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7 July 1997 ~~AS~~ MA

VIA FAX TO: Speed Dial (2 pages + cover)

**TO: Anthony Cary
Chancery
Washington**

**CC: Anita Bharucha, NIO London
Philip Priestley, NAD, FCO
Peter Reid, BIS New York**

FROM: Terri Evans, Press and Public Affairs

RE: JOE KENNEDY REACTION TO DRUMCREE

1. Joe Kennedy's Boston office copied me on a letter which has this afternoon gone to the Prime Minister expressing Kennedy's concern over events at Drumcree and his intention to file a resolution asking for a sense of Congress that marches not take place along disputed routes. I have not seen the exact wording of the resolution; I have sent Kennedy's office copies of the Secretary of State's statement in which she discusses the European Convention on Human Rights.

2. The letter (the reply to which I would expect we will want to help craft) may provide useful background with any conversations you have with either Kennedy's office on the subject.

~~Mr Steele~~

Mr Gibbons

- 1, cc PS/POS (L+B) F
- Mr Steele F
- Mr Thomas
- Mr Lead F
- Mr Watkins F
- Mr Stephens
- Mr Wood F
- Mr Brooker
- Mr Barton
- Mr Perry F
- Miss Side

2, Mr Gibbons

JACQUES
18C
10/7/97

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1st DISTRICT MASSACHUSETTS
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FINANCIAL SERVICES

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HOUSING AND COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY,
BANKING AND CREDIT MEMBER
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Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

July 7, 1997

The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair, MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, England

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

I am writing to express my disappointment over your government's decision to allow Orange Order marchers to parade down the Garvaghy Road in Portadown this past Sunday and to urge you to adopt a policy of respecting local consent as the marching season now moves to other communities in Northern Ireland.

I am particularly concerned about the Orange Order's disputed plans to march down the predominantly Catholic Lower Ormeau Road in Belfast this coming Saturday. The already fragile peace process, rocked by the show of police force in Portadown and rioting in other areas of the province last weekend, would suffer further blows if marchers are once again allowed through a neighborhood where residents have clearly stated their opposition to triumphalist displays of Unionism.

Such a decision would risk setting off further outbreaks of civil disorder and further alienating the good will of the Nationalist community, whose participation in the peace process is essential to a lasting settlement of the conflict. As recent events have proved, backing down to militant Unionism does nothing to encourage good faith on the part of those committed to peace and simply inflames those who are looking for any excuse to return to a protracted campaign of violence.

There are a number of my colleagues on Capitol Hill who share my concerns. When Congress reconvenes tomorrow, I plan to file a resolution asking the House of Representatives to express its opposition to allowing marches through disputed areas.

Since taking office, your government has taken a number of encouraging steps toward building better ties between divided communities and raising the confidence of the Catholic community in your commitment to justice. That confidence was sorely tested by the events in Portadown.

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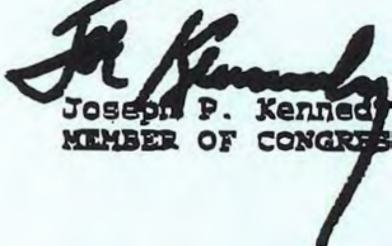
The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair
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Disallowing marches along disputed routes in Belfast, Derry and other communities -- wherever no local consent exists -- is the best way to send a message that you are committed to protecting the lives and property of all and to respecting the voice of every community in Ireland.

Last May, you told the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society: "No one with any sense wants more Drumcrees." Nevertheless, another Drumcree did occur this weekend.

To prevent Drumcree from falling again across the landscape of Ireland, I urge you to respect the wishes of local residents and ban marches where no consent is reached.

Sincerely,


Joseph P. Kennedy II
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

JPK/boc