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Mr Reeve

MR ENOCH POWELL'S SPEECH TO THE HANTS AND DORSET MONDAY CLUB CONFERENCE

The Secretary of State has seen the text (attached for ease of reference) of the speech which Mr Enoch Powell gave to the Hampshire and Dorset Monday Club Conference on 21 September. He would be very grateful for a detailed and critical analysis of the speech, in terms particularly of the structure of the arguments put forward by Mr Powell.

Jonathan Duke-Evans

J B DUKE-EVANS
Private Secretary

23 September 1985

Country

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CONTENT BEFORE TIME OF DELIVERY

Speech by the Rt Hon J. Enoch Powell, MBE. TD to the Hants
and Dorset Monday Club Conference at the Dolphin Hotel,
Southampton, 11.00 am, Saturday, 21st September 1985.

Duplicity in politics is nearly always self-destructive. That is why it has been so tragic to watch a Conservative Government, which in so much else has kept faith with its undertakings and its supporters, behave with persistent duplicity towards the part of the United Kingdom known as Ulster or Northern Ireland.

The Government's public profession is that Ulster shall be a part of the United Kingdom as long as its people wish. That they do wish, they have declared by fifteen seats to two on the same franchise and electoral system as the rest of Britain uses to elect its government. On no other question have British electors delivered so overwhelming and unmistakeable a verdict. Yet the actions of the Government have been, and still continue to be, in gross conflict with their profession. Every policy undertaken in Ulster since 1979 has been designed, in concert with the Irish Republic, which claims Northern Ireland as its own territory, to promote the removal of Ulster from the United Kingdom into some form of all-Ireland relationship. The current negotiations with the Irish government are explicitly being conducted on the basis that the Irish Republic has a legitimate interest in the internal affairs of that part of the United Kingdom. *and NI is the South*

If anyone imagines that this course of behaviour is consistent with commitment to Ulster's constitutional status as part of the Union, he need only ask what the people of Yorkshire or Cornwall would think if the same manoeuvres had been applied to them. It is futile to plead in justification that the Republic alone has a common land frontier with Britain. Nobody suggests that because Switzerland has common land frontiers with Italy, Austria, Germany and France, therefore those countries must have a legitimate interest in the internal affairs of the adjacent Swiss cantons. It is still more perverse to point to the existence in Ulster of a small minority which, like small minorities

in Wales and Scotland, objects to being included in the United Kingdom. If Ulster is to be part of the United Kingdom, a foreign country which lays claim to it is the last that can ever be conceded by Britain any status on that minority's behalf.

The Government has long understood perfectly well that the very suspicion of any attempt to shift Ulster into an unwanted relationship with the Republic or to call its position in the United Kingdom into question is certain to provoke the passionate resentment of its own people, as a similar suspicion would do anywhere else, and to sustain and encourage terrorist activity. Why then, it may be asked, does the Government persist in playing with fire by acting in a manner cynically incompatible with the undertakings repeatedly given to its own people?

The answer is that the Government thinks it can play a double game and get away with it. It wants to achieve an arrangement with the Republic that will enable it to say to Ulster, "See, there is nothing in this agreement that in practice diminishes UK sovereignty" while saying at the same time to Dublin, "Look, there is progress for you towards getting the united Ireland by consent which you make no secret of wanting". So the Irish are to be fobbed off with concessions which Ulster will be assured are only illusory but which the Irish are intended to mistake for evidence of more to come.

The Government are in the business of cheating both sides. But the question still arises: "What is in it for Britain?" The answer is that there is a third party whom the Government are also hoping to cheat. For reasons which have nothing to do with the interests of Britain or still less those of Ulster, the United States is keen to see the Irish Republic's political aspirations fulfilled. It was fascinating recently to hear the US congressman Biaggi, when opposing the extradition treaty with Britain, declare "I contend that ratification of the treaty will represent full United States acceptance of the political status quo in Northern Ireland, which would be a dangerous and unwarranted position". Knowing, therefore, to keep in with the United States, the Government aims at producing for sale in

merica spurious evidence of its willingness to provide the Republic with political satisfaction.

So everybody is busily double-crossing everybody else. Britain intends to cheat the Republic by holding out constitutional change in Ulster which it cannot deliver and which it is domestically pledged not to deliver. The Republic intends to cheat Britain by holding out effective co-operation against the IIRA, which it cannot deliver and would commit suicide if it tried to deliver. Both are trying to cheat the Americans by holding out the prospect of a politically appeased Republic ready to assist the NATO alliance - something which neither of them is able to deliver.

It is a tricky and a dangerous ploy all round. It will fail of course because the propositions are built on sand. The miserable thing is that the penalty for this duplicity will be paid by the innocent. To keep the merry game going, men, women and children in Northern Ireland will continue to be killed and bereaved because of the hopes and fears which the Government's proceedings continually sustain and renew.

There is one blessing which it is in the Government's power to confer upon Northern Ireland. It is indeed nothing other than what the Government has solemnly promised but never yet performed. That blessing is the full and unequivocal enjoyment of the Union pure and simple, unbeset by initiatives or negotiations or underhand deals, by constitutional innovations or outlandish experiments. The path of honourable and straightforward dealing, as so often, is the way to peace and safety. There are those of us who still want to hope that a Conservative Government will yet take that path in Northern Ireland.