



**An Chartlann Náisiúnta**  
**National Archives**

**Reference Code:** 2021/96/16

**Creator(s):** Department of the Taoiseach

**Accession Conditions:** Open

**Copyright:** National Archives, Ireland.  
May only be reproduced with  
the written permission of the  
Director of the National  
Archives.

*Tánaiste*

*Do see please*

*Muz 25/3/94*

*cc PST*

*(12)*

*PSS, Mr. Foley,*

*A/Sec J. Lyons*

*~~F. ...~~ DIT*

*M. ... DIT*

*T. Dalton DIT*

*J. ...*

*Ulla, A-1*

*S. ...*

**Attack on John Fee**

I spoke early this morning with Seamus Mallon MP who confirmed that Fee's injuries were as described in radio broadcasts, but also mentioned that doctors were checking for damage to the skull. He said that this was the third occasion on which Fee had been beaten up by Republican elements, although this was the most serious.

I conveyed the Tánaiste's sympathy and best wishes for a full and speedy recovery. (A letter from the Tánaiste to Mr. Fee is in preparation).

A note on the incident prepared at the request of the D/Tánaiste for the President, who is today visiting Newry, is attached.

*PH*



P. Hennessy  
25 March, 1994

A1945

Note requested by D/Rowan for President

ATTACK ON JOHN FEE

1. John Fee is a SDLP member of Newry and Mourne District Council who also runs Seamus Mallon's Newry constituency office. He is single, in his late twenties and a nephew of the late Cardinal O Fiaich. He recently made a statement strongly critical of the IRA attack on a British Army helicopter in Crossmaglen.
2. Last night, as he was parking his car on returning to his home in Crossmaglen (where he lives with his widowed mother), he was set upon by three men, one reportedly in a combat jacket, who inflicted very serious injuries on him. Mr Fee reportedly suffered a broken leg and three broken ribs as well as extensive bruising all over his body. We understand from direct contact with Seamus Mallon M.P. that doctors are also checking for possible skull damage. He is at present recovering at Daisy Hill Hospital, Newry.
3. All reports this morning link the attack to Fee's condemnation of the helicopter incident. The attack has been condemned by Seamus Mallon and the Tanaiste in separate interviews which were carried on RTE radio this morning. Mr Mallon said he was in no doubt that the attack was carried out by the IRA. He demanded that Gerry Adams should condemn the attack on behalf of Sinn Fein, if its interest in the peace process is to be taken seriously.
4. The Tanaiste paid tribute to John Fee's role as a public representative and deplored the attack. He indicated that he fully agreed with Seamus Mallon's call for unequivocal condemnation by Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein.

5. Republican sources in Belfast are quoted as denying any involvement in the attack. A local Sinn Fein councillor has also said that Republicans were not responsible for the assault.

Suggested Line

The President might wish to consider, if appropriate, drawing on the following elements in any public comment:

- While all attacks are deplorable, there is particular outrage at assaults on elected public representatives
- Such attacks threaten the democratic process itself
- Last night's incident was a sober reminder of the risks faced by public representatives and their courage in taking on these duties on behalf of the community
- Sympathy to John Fee and his family
- Best wishes for a speedy recovery and early resumption of his important work

25/3/94