

METROPOLITAN POLICE

Special Report }

SPECIAL BRANCH

12 day of April 1972

SUBJECT Northern
Minority Defence
Force

Reference to Papers
588/UNREG/1014

1. The following information has been received from a reliable source:-

2. "An emergency meeting of the extended Officers' Committee of the Northern Minority Defence Force took place at the Irish Club, Eaton Square, SW1 on Sunday 9 April 1972 between 9pm and 11pm. Ten members of the Committee attended together with Privacy a reporter for the 'Irish Post' (and a member of the Roger Casement cumann of Sinn Fein) who had arranged the hire of the room. The following persons were identified:

Privacy

Ian CAMERON

Privacy

3. The chairman of the meeting, Privacy said that news had just been received that 'William CRAIG was coming to London to take part in an Ulster Vanguard rally at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park on Saturday 29 April 1972 and would be bringing about 1,000 supporters to London with him'. Privacy added that Vanguard already had some support in London - a Branch in Brixton was claiming 200 members - and they would undoubtedly be joined by members of the National Front which would ensure wide publicity would be given to the event. He continued by stating that the NMDF could not allow CRAIG or his Vanguard to have an uninterrupted meeting in London and that it was up to them to arrange a counter-demonstration to show solidarity with the minority in Northern Ireland. He proposed that other Irish organisations, such as Sinn Fein and Clann na h'Eireann (he was undecided about the wisdom of inviting the Anti-Internment League or the Irish Solidarity Campaign) be invited to support this counter-demonstration which should set up an opposing platform in Hyde Park to compete with that of Vanguard. To this end Privacy proposed that he should write to the relevant authorities to obtain permission to use a public address system. He then asked for suggestions from those present.

4. Privacy asked whether trouble could be expected at the demonstration and was told that if there was no trouble then the counter-demonstration could be counted as a failure. When Privacy was asked if he would help with the publicity of the counter-demonstration he said that he would do what he could but

that he required a story. When asked to explain what he meant he said that in order to gain publicity he needed trouble or the strong hint that there was going to be trouble. He suggested that press statements be issued, which while not directly threatening trouble, should be phrased to let people know that some disorder was likely. He then recommended that the NMDF make plans to attack the opposing platform. This led to much discussion on weapons, smoke bombs, petrol bombs etc., but no definite proposals were made. Pleased with the prospect of a story [Privacy] then asked to be excused from the meeting and said that he would make up a statement on behalf of the NMDF for inclusion in the 'Irish Post'.

5. Following his departure [Privacy] said that they must not allow themselves to be pushed into a confrontation which would only leave them open to arrest (such as by carrying weapons etc). He said that he would incite the people from the platform to take action against Vanguard without leaving himself open to arrest for incitement. He said that they should however make plans to defend their own meeting from attack. [Privacy] said that [Privacy] [Privacy] the Secretary of the Catholic ex-Servicemans' Association had said that he would ensure that at least 100 of his members travelled to the NMDF meeting from Belfast and that he would whip up support in Birmingham (where he is at present living with his wife and family) and the Midlands.

6. [Privacy] closed the meeting by saying that the demonstration and the violence which was bound to ensue would be good publicity for the organisation. A suggestion that they should have leaflets and posters printed advertising the counter-demonstration was adopted and a further meeting to make contingency plans is to take place in the near future (no date at present).

7. The names and Special Branch references of the persons mentioned in this report are given on the attached appendix.

[1] HN294
Det. Inspector

Submitted:

[2]

HN294

Chief Inspector

Thomson
CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT

A P P E N D I X

Appendix to Special Branch report dated 12 April 1972 concerning
a Committee meeting of the Northern Minority Defence Force

Privacy

Ian CAMERON ✓

Privacy

Mentions re. NMDF

Mentions re. NMDF

RF Privacy

Mentions re. NMDF

Unable to identify

RF Privacy

Mentions re. NMDF
(588/UNREG/1006 - 15A 3C
588/UNREG/1006 - 2A)

Unable to identify

Mentions re. NMDF

Mentions re. NMDF

No trace