



J.O. Lloyd, ~~British~~ BRITISH EMBASSY
San Francisco, WASHINGTON, D.C.

105

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Northern Ireland

Please refer to Lloyd's letter 14/1
of 7 April about the visit to this country of
Mr. Gerard Fitt.

23/4

I do not know what Mr. Fitt's itinerary was but he seems to have covered a large part of the States and also appeared in Washington. He did not make contact with us and we did not know he was speaking until it was all over. I was interested in Lloyd's impression that Mr. Fitt is doing us a useful service and that he did some sound talking. I cannot judge what impression he made on audiences as a whole or how reasonably the line he put over was, but I would say that the correspondence and telephone calls we have received arising directly out of Mr. Fitt's talks, have at best been critical and in some cases bitterly hostile. It may be that Mr. Fitt thought he was being reasonable and objective but it does seem to me, both from our correspondence and from the clipping from the San Francisco Chronicle which Lloyd enclosed, that he picked on all the things that were wrong with Northern Ireland without making any attempt to show or admit either that in some cases the points were exaggerated and in others that the Northern Ireland Government is taking action.

My judgment therefore, admittedly from the rather narrow and perhaps very unrepresentative viewpoint of the reactions I have seen, is that Mr. Fitt did more harm than good and that while he may have tried to dampen the ardour of some of the extremists here (who I suspect are beyond conversion), more moderate people he spoke to will have gone away with a worse impression than the one they came with.

Brian L. Crowe
First Secretary-Information

P. W. Unwin, Esq.,
British Information Services,
New York.