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**Reference Code:** 2021/49/291

**Creator(s):** Department of Foreign Affairs

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7 September 1995

For: C. O Floinn

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MR. F. MURRAY  
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MR. FROM: K. Dowling

*CE Secretary*  
*Cannellon*  
*Mrs. McIntyre*  
*Unusual list*  
*B. Nolan*  
*C. O'Brien*  
*R. Victory*

*La hoy Bredes*

Discussions with Quaker House representatives

1. Mr and Mrs Alan Quilley, who run Quaker House (which is located near QUB) in Belfast, called to the Secretariat this afternoon (7 September) for discussions with the Joint Secretary and the undersigned. Following an exchange of views on the political process (postponement of the summit, differing approaches to decommissioning as a pre-condition for entry to political talks), they offered some views as follows on a number of security and related matters:

Parades and related events

2. The Quilleys wondered to what extent events in the last few weeks at local level - "parades, angry voices, marching feet" - might have affected attitudes and developments at the wider political level (the Joint Secretary responded that, while local events such as the Portadown and Lower Ormeau parades had undoubtedly added to the tension, it was essentially other difficulties which had given rise to the present impasse.) They also said (see paras 3 and 4 below) that Loyalists were very bitter that Gerard Rice of the Lower Ormeau Concerned Community Group (LOCC) had gone back on the agreement arrived at in regard to the parade to take place on the Lower Ormeau Road on 12 July. They also detected what they described as a "schizophrenic" or split approach within Sinn Fein/IRA (see para 5 below) in regard to whether they wished agreements to be arrived at on parades.

Lower Ormeau Road parade on 12 July

3. The Quilleys said that, in their view, there had been a considerable "hardening up" of opinion on the Unionist side since the mid-July period. The loyalists were very bitter that Gerard Rice of the Lower Ormeau Concerned Community Group (LOCC) had gone back on the agreement which had been worked out in relation to the parade to take place on the Lower Ormeau Road on 12 July. The cooperation on the matter had initially been very positive, offering signs that the two communities in the area could work together; as part of the arrangement, the Loyalists had agreed to move certain demonstrations away from the Lower Ormeau Road to Donegall Pass nearby and they had been encouraged to see in return that offensive signs (e.g. "Disband RUC") were not in evidence on the Lower Ormeau Road.

4. Describing how the accommodation worked out in relation to the parade in question had unravelled, the Quilleys said they had attended the two public meetings held (on 10 and 11 July) as part of the attempt to reach agreement in the matter. In their estimation, some 70 per cent of those present at the first of those meetings (including SF/IRA representatives) had been favourable to arriving at an accommodation ; such an agreement would have been very significant since it would have been the first time that the Orange Order would have made one of its marches conditional on the "permission" of the local community. The turning point came when someone arrived with a video showing how events were deteriorating on the Garvaghy Road in Portadown ( at which stage some of those present began to proclaim that "these are the kind of bigots we are dealing with".) Neither had it helped that Gerard Rice had subsequently appeared on television side by side with a senior Orange Order representative, who had endeavoured to get Rice to read a section from the agreement worked out in relation to the march. By the time of the second meeting on 11 July and in the wake of David Trimble's (triumphalist) remarks claiming victory in Portadown, the possibility of agreement had evaporated.

**"Schizophrenic" or split approach in relation to parades**

5. The Quilleys indicated that in recent weeks they had also detected "important indications of difference" between Sinn Fein and the IRA on the matter of parades. There seemed in their analysis to be a "schizophrenic" or split approach (within SF/IRA) in regard to parades - they seemed to wish to go in two directions at once. The Quilleys had also noted that in recent weeks Gerard Rice of the LOCC Group had made some pointed criticisms of Sinn Fein. As further evidence of a possible difference of approach between the LOCC and SF, they said they had noted that the "main announcement/ reaction" yesterday welcoming the decision (by the RUC) to re-route the parade planned for the Lower Ormeau Road for Sunday next had been made by Sean Hayes of SF (rather than Gerard Rice of the LOCC).