

FAXED

8.45 JHT 6/8/96

Via Concom.



10 DOWNING STREET

Prime Minister

MARCHES

1. I mentioned a CEEFAK report just now that the RUC had re-routed the

The Secretary of State was very grateful for the update you gave him this morning following the Apprentice Boys march. This

is wrong: They have re-routed an

2. You reported that Simpson felt the negotiations between the Apprentice Boys and the RUC had been going reasonably well. The RUC were prepared to agree to 13

(The Walker's Club), not Derry.

2. But this should help the negotiation in Derry.

3. The latest position is in the attached

W/O note.

(W/O)
5/8

5. Aug. 1996 13:54
03/08/96 13:02

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SOS UTT. (B) → SOS OFF. (C)

No. 9847 P. 2/4
NO. 481 P001

CONFIDENTIAL

cc press

DESK IMMEDIATE

FROM: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE
5 August 1996

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Leach - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Ray - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Perry - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Hill - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Campbell-Bannerman - B
Mr Budd, Cabinet Office
Mr Holmes, No 10
Mr Lamont, RID - B
HMA Dublin

Mr Steele - B

PROSPECTS FOR THE APPRENTICE BOYS MARCH

The Secretary of State was very grateful for the update you gave him this morning following your discussions with DCC Flanagan and Alastair Simpson of the Apprentice Boys.

2. You reported that Simpson felt the negotiations between the Apprentice Boys and the Bogside Residents Group had been going reasonably well. The Bogside Residents were prepared to agree to 13 Apprentice Boys walking the whole of the Walls and there had been negotiations on the route within the City to take it away from the Diamond. This would probably not satisfy the Apprentice Boys at the moment, but there was at least some movement, though Neills who headed up the Residents Group, was a difficult negotiator. Simpson had also been encouraged by statements by the Taoiseach and Bishop Hegarty.

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5. Aug. 1996 13:54
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3. The Apprentice Boys and the Bogsiders were meeting again today at 5.00 pm. The Apprentice Boys were keen to conclude agreement by today, though the local residents were talking more in terms of Wednesday. The Apprentice Boys had managed to prevent the Walker Club from marching in Belfast and the RUC were planning to ban the march in Dunloy. The decisions were likely to be announced later today.

4. The Bogside Residents Group had passed a request through the Maryfield Secretariat to see the Secretary of State. Our line in response to that was to say that the Secretary of State was ready in principle to see the Residents Group but did not want to cut across local negotiations. It would be sensible to postpone a meeting until after any decision had been taken to close off all or part of the Walls, if that turned out to be what was necessary. You felt that there was a good presentational case for leaving any decision to close all or part of the Walls until Wednesday evening. It did not seem likely that any nationalist attempt to occupy the Walls, in the absence of an agreement, would be made before Thursday evening at the earliest when there was a 'Trade Union' march (which was unknown to NIC/ICTU): and even this was assessed to be unlikely.

5. The Secretary of State said that he would try and speak to John Hume today. He detected a widespread sense that Derry did not need a major confrontation and he had, with some success, played on this in his interview with Jim Dougal over the weekend.

Conversation with John Hume

6. The Secretary of State subsequently had a short telephone conversation with John Hume in Donegal. The Secretary of State outlined the position as he understood it. Hume did not disagree but said that he was concerned at any delay in reaching agreement which would exacerbate tensions. If possible he would like to see agreement reached today.

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7. The Secretary of State said that one worry was the possibility of agreement being reached to be followed by claims that the depth of nationalist community feeling had not been appreciated and that accordingly the deal would not stick. Hume recognised the danger and said that he was in contact with Church and other leaders in Derry to ensure that if a deal was struck, they would come out strongly in support of it.

8. The Secretary of State said that the situation was very delicate and he commended Hume for the efforts he had made to resolve it. Hume said that he would contact the Secretary of State this evening after the meeting between the Apprentice Boys and the Bogside Residents Group.

Signed

MARTIN HOWARD
Private Secretary

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