

1970/Joint Sec/77

CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE JOINT SECURITY COMMITTEE HELD  
ON MONDAY 3 AUGUST 1970 IN STORMONT CASTLE AT 12 NOON

PRESENT:                   The Deputy Prime Minister  
                          The Minister of Home Affairs (in the Chair)  
                          The Minister of Development  
                          The Minister of Education  
                          The GOC  
                          The Chief Constable  
                          The Deputy Chief Constable  
                          The Secretary to the Cabinet  
                          The Deputy UK Representative  
                          The Director of Intelligence  
                          The Security Liaison Officer  
                          The Chief Superintendent, Crime Special Branch

---

ALSO PRESENT:           The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs  
                          The Secretary of the Police Authority for  
                                  Northern Ireland  
                          The Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet  
                          The Private Secretary to the Prime Minister  
                          The Press Officer to the Prime Minister

---

Mr T A Cromey

---

1. WEEKEND RIOTING

The Chief Superintendent, Crime Special Branch said there was no doubt that the riots were Republican inspired. They invariably developed following meetings and there were Republican participants in all cases. Nevertheless there was no indication of a master plan. There was a melding of the Republican 'Goulding' and 'Provisional' Groups and 'left' organisations such as the West Belfast Democratic Socialist Alliance without any clear policy direction. Ad hoc disturbances suited their purpose. The Republican movement was also in direct liaison with NICRA.

Good information now becoming available tended to confirm earlier belief that the majority of the explosions which had taken place had been perpetrated by Protestant extremists simply to embarrass the Government.

1.

SECRET

The GOC said:

1. that the new riot control devices (baton rounds, water cannon, etc) had not come up to expectation largely because the riot situations had not presented the right sort of target;
2. that very fair warning had been given before the youth was shot in the New Lodge Road;
3. that he was arranging for clear warning to be published that petrol bombs were lethal weapons and would be met by lethal reaction;
4. that in terms of large scale search the petrol bomb could not be classed with firearms/ammunition. Searches would nevertheless be carried out on strong suspicion of large collection;
5. that the 'sniper on the roof' had been a Protestant sniper in a Protestant area, which was otherwise quiet and he had disappeared after one shot had been fired by the Army;
6. that the New Lodge Road had not become a No-Go area;
7. that Roman Catholic clergy had tried to help in the troubled areas; Father Murphy had been particularly helpful in a very tense Divis Street situation.
8. that the RUC had been most helpful during operations.

The Minister of Education wondered if the time had come to intern known extremists. The Chief Superintendent, Crime Special Branch said this would be an inadequate answer to a very big problem.

The GOC felt that the one thing that would help would be heavy sentences quickly imposed. The Minister of Home Affairs said he could not interfere with the normal course of justice. A special Commission had been arranged

SECRET

SECRET

but this could only deal with trial on indictment and could not exercise summary jurisdiction. There had been many successful prosecutions. Press interest might be arranged to draw public attention to these.

2. CURFEW

The GOC said he did not have the troops to impose curfew restrictions.

3. EARLY CLOSING OF PUBS

The GOC said that trouble might develop as crowds returned home this evening from Mr O'Hagan's funeral. Attacks on Police Stations and Army posts were a possibility, and perhaps sectarian clashes. Discussion on this led to consideration of renewed restriction on drinking hours, and it was agreed that 8 pm closing of licensed premises in Belfast be re-imposed from this evening until further notice.

4. ACTION AGAINST ILLEGAL PROCESSIONS

The Minister of Home Affairs expressed some concern about the comparatively innocuous name taking procedure against illegal processions since it might encourage others to flout the law. The GOC distinguished between the treatment of a parade in a flashpoint area (eg Derry on August 12) and an area where trouble was unlikely (eg Dromara last Saturday). It would help if those whose names had been taken at Dromara could be convicted before August 12. Efforts would be made to achieve this.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was confirmed for Wednesday at 11 30 am.

SECRET