MARTIN GALVIN: PETITION FROM CONGRESSMAN BIAGGI

We received the attached letter in Belfast this morning (the original is being sent to PS/SOS (L) by box today). It has not yet been acknowledged.

2. The point at issue is one for the Home Secretary, but it might be prudent if you were to discuss with Mr Daniell today whether our Secretary of State should respond in some way. A simple 'transferring to the Home Secretary' acknowledgement from my office is perhaps not the best way of dealing with this.
The Honorable Douglas Hurd  
Secretary of State  
Northern Ireland Office  
Stormont, Belfast  
Northern Ireland  

Dear Secretary Hurd:  

We are writing to urge the British government to permit Mr. Martin Galvin of New York to lead a delegation of more than 100 American citizens from some 28 states who are scheduled to visit Northern Ireland from approximately August 5-13.  

We are aware of the fact that in August of last year, the British government issued an order which barred Mr. Galvin from making a similar visit. That decision we view as being inimical to the Democratic principles of free speech and travel. It is also hostile to efforts to promote a full and open dialogue on Northern Ireland by concerned Americans.  

We are aware of the fact that Martin Galvin did ultimately enter Northern Ireland against your government's order. We also recall that when Mr. Galvin did appear in Belfast to speak at a rally of supporters, a police action ensued during which one civilian was killed and scores were injured; this, despite the peaceful nature of the crowd and the expectation by Mr. Galvin that he would be arrested for his actions.  

We are also reminded of statements made by British government officials questioning the order barring Mr. Galvin in light of the unfortunate developments of August 12.  

We believe that Mr. Galvin should be permitted to lead the American delegation. Our position in support of Mr. Galvin's ability to travel to Northern Ireland in no way represents our acceptance of any particular policy of Mr. Galvin or Irish Northern Aid. Rather, it is a reflection of our support of all interested and concerned Americans who wish to travel freely to and from Northern Ireland should be able to do so without selective exclusionary policies being imposed by the British government.  

Sincerely,  

MARIO BIAGGI, M.C.  

THOMAS MANTON, M.C.  

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