



IRISH TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS' UNION

General Secretary: MICHAEL MULLEN



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IN REPLY PLEASE QUOTE

G/3

26th April, 1974.

Mr. Len Murray,
General Secretary,
Trade Union Congress,
Congress House,
Great Russell Street,
London. W. C. 1.

Dear Len,

It may have come to your notice that the Football Association of Ireland has planned a match with Chile to be played in Santiago Stadium on May 12th next.

After the illegal and armed overthrow of President Allende, this Stadium was used as a concentration camp for trade unionists and democrats. In it, many opponents of the coup d'etat were herded together like animals and several brutal and atrocious acts were committed against them.

In view of the cruel and anti-democratic nature of the new regime, any social or cultural contact under its auspices at this point is reprehensible. It provides what the Santiago Junta is earnestly seeking an event which gives the appearance of normality and distracts from the Government's repressiveness.

The occasion of the F.A.I. plan, however, is particularly distasteful and insensitive as it selects the bloodstained soil of Santiago Stadium to enact a scene of enjoyment where, so recently, our brother and sister trade unionists were persecuted for their beliefs.

We realise that this step may have been taken by the F.A.I. without full consideration of its implications and to that extent we do not assign any malign or callous intent. We still hope, nonetheless, that it can now see the objective significance of its plan.

Whilst we have protested directly to the Football Association of Ireland and to the Professional Football Association, it has not resulted in the game being cancelled. Unfortunately, the Professional Football Association in this country is not affiliated to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions but, whilst this is so, all the members of the Irish Team who have been selected to play in Chile are British based footballers and members of the Professional Footballers Association. It is our understanding that the latter body is affiliated to your Congress and, that being so, we are wondering if you could possibly use your influence with the affiliated Union to have them prevail on their player-members not to participate in the match referred to.

Thanking you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

MICHAEL MULLEN,
GENERAL SECRETARY.

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