

CONFIDENTIAL

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INSPECTOR GENERAL, R.U.C.

Noted 9/1/69 . 8th January, 1969

Dear John,

Herewith for information are photocopies of reports by District Inspector Harrison in respect of the People's Democracy March from the time it entered his area on Friday, 3rd January, and eventually left his area on Saturday, 4th January. The question of proceedings against those who can be identified has been raised with the County Inspector, Londonderry.

I will keep you informed as to the institution of criminal proceedings against alleged offenders.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Buchanan

J. E. Greeves, Esq.,  
Secretary,  
Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Stormont,  
BELFAST,  
BT4 3SW.

Subject:- Civil Rights March from Belfast to Londonderry 1st - 4th  
January, 1969.  
Third day.

District Inspector's Office,  
Royal Ulster Constabulary,  
LIMAVADY,  
6th January, 1969.

County Inspector,  
Londonderry.

Submitted.

I have to report that The Peoples Democracy March entered Limavady District on the morning of Friday, 3rd January, 1969 at Genshane Pass.

There were over a hundred walkers and as they approached Dungiven they were met by many people from the village. There were about 500 in the procession as they entered Dungiven. They were joined by a piper who played them into and out of Dungiven. They had lunch at Dungiven at the G.A.A. Hall.

As the procession reached the junction of the Londonderry and Feeny roads I stopped the procession. It was about 400 strong. I informed the walkers that I had reason to believe they would meet with opposition if they were to follow the route by Feeny. I requested them to travel to Claudy by the Londonderry or Foreglen Road. I informed them that this route was shorter. I then had a discussion with two of the leaders, Michael Farrell and Kevin O'Boyle. They discussed what action they would take and after several persons addressed the processionists a vote was taken and the decision made was that they would press forward on the police cordon which was formed across the mouth of the Feeny road. None of the speakers was in favour of taking the alternative route. They said they were fed up being diverted.

I doubt if they hoped to succeed in breaking the police cordon but the pressure was so great from the local followers who were at the back of the crowd that the police were forced to give way after a few minutes and the Civil Rights Marchers came through.

The police were unable to regain the initiative and the marchers continued along the road to Feeny. There were about 70 to 80 police in the cordon. About 100 of the local followers turned back at this place. Four police had hospital treatment for pepper thrown in their eyes by the marchers at this stage.

About 11.45a.m. it was reported that a number of cars had left Maghera and were believed to be travelling towards Dungiven by either Garvagh or Draperstown. About 12.30p.m. a number of men were reported to have assembled at the Feeny end of Claudy village. This was investigated by local police. There were about 10 car loads of men. These men were loyalists. They left the scene in about half an hour, travelling in the Limavady direction.

A message was received from the organisers at the G.A.A. Hall at 1.15p.m. that they expected trouble at the bridge at the Feeny end of Claudy and requested the police to deal with the matter.

At 1.30p.m. the police received an anonymous phone call reporting a bomb in this Hall. This turned out to be a hoax. It was investigated by the police.

When the marchers continued on the Feeny road the original leading police escort passed the procession by a diversion and continued to escort the marchers as before.

No opposition was met on the way to Claudy. A number of loyalists were seen as spectators in the Straidarran area. A mixed group of loyalists

numbering about 20, from a small housing estate, greeted the procession with cheers, shouts etc. Three or four women were waving Union Jacks. It is believed one or two missiles were thrown from these observers at the processionists, also at passing traffic immediately afterwards.

On approaching Claudy the marchers were met and greeted by many of the local people. The Gornley brothers, members of Parliament and Mr. Kevin Agnew were among those who met them.

They spent the night in St. Patrick's Parochial Hall, where they arrived at about 6p.m. The marchers obtained their food at a local cafe. The number arriving in the village was about 600.

Claudy village was quiet in the evening. However, at 10.15p.m. police received a call from Mr. Eakin, regarding a row outside his shop in the village. Police found the vicinity quiet on arrival. However just after this a Police Land Rover was struck by bottles. Just after this bottles were thrown at some loyalists at the same place. A Reserve Force platoon which was on reserve in the station was called on the scene. They chased a crowd of about 20 Civil Rights supporters up the Limavady road, then they chased a crowd of a similar size consisting of Loyalists, out the Feeny Road. About 20 or 30 persons were involved in the bottle throwing. Isolated bottles were thrown in the presence of the police. Two windows in Mr. Eakin's shop were broken. Three other windows in the village were broken.

A group of persons from the Hall in which the Civil Rights people were staying approached the scene but they were kept away by the police.

The incident lasted not more than 10 minutes and the place became quiet again.

At 3.5p.m. Rev. John Wylie reported to police Dungiven that George Hutton of Crossgar had been following the procession on the Glenshane Pass. His car had stopped for some reason and Hutton was pulled out of his car by some "thugs" and shaken. The windscreen of his car was smashed. The car was a B.M.C. Mini, Reg. No. 194 NZ. Later in the afternoon the police visited the scene in the presence of Mr. Hutton. The car had then been pushed into a field and had sustained further damage as result. Mr. Hutton declined to make a statement about the matter. This incident occurred in the townland of Edin, about 6 miles from Dungiven.

About 4.30p.m. John Bernard O'Kane, Killycarr, Claudy parked a Morris 1100 car, Reg. No. 547 HGD at Straidarran on the Feeny - Claudy road. He joined the procession and when he returned to the car about 8.15p.m. he found that all the windows and lights had been smashed. The doors on the driver's side were also damaged. The car was owned by James Doherty of Killycarr.

W. C. Harriman  
District Inspector.