

NATIONAL ARCHIVES**IRELAND**

Reference Code: 2002/8/77

Title: Address by Home Secretary Reginald Maudling to the Northern Ireland Parliament.

Creation Date(s): 4 March, 1971

Level of description: Item

Extent and medium: 3 pages

Creator(s): Department of the Taoiseach

Access Conditions: Open

Copyright: National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

5296 UKDB EI
CENTROFORM LDN
CENTROFORM LDN

L.O.W.

VERBATIM SERVICE 074/71

THURSDAY

4TH MARCH 19NE

NORTHERN IRELAND - MR MAUDLING.

FOLLOWING IS SUBSTANCE OF HOME SECRETARY'S ADDRESS TO MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND PARLIAMENT TODAY THURSDAY.

MR MAUDLING I DO NOT THINK I NEED STRESS TO YOU HOW DEEP IS THE CONCERN IN PARLIAMENT AT WESTMINSTER ABOUT THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS IN NORTHERN IRELAND. I AM SURE YOU ALL WELL APPRECIATE THAT ALREADY. BUT TWO THINGS I DO WANT TO STRESS. FIRST THERE IS A VERY GENERAL AGREEMENT IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES ON THE WAY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD TACKLE THESE PROBLEMS. THIS IS AS IT SHOULD BE. NO RESPONSIBLE PERSON WOULD WISH TO MAKE PARTY CAPITAL OUT OF A SITUATION SO DANGEROUS, POTENTIALLY SO TRAGIC AND SO CLOSELY AFFECTING THE CONSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARLIAMENT. MY SECOND POINT IS THE COMMON WISH OF ALL IN PARLIAMENT UTO UNDERSTAND TO THE FULL YOUR PROBLEMS AND TO DO ALL THAT WE CAN TO HELP IN THEIR SOLUTION. I SAY 'HELP' ADVISEDLY BECAUSE THE FIRST RESPONSIBILITY FOR ANY SOLUTION LIES HERE. OUT RESPONSIBILITY IS TO SUPPORT AND ASSIST IN THE NECESSARY PROCESSES OF ACHIEVING A SITUATION WHERE ALL CAN LIVE TOGETHER IN THIS SMALL COUNTRY IN PEACE AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND IN THE CONFIDENCE THAT ALL CITIZENS ARE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW.

SECURITY FORCES.

IT IS FAIR FOR ME TO POINT OUT THAT THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE BRITISH PEOPLE HAVE NOT STINTED THE SUPPORT, ECONOMIC AND PRACTICAL, WHICH WE HAVE BEEN PREPARED TO GIVE IN AID TO INDUSTRIAL FIRMS AND TO YOUR AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY AND IN MAINTAINING SOCIAL SERVICES BENEFITS AT THE SAME LEVEL AS IN THE REST OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. MORE THAN THIS, WE HAVE RECOGNISED OUR OVERALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAINTAINING THE LAW AND TO THIS END WE HAVE PROVIDED THE SECURITY FORCES THAT ARE AT PRESENT HERE IN SUBSTANTIAL STRENGTH. THEY ARE HERE TO PRESERVE PEACE AND LAW WORKING WITH THE RUC AS THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WORK DAILY TOGETHER ON A TASK WHERE BOTH MUST SHARE RESPONSIBILITY. THEIR PRESENCE IS A HEAVY BURDEN ON THE BRITISH ARMY AND THE BRITISH PUBLIC, AND THEY HAVE NOT HESITATED TO CONTRIBUTE LIFE, LIMB AND EFFORT IN FURTHERANCE OF THE DUTY TO WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN CALLED.

CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS.

I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT RECENT MONTHS HAVE SEEN IN MANY WAYS CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS. THE EFFORTS MADE HERE TO WHICH WE HAVE CONTRIBUTED, HAVE NOT BEEN WHOLLY UNAVAILING. THE REFORM PROGRAMME TO WHICH YOUR GOVERNMENT IS COMMITTED, AND WHICH THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT HAS WHOLEHEARTEDLY ENDORSED, IS DESIGNED TO REMOVE ANY GRIEVANCES THAT MAY HAVE BEEN BASED ON CLAIMS OF DISCRIMINATION WITHIN YOUR ECONOMY AND YOUR SOCIETY. AS A RESULT I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THERE HAS BEEN A CONSIDERABLE REDUCTION IN COMMUNAL OR SECTARIAN STRIFE. THE STRUGGLES AND VIOLENCE BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT THAT SO DISFIGURED BELFAST AND OTHER PARTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE LAST TWO YEARS HAVE, I BELIEVE, GROWN LESS. LEADERS OF BOTH COMMUNITIES HAVE OPENLY GIVEN THEIR SUPPORT TO THIS DEVELOPMENT. IT IS ONE WHICH I PROFOUNDLY WELCOME AND I PAY MY TRIBUTE TO THE EFFORTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE.

