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Title: Letter from Ambassador of Great Britain to Ireland John Peck to Taoiseach Jack Lynch, regarding the replacement of Lieutenant General Ian Freeland as General Officer Commanding in Northern Ireland by Lieutenant General; VF Erskine Crum, and the likely appointment of Graham Shillington as Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary.

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ReplBRITISH EMBASSY,
DUBLIN.

22 September, 1970

by Des Taoiseach.

I have been instructed to pass to you the following message from the Prime Minister, The Rt. Hon. Edward Heath:-

"I want to give you advance intimation of changes in the command of the security forces in Northern Ireland, which are likely to be announced on Wednesday, September 23. Lt. Gen. Sir Ian Freeland is to be replaced in early February by Lt. Gen. V.F. Erskine Crum. This change is being made in the ordinary course of military posting. To avoid a nearly simultaneous change in the command of the R.U.C. Sir Arthur Young will return to the City of London Police in Mid-November this year. He will have been with the R.U.C. for over a year and has already fulfilled his task of implementing the Hunt reforms within the R.U.C., and I know you will agree that he has done this with great distinction.

In accordance with the Hunt recommendations the Northern Ireland Parliament set up an independent police authority and it is for the authority (as it is for authorities in England and Wales) to appoint the new Chief Constable with the approval of the Minister of Home Affairs. I understand that they are likely to appoint Mr. Shillington the present Deputy to the Chief Constable, and Mr. Flanagan one of the Assistant Chief Constables and a Catholic, to be Deputy. Major Chichester-Clark (who, as you know, now holds the Home Affairs Portfolio himself) is also intending to appoint as the Northern Ireland Inspector of Constabulary one of the Inspectors of Constabulary for England and Wales. The Home Secretary has agreed that the Inspections can be carried out by our new Chief Inspector. He will

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The Taoiseach, Mr. J. Lynch, T.D.,
DUBLIN.



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make it clear in a public statement that there is no change in the policy based on the Hunt reforms: no rearming of the R.U.C. and no revival of the B-Specials.

I can assure you that the change of personnel entails no change of policy. The Catholics in Northern Ireland have nothing to fear and the appointment of a Catholic Deputy and an English Inspector of Constabulary should give them the reassurance they need. The latter appointment continues the momentum towards making the R.U.C. part of the United Kingdom Police family and I know that Major Chichester-Clark has in mind that there should be interchanges that should greatly benefit the R.U.C. All this is important and I wanted you to know it in advance."

I look forward to meeting you in New York."

*Yours very sincerely,
John Peck*

John Peck