view of the terrible events in Derry on Sunday last. He has not yet had a reaction from the British authorities to this or his other proposals including his call for the immediate withdrawal of British troops from Derry and other centres of Catholic population and the cessation of harrassment of that population. That request of course covers Newry and, if it is met, there should be no trouble in Newry next Sunday.

3m

~~24~~ February 1972