VICIOUS THREAT.

BUT WE MUST ALL RECOGNISE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE WATER THAT WHAT HAS RECENTLY EMERGED IS A NEW AND ALTOGETHER MORE VICIOUS THREAT. A THREAT OF VIOLENCE AIMED NOT AT THE REDRESS OF GENUINE GRIEVANCES BUT AT THE ACHIEVEMENT BY BRUTE FORCE OF POLITICAL ENDS. THIS NEW SITUATION I BELIEVE HAS ARISEN JUST BECAUSE OF THE PROGRESS THAT WAS BEING MADE. THOSE WHOSE AIMS CANNOT BE RECONCILED WITH DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, FREEDOM AND A LAWFUL SOCIETY HAVE TURNED MORE ANFMORE TO THE USE OF THE GUN AND THE BOMB BECAUSE THEY COULD SEE NO OTHER MEANS OF ACHIEVING THEIR ENDS.

MAY I ASSURE YOU THAT IN PARLIAMENT WE DO NOT IN ANY WAY UNDER-ESTIMATE THE REALITY OF THE DANGER. THE THREAT NOW QUITE CLEARLY AND DELIBERATELY POSED BY THE EXTREMISTS IS ONE TO ORGANISED SOCIETY, TO FAMILY LIFE AND TO THE ECONOMY OF NORTHERN IRELAND. LIFE CANNOT PROCEED DECENTLY IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF TURMOIL AND FEAR AND MURDER. CHILDREN ALLOWED OR ENCOURAGED TO ROAM THE STREETS TAUNTING AND STONING THE SOLDIERS WHO ARE THERE SOLELY TO PROTECT PEACE AND ORDER SHAME THE STREETS IN WHICH THEY LIVE. NORTHERN IRELAND'S ECONOMY, WHICH HAS STOOD UP SO STURDILY TO ITS MANY PROBLEMS, URGENTLY NEEDS MORE INVESTMENT IF IT IS TO SUSTAIN LET ALONE INCREASE, ITS MOMENTUM EVERY BOMB, EVERY BULLET IS AIMED AGAINST THE WELL-BEING AND SECURITY OF ALL WHO LIVE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

RULE OF THE GUN.

WHAT WE ARE FACED WITH IS A DELIBERATE ATTEMPT TO IMPOSE POLITICAL VIEWS BY THE RULE OF THE GUN. I AM ABSOLUTELY CONVINCED THAT THE VAST MASS OF PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND, TO WHICHEVER COMMUNITY THEY MAY BELONG, DO NOT SUPPORT THESE METHODS. I AM QUITE CONVINCED THAT THE VAST MASS OF THE PUBLIC WISH TO SEE A NORTHERN IRELAND THAT IS AT PEACE. I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT WILL NOT LET THEM DOWN.

THE AIM OF THESE SMALL GROUPS OF EXTREMISTS IS QUITE CLEAR. THEY SEEK TO STIR UP DELIBERATELY SOCIAL STRIFE AND THEY USE SUCH WEAPONS AS ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM, WITH A RUTHLESS DISREGARD OF HUMAN LIFE, TO PROMOTE A BREAKDOWN OF NORMAL, DECENT, ORDERED LIFE IN YOUR CITIES AND YOUR COUNTRYSIDE. THEY SEEK ALL THE TIME TO PROVOKE REACTIONS BY THE SECURITY FORCES WHICH, AS THEY BECOME INEVITABLY MORE STRICT, MAY APPEAR TO BE REPRESSIVE. BY THAT PROVOCATION OF THE SECURITY FORCES AND BY THEIR VIOLENT ACTION AGAINST THEM THEY TRY ALL THE TIME TO ENTICE THEM INTO ACTIONS WHICH WILL APPEAR DESIGNED NOT TO DEAL WITH THE CRIMINALS THEMSELVES ALONE BUT TO IMPOSE REPRESSIVE OR PUNITIVE MEASURES ON A LARGE SECTION OF THE PEOPLE. WE SHALL NOT BE CAUGHT IN THIS TRAP. THEY BELIEVE ALSO THAT BY THIS CONTINUING PROCESS OF BLOODSHED THEY CAN CREATE IN BRITAIN A WEARINESS AND A DESIRE TO WITHDRAW FROM NORTHERN IRELAND AFFAIRS AND TO ABANDON THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOR THE WHOLE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. IN THIS WAY THEY HOPE TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT THEY WILL WIN. THEY KNOW THAT THIS IS CRUCIAL TO THEIR FUTURE SUCCESS.

