



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2021/45/100
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5 June 1991.

SECURE FAX

To Belfast
For David Barry

From HQ
From B. McMahon

Subject: Loyalist parades - Duncairn Gardens, North Belfast.

Marching Season:

1. Grateful if you could enquire as to whether the annual RUC document surveying this year's marching season is available. A very useful document was handed over to us in April of last year detailing the marches planned for July 1990.
2. In the meantime, travellers at this end are making the usual soundings and will provide briefing on any possible trouble-spots during this year's marching season.
3. As in previous years, we will continue to insist on the general principle that parades should not take place in an area, or along a route where they are not welcome - a principle which was reflected in the then Secretary of State's remarks in 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?"

Duncairn Gardens:

4. Grateful if you could also enquire as to whether a march is planned this year for the Duncairn Gardens route in North Belfast. This, along with the Garvaghy Road in Portadown, is perhaps the most controversial route in the entire marching season and considerable background

cc for information
of Sec Gallagher
R. Murphy
P.A.
cc id
H.S.
5/6/91

material is available on the issue in your files.

5. We have strongly objected in the past to the use of this route. In some sectors the march passes through areas which were formerly unionist but which are now nationalist; while in other sectors it passes right along the sectarian interface of North Belfast - one of the most dangerous interfaces in Northern Ireland.
6. Because of the potential for serious public disorder, orange marches using this route have necessitated the entire nationalist community of the New Lodge being boxed-in for a considerable period of time. Needless to say, this has caused considerable anger and resentment in the past and has frequently led to serious rioting in the area.
7. We continue to strongly object to further marches at any time along this route. In any event, our information is that this year, according to tradition, there should not be a march using this route. Traditionally, this route is marched every two years. Thus, marches took place in 1986, 1988 and 1990. Additionally, a march took place in 1987 - ostensibly on an exceptional basis to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the covenant.
8. In enquiring about whether there are any plans for a march using this route during the 1991 marching season, you might like to reiterate our objections to orange parades being allowed to march on this route; and additionally make the point that our understanding is that in terms of "tradition", permission should not be given for the use of this route during this year's marching season.

Garvaghy Road - Portadown:

9. You might reiterate our objections to orange parades on this route and enquire as to whether it is the intention of the RUC to permit parades on this route this year and, if so, whether they propose to put in place any new alterations or restrictions to the pattern or previous parades in this area.

Limavady:

10. Grateful if you could also enquire about planned marches in Limavady this year. [Enclosed for your information is a copy of a letter which the Parish Priest, Fr Donnelly, sent to the local RUC Superintendent complaining about band-practice sessions in the town.]

Tel. (05047) 62522

Our ref: TPD/JAMcL

20th April, 1991

St. Mary's Parochial House,
115, Irish Green Street,
Limavady,
Co. Derry,
BT49 9AB

Mr. Robert J. Ballantine,
Superintendent,
R.U.C. Station,
Connell Street,
Limavady.

Dear Sir,

This evening our congregations attending evening Mass have been hindered twice. After the 7.30 p.m. Mass in the Church of Christ the King the congregation found Main Street congested by crowds of bandsmen and spectators. I was held up for some time in trying to make my way to St. Mary's Church for the vigil Mass to start at 8.30 p.m.

After that Mass when the congregation was leaving at 9.10 p.m., Irish Green Street was blocked by the progress of a band marching down the street. That congestion continued for some time.

I would hope for some more consideration for large numbers of Mass goers, who also have a right to the use of the streets. It must have been known for several years that considerable numbers of our people attend vigil Mass on a Saturday. It is an unfortunate start to the marching season in Limavady. Indeed a march on this evening must be unprecedented.

I trust that by your good offices such an annoying inconvenience will not be repeated as the season goes on. The consideration ought to be kept in mind that Orange marches are offensive and provocative to a great many people, who are thus forcibly reminded of the inferior position in which the paraders and their supporters appear to hold them.

Yours sincerely,

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Rev. T. P. Donnelly
Parish Priest.