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6 Counties: Situation.SECRETNote:

1. I was in Derry for the Republican parade and ensuing events on Easter Sunday, 29th March. The Guildhall Square was blocked off from the old City by soldiers and the only policemen in sight were directing traffic diverted through the Quays. In due time a colour party arrived from the direction of Strand Road headed by a number of youngsters, boys and girls, in Fianna uniform and carrying the tricolour, the Plough and Stars and a flag showing the rising sun. They were followed by not more than 300 or 400 people. Several speeches were made, the most important speaker being Mr. Tomás Mac Giolla, head of Sinn Féin. He attacked the Taoiseach and the Government in round terms and also had a go at the British Army. His main theme was that no person and no Government had the right to rule out the use of force to achieve reunification; a subsidiary theme was that Catholic and Protestant workers should unite in the North against the landed gentry and industrial leaders and turn their guns on them instead of on each other. During the speech-making the Fianna youngsters were escorted to Shipquay Gate - opposite the Guildhall steps - and were allowed to pass through the city walls with a number of stewards. This was a symbolic breach of Derry walls and I should think it was arranged in advance with the British Army authorities. Following the speech-making the crowd moved off in the direction of William Street.
2. It had become obvious that most of the parade had not reached the Guildhall Square at all and, on checking the situation, I discovered that a considerable conflict was taking place at Victoria barracks. Therefore, I stayed in the area and was present later in the Bogside. The newspapers have reported the happenings at Victoria barracks and the Bogside but I should like to make some comments from personal observation in Rossville Street. At the beginning the number of stone-throwers was very small - not more than a handful, all young fellows determined to tease the Snatch Squads. A large crowd - about 2,000 or 3,000 - took no active role in this but seemed on the whole to be quite tolerant of the stone throwers. As the Snatch Squads proceeded to clear Fahan Street and later Free Derry Corner and Rossville Street the number of stone throwers increased. Basically the whole thing was a "game" but rather a nasty one and seemed to be without serious motive. There were some people from across the Border in the crowd but they appeared to take no part in the stone throwing and I was unable to establish any real connection between the stone throwing and any political intent. The "game" continued for several hours. Eventually Fr. Mulvey gathered a group of men and tried to interpose between the Snatch Squads and the stone throwers. The manoeuvre succeeded for a few minutes only and earned Fr. Mulvey considerable verbal abuse. Hume told me later that he also had suffered verbal abuse from the crowd for a statement attributed to him in the Sunday Mirror to the effect that the RUC man named by the "Free Citizen", the PD News Sheet in Belfast, was not involved in the Devenney case. This had been taken to mean that he was exonerating the entire RUC. (As a result Hume issued a correction to the Sunday Mirror report which appeared on Page 7 of the Irish Times on Monday last). Eventually the Army personnel withdrew from the Bogside and hostilities ceased.
3. Later that night, about midnight, I heard a rumour that Irish troops were on the Border. I questioned one young man who claimed to have seen them and his story broke down to his having seen one soldier at the Bridge End customs post (a few miles from the City) who, he alleged, was stopping traffic. In the circumstances I drove to Bridge End at about 1.15 a.m. and found two army land-rovers there within a few yards of the customs post on the Donegal side. They

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retained 8 soldiers between them and the man in charge told me it was a routine patrol and that they were not stopping traffic. He said they had been there only for a few minutes and did not know if others had been there before them.

4. Fortunately the weather was extremely bad - high winds and buckets of rain. In other circumstances a rumour of Irish troops on the Border might have swept the Bogside and might have encouraged another attack on British Army personnel. With this in mind I telephoned Mr. O'Dowd and asked him to advise the Taoiseach of the situation as early as possible the following morning and to recommend that Army personnel should not be visible right on the Border on such occasions in the future as their presence could encourage the hooligan element in the Bogside and lead to charges of provocation as well. Mr. O'Dowd confirmed to me the following evening that he had so advised the Taoiseach and that the recommendation had been accepted and put into effect immediately.

5. I had conversations with several people during Sunday ^{evening and} night. ~~and evening~~ They included Mr. Hume, Mr. Stephen McGonigal, Vice-Chairman of the Derry City Development Commission, two or three Catholic businessmen and others I met casually. They were all satisfied that the stone throwing was the work of hooligans and none could produce any evidence that there was any organisation behind it although all had varying degrees of suspicion. The difficulty is that the RUC is not acceptable in the Bogside, that the British Army is at best tolerated there and therefore that there is no real policing of hooligan elements. Considerable pressure was put on Hume to create a vigilante force or to do something about the situation. Hume is unwilling to take a lead in this matter but there is some prospect that a meeting of moderate elements might be arranged in the near future. It is almost impossible simply to condemn the hooligans as they do have a considerable degree of tolerance from residents of the Bogside when feeling runs high. In the circumstances, following a long conversation with me about what to do, Hume issued a statement condemning the insensitivity of the authorities in flying the Union Jack from Victoria barracks which was on the route of the parade and incensed young people in the parade. He then went on to condemn the acceptance of the provocation and the hooliganism that followed.