COMMONS UNITED.

IT IS THEREFORE OF OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE TO MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT THEY ARE NOT GOING TO WIN. THE NORTHERN IRELAND GOVERNMENT HAS, AS YOU KNOW, THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT IN MAKING THIS ABSOLUTELY CLEAR. THERE MUST BE NO DOUBT ABOUT THIS IN ANYONE'S MIND. THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IS UNITED ON THIS HUMANE AND NECESSARY OBJECTIVE. I AM CONFIDENT THAT IT EQUALLY COMMANDS THE UNITED AND DETERMINED SUPPORT OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND PARLIAMENT.

NORTHERN IRELAND IS CONSTITUTIONALLY PART OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. SUCCESSIVE BRITISH GOVERNMENTS HAVE REPEATED THE ASSURANCE, WHICH I REAFFIRM TODAY, THAT THEY WOULD NOT AGREE TO ANY CHANGE IN THE CONSTITUTIONAL POSITION OF NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE UNITED KINGDOM WITHOUT THE APPROVAL OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND PARLIAMENT AND PEOPLE. NORTHERN IRELAND IS NOT TO BE TORN AWAY BY FORCE FROM THE MAIN BODY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM. FEW INDEED IN MY JUDGMENT BELIEVE THIS TO BE POSSIBLE. THEY MUST BE CONVINCED OF THE WRONGNESS OF THEIR VIEWS, JUST AS THE VAST MASS OF THE PUBLIC AT LARGE MUST BE CONVINCED THAT THEIR VIEWS WILL NOT PREVAIL.

REFORM PROGRAMME.

THE REFORM PROGRAMME, NOW WELL LAUNCHED AND PROGRESSING AT PACE, IS ACKNOWLEDGED BY ALL MEN OF GOODWILL AS ELIMINATING THE GRIEVANCES THAT MANY FELT EXISTED. I SEE NO OTHER BASIS FOR PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND. I SEE NO ALTERNATIVE TO COEXISTENCE SAVE CODESTRUCTION.

IT IS THEREFORE MY DUTY TO CALL ON ALL MEN AND WOMEN OF GOODWILL TO STAND FIRM AGAINST THE MEN OF VIOLENCE AND TO SUPPORT IN EVERY WAY THE FORCES OF PEACE AND ORDER. ALL IN NORTHERN IRELAND HAVE THEIR PART TO PLAY IN THIS. THE POLITICIANS OF ALL PARTIES AND NONE, THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCHES, THE TRADE UNIONS, EVERY INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN WHO VALUES PEACE FOR HIMSELF, HIS FAMILY, HIS CHILDREN.

FREEDOM NOT OPPRESSION.

THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE DETERMINED THAT PEACE AND ORDER UNDER THE LAW SHALL BE A BASIS FOR FREEDOM AND NOT FOR OPPRESSION. IT IS ESSENTIAL TO EMPHASISE THIS TIME AND TIME AGAIN. IT IS TO THIS TASK THAT SO GALLANT A CONTRIBUTION IS BEING MADE BY THE RUC AND THE BRITISH ARMY. MEN OF THE RUC IN THEIR NEW REFORMED ROLE AND SOLDIERS OF BRITISH UNITS HAVE TOGETHER BEEN DYING FOR THIS SINGLE CAUSE. IT WOULD BE AN APPALLING JUDGMENT ON ALL OF US IF THEIR EFFORTS SHOULD BE IN VAIN: IF BITTERNESS, THE PREJUDICE OF LONG AND TURBULENT HISTORY OR SHEER DESIRE TO IMPOSE ONE'S WILL BY NAKED FORCE SHOULD BRING THEIR EFFORTS TO NOUGHT.

THIS PRESENT STATE OF VIOLENCE CANNOT BE TOLERATED. IT CAN AND WILL BE TAKEN IN HAND. ANARCHY SHALL NOT PREVAIL, OF THIS I AM CONVINCED. BUT THE TIME IT TAKES TO ELIMINATE VIOLENCE AND ANARCHY AND THE AMOUNT OF SUFFERING THROUGH WHICH NORTHERN IRELAND MUST PASS BEFORE THE OBJECTIVE IS ACHIEVED WILL DEPEND ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE VAST MASS OF THE PUBLIC UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND OTHER GREAT NATIONAL BODIES ARE PREPARED TO UNITE NOW IN CONDEMNATION OF, AND TOTAL OPPOSITION TO THE BRUTAL AND SENSELESS VIOLENCE THAT SO DISFIGURES OUR NATIONAL LIFE.

ENDS VS 074/71... L P S

SENT 1946/4/JRB
5296 UKDB EI
CENTROFORM LDN