



## An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2019/101/2267
<b>Creator(s):</b>	Department of Foreign Affairs
<b>Accession Conditions:</b>	Open
<b>Copyright:</b>	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

CONFIDENTIAL

NOTE FOR INFORMATION

Twelfth of July Parade, Keady

Keady, an overwhelmingly nationalist town in South Armagh, has a population of two to three thousand, of whom there are estimated to be only 30 to 40 protestants. According to the press (Guardian report attached hereunder), there are only two members of the Orange Order in the town. The Orange Order justified the march through the town on the grounds that Keady was on a rota of traditional venues for the main Armagh parade. The last such parade took place in Keady eleven years ago.

In the run-up to 12 July, strong representations about the parade were made to the British side through the Anglo-Irish Secretariat, pointing out that the parade violated the important principle that marches should not be permitted in areas or along routes where they would be unwelcome to the local population. Mr King himself accepted this principle in a statement to the House of Commons on 19 June 1986 when he asked: "How does it benefit anyone to march through an area where the inhabitants do not support the views being expressed by the marchers and where the only result is to exacerbate communal tensions?" We were assured in the Secretariat that the general policy was to re-route loyalist parades away from nationalist areas.

Despite our representations, the condemnation of the march by Séamus Mallon, the MP for the area, and a forceful statement issued by the local parish priest, Fr Patrick McDonnell, the RUC decided to allow the march through the town, with some minor modifications to the route (the march was to avoid the environs of the Catholic church and the marchers would only be allowed to parade through the town on their way to the "field" and would not be allowed through it on the way home).

On the night before the march, there was a minor incident lasting some hours when loyalists put up bunting in the main street of the town. A crowd of some 50 inhabitants gathered to protest and a union jack and two flagpoles were burnt. After the intervention of Fr McDonnell and the RUC, the loyalists agreed to remove the bunting.

The parade, consisting of 150 bands and some 7,000 Orangemen, passed off without incident; the townspeople either stayed indoors or left for the day. The new Chief Constable of the RUC, Hugh Annesley, who travelled to Keady to supervise the policing of the march, described it as a victory for common-sense and said that the controversy had been unnecessary. He added that the banning of the march had never been a good option because of the difficulties involved.

Anglo-Irish Section  
18 July 1989