6. The troublesome thing about Derry is that the stone throwing at the Army personnel is becoming almost a routine occurrence. It is difficult to see any conscious reason for these very frequent assaults and as there seems to be no specific motivation for them it is virtually impossible to extirpate any responsible parties. Moderates, like Hume, are up against the threat of political attack both from Republicans and extreme Left who have an interest, or think they have, in keeping the pot on the boil, if moderates take any action. While the Bogside residents are generally opposed to hooliganism they do show a certain tolerance of it which is influenced I should think, by a genuine dislike of the RUC who so far have escaped scot free for their previous activities in the Bogside. They are also influenced by a fundamental dislike of the symbols of authority e.g. the Union Jack which to them is merely a Unionist flag and representative of Unionist misbehaviour. I formed the impression that a solution to the problems of the North cannot really be achieved within the Callaghan terms of reference. While much is being done to recognise the duality of the North - by creating Boards with substantial minority representation in various important matters and therefore moving away from the idea of democratic control - this will not be sufficient while the State itself is alleged to be British and all the symbols and trappings of the State are British. No attempt was made by the RUC or the Army to interfere with the tricolour during the weekend but this kind of tolerance may have to be recognised formally and the Union Jack de-emphasized in recognition of the aversion of the minority to it.

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body seems to have reported it or perhaps noticed it but the Union Jack was also flying from the Guildhall tower on Sunday afternoon.

7. I had several discussions with Hume during the weekend both before and after the events of Sunday and came back to Dublin via Belfast on Monday so as to have an opportunity of a private chat with Martin Wallace, the RTE man in Belfast, whose book "Drums and Guns: Revolution in Ulster" was published last week. Among the matters discussed were the following:

- (i) Hume has been asked by several people to run as a candidate in Mid-Ulster if Miss Devlin does not stand again. These people include Protestants in North Tyrone who have said that they will openly support his candidature in the area. I am convinced that Hume would not be accepted as a Unity candidate and that there will be another candidate, possibly Kevin Agnew, run by the Republicans. Hume's hopes rest, therefore, on a split among the Unionists. My comment to Hume was confined to remarking that if the seat were lost again to a Unionist because of a split in the Opposition Hume would not be allowed to live it down for years to come. Consequently he should have to do his arithmetic extremely well.
- (ii) There will be a statement by Sir Arthur Young on the Devenney case today. I have not discovered what its content will be but my assumption is that Sir Arthur will reopen the inquiry. My information is that plain clothes detectives from the RUC have in fact been conducting a fresh investigation but that the Devenney family, on the advice of Hume, refused to cooperate. There were two reasons for this: the first reason is that the RUC have a well established reputation for creating alibis after the event if names were given to them and secondly Hume was determined to make it clear to Sir Arthur Young that no RUC investigation of its own activities would be satisfactory. ^{Since} dictating above the Evening Press today headlines "Scotland Yard to probe Devenney death".
- (iii) I again discussed with Hume the implications of EEC membership and advised him to be careful about accepting the idea that the Six Counties as a whole should be regarded as a development area. This could have the indirect effect of a European endorsement of the Unionist policy of transferring the wealth of the Six Counties to the area East of the Bann. What might be sought is a development area agreement for the area West of the Bann plus South Armagh and South Down. There may be a debate on this in Stormont but I understand that O'Hanlon has put down a motion opposing entry to the EEC. He did this without consulting anyone else in the Opposition which is an excellent indication of how difficult it is to organise the Opposition in Stormont.
- (iv) My conversation with Martin Wallace was on a more or less academic plane and amounted essentially to discussion of the last chapter of his book. While he, and nearly everyone else, agrees that Dublin is involved in the Northern situation it is difficult to discover a means of expressing this usefully.

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- (v) Paisley may be in trouble in Bannside. A few people are now considering the possibility that he can be beaten. Following upon the "confidence" debate it is politically necessary for the Government to back Minton, the official Unionist candidate, to the hilt and, if they do so, they might retain the seat. No one I spoke to knows the constituency well enough to bet on this. Morgan is regarded as a shoo-in in South Antrim.

8. Certainly it would be foolish to confine our role merely to cooling the situation. If this idea should get abroad as the sole content of current policy it would not be helpful to our own long-term aspirations. Now that the Easter weekend has passed rather better than might have been expected two or three months ago and rather worse than might have been hoped the time may be ripe for looking again at long-term policy on the North. The short-term policy of doing nothing to rock the boat while privately making our views known to London and insisting on reforms has been successful but is not enough by itself. The vital necessity of local government reform is still under examination and we should keep reminding London of its essential importance but thereafter the whole field of policy in relation to the North remains to be decided.

*Liamon
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