

E.R.

SECRET  
SECRET

Ireland (4)

NIOM (80) (5)

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE ON FRIDAY 11 JULY 1980

*Handwritten initials*  
17/7

Present

|              |   |          |
|--------------|---|----------|
| Mr Marshall  | ) | Chairman |
| Mr Buxton    | ) |          |
| Mr Corbett   | ) |          |
| Mr Ledlie    | ) |          |
| Mr Abbott    | ) | NIO      |
| Mr Blackwell | ) |          |
| Mr Hall      | ) |          |
| Mr Bengier   | ) |          |
| Mr Stephen   | ) |          |
| Mr Stephens  | ) |          |
| Mr Gardner   | ) | MOD      |
| Capt Ramsay  | ) |          |
| Maj Martin   | ) |          |
| Mr Thomas    | ) | FCO      |

Area Reviews

Mr Ledlie said that, whilst the Review of Londonderry had raised comparatively few issues, a number of points had arisen from the Review of South Armagh and these were still being considered by the persons concerned. It was likely that this review would be used as a foundation document for further consideration of the area. It was hoped that the Review of East Tyrone would be completed in time for the next SPM. At the same time it was hoped that a report could be presented on the relationship between the activities of the civil administration and the security forces. Work on the Review of Belfast was proceeding satisfactorily but Sir Brooks Richards might well wish to consider matters afresh in which case the final report might not be submitted to the next SPM although the fieldwork should be concluded by the end of July.

SECRET

SECRET

E.R.

Mr Stephens thought that a major problem in West Belfast might be the effects of the actions of the security forces and the civilian administration upon each other and the difficulties of dovetailing the two. Mr Ledlie agreed that it should be possible to improve co-ordination but did not think it appropriate for the Planning Staff to make recommendations in this sphere. Mr Stephens also asked whether thought had been given to breaking down consideration of West Belfast into smaller geographical areas. Mr Ledlie replied that the GOC had insisted that all of Belfast should be treated together; in the case of West Belfast it made operational sense to view it as one area.

#### Irish Named Regiments

3. Mr Stephen said that the press articles appearing on Monday July 7 had been the result of an involuntary leak. The effects had not in fact been serious and it had perhaps been beneficial to deal with such a potentially sensitive issue so far in advance although, of course, no announcement had been planned. The Chairman said that he had been surprised by the level of press interest but no harm had been done. He asked whether interest had been shown in further troop withdrawals. Mr Stephen replied that very little interest had been shown.

#### Renewal of the Emergency Provisions Act (EPA)

4. The Chairman said that the decision to allow Section 12 of the EPA to lapse had been received very quietly; unfortunately the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) had not given the Government much credit for the decision. Mr Buxton said that the SDLP favoured the outright repeal of the Section, which would require a Bill. If there were a short Bill giving effect to the recommendations of the Working Party on the Law relating to Terrorism that might provide a suitable vehicle; but it could also lead to the tabling of a large number of undesirable amendments. The Chairman said that the Secretary of State was not minded to introduce such a Bill, and if he subsequently did so the long title would need to be drawn very tightly which would be

popular. Mr Stephen asked whether there had been comment on the link between Sections 11 and 12 of the EPA. Mr Buxton replied that the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights (SACHR) had mentioned it but without alluding to the Parliamentary undertakings. The Chairman said that the Attorney-General had given clearance on the legal aspect and the Secretary of State had taken the view that the political commitment was no longer of significance. Mr Buxton mentioned that SACHR had extended its comments to the special powers of arrest in Sections 11 and 14; more might be heard of the alleged abuse of Section 14 to conduct large-scale screening operations.

#### Yellow Card

5. Mr Stephen said that the Law Officers had finally commented on the MOD proposals on a shorter form for the Yellow Card. Three points had been made; two posed no problems, but the other was somewhat difficult. MOD would write to NIO on the matter.

#### Constitutional Proposals

6. The Chairman said that the Command Paper "The Government of Northern Ireland: Proposals for Further Discussion" (Cmnd 7905) was published on 2 July and debated in the House of Commons on the 9th. None of the four main Northern Ireland parties had rejected the proposals totally, and the intention was to meet the parties bilaterally in an attempt to work out an acceptable formula; as yet one could not tell whether this was possible. The talks would begin later in the month with Mr Molyneux being seen first. The aim was to meet all the major parties by the end of July.

#### The North/South Interconnector

7. Mr Thomas said that the Embassy in Dublin had been prodding gently for a directive to be issued to the Garda on co-operation

E.R.

over the restoration of the interconnector. Progress had been unsatisfactory but before proceeding further the Embassy would like more information on progress in the North. The Chairman said that information would be sought from Belfast. Mr Buxton said that the Northern Ireland Electricity Service seemed to have accepted that the interconnector ought to be restored by winter; but there was no decision as to how this should be done.

Security Situation in Fermanagh

8. Mr Ledlie asked what had been the outcome of the meeting between the Prime Minister and the UDR widows from Fermanagh. Mr Blackwell said that the widows had stated that certain local people were giving information to PIRA; they also called for further border road closures. Number 10 had now written to ask for a report on the security position and on the improvement of cross border co-operation. Mr Corbett said that the Prime Minister had also informed Rev Ian Paisley that she would be consulting the Secretary of State. The Chairman said that a report should be provided as soon as possible. Mr Ledlie said that the Planning Staff had done some work on Fermanagh and he would consult with LOB about it.



JUL 6 1980