

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES****IRELAND**

**Reference Code:** 2002/8/493

**Title:** Letter from Maisie Forde, Private Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to NS Ó Nualláin, Private Secretary to the Taoiseach, regarding a letter sent by the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement to the Taoiseach, Jack Lynch, and possible action by the Irish government against Britain in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom.

**Creation Date(s):** 30 August, 1971

**Level of description:** Item

**Extent and medium:** 1 page

**Creator(s):** Department of the Taoiseach

**Access Conditions:** Open

**Copyright:** National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.



30 Lúnasa, 1971

Rúnaí Príobháideach don Taoiseach  
 Roinn an Tacsigh

I am desired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to refer to your minute of 27 August concerning the letter received by the Taoiseach from the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Movement. It is suggested that you should issue a reply addressed to the Honorary Secretary, Mrs. Edwina Stewart, so as to avoid addressing also [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] It is suggested that the letter be in the following terms:

The Taoiseach has asked me to thank you for your letter of 15th August suggesting that the Government should institute proceedings against Britain under the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedom in respect of violations of the Convention by the British Army in the North of Ireland.

I am to assure you that this is a matter which the Government have had under consideration for some time and that they are aware of some difficulties that might arise in such proceedings including the provision in Article 26 of the Convention that the European Commission may only deal with a matter after all domestic remedies have been exhausted.

The Government intend to keep this proposal under constant review in the light of all the relevant circumstances and for this purpose have arranged for assessment of the evidence available to them to date.

In this respect any evidence collected by your association might be forwarded to the Secretary, Department of Foreign Affairs, 80 St. Stephen's Green, Dublin.

The Department of Foreign Affairs would be glad to receive a delegation from your Executive Committee in relation to this whole subject at mutual convenience. To arrange this you might wish to telephone Mr. E. Gallagher or Mr. J. Small at the Department (telephone no. 780822) to make the necessary arrangements.

It is apparent, of course, that the issue of a letter in the above terms amounts to an official indication that the Government are seriously considering recourse to Strasbourg. The Minister however is of the opinion that we should not back away from this question while at the same time not committing ourselves to proceed.

*Máire Dade*

Rúnaí Príobháideach