

SECRETRobin ButlerMR ENOCH POWELL - NORTHERN IRELAND

1. I have now had an opportunity of considering carefully Sir Robert Armstrong's Minute dated 11th November 1982, addressed to you, which you submitted to the Prime Minister on the following date.
2. I have no comments to make on the shorter of the two draft letters which Sir Robert proposes to send to Mr Powell.
3. I have the following comments on the "Draft Note for the Record":-
  - (a) Page 3, Paragraph 1
    - (i) The meeting to which reference is made took place on 5th October 1979 (not 7th October 1979).
    - (ii) This meeting was attended by the then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the then representative Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Justice, the Chief Constable of the RUC, and the Commissioner of the Garda.
    - (iii) The final sentence of paragraph 5 (not 8) of the Communique is as follows:-

"The Irish Ministers emphasised the importance of an early initiative leading

(2)

to acceptable political institutions which both sections of the Community in Northern Ireland could support and sustain".

My own recollection is that Mr Powell did not purport to quote verbatim from the Communique, of which I attach a copy.

(b) Page 5

I agree that the word "component" should be added after the word "Ireland" in the 7th line of Paragraph 7.

4. I have the following comments on the longer of the two draft letters which Sir Robert proposes to send to Mr Powell:-

(a) Page 7, Paragraph 7

I note the words which the Prime Minister suggests should be deleted from this paragraph. Nevertheless, these words are crucial to the argument, and are central to the allegations made by Mr Powell. If these words should be deleted, their omission will certainly be noted by Mr Powell, and I would expect him to refer to the omission in his reply to Sir Robert's letter.

(b) Page 8

I certainly agree that the words suggested by the Prime Minister should be deleted.

(c) Page 9, Paragraph 9

(i) The sentence:-

"The proposal" (ie. for an Assembly in Northern Ireland) "was not made for the purpose of providing a Northern Ireland component for some Anglo-Irish inter-Parliamentary body." is dangerous and should be deleted.

(ii) Paragraph 8 of the Communique issued following the meeting between the Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed that it would be for the Parliament concerned to consider at the appropriate time whether there should be an Anglo-Irish body at Parliamentary level comprising members to be drawn from the British and Irish Parliament, the European Parliament, and any elected Assembly that may be established for Northern Ireland".

(iii) Paragraph 23 of the Secretary of State's White Paper presented to Parliament in April 1982 (Command 8541) contains the following sentence:-

"It is now for the Parliaments concerned to consider whether Governmental meetings of the Council should be complimented by an Anglo-Irish body at Parliamentary level in which members of the Parliaments of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland could take part. The Government would expect the arrangements to enable members of the Northern Ireland Assembly to participate if they so wished."

(4)

(iv) More recently, Lord Gowrie has referred to the virtue of the Northern Ireland Act 1982, in that it will enable a Northern Ireland input into the proposed "Anglo-Irish body at Parliamentary level".

(d) I would expect the Secretary of State to suggest the deletion of this sentence. I suggest that if that sentence is deleted, the final sentence of that paragraph should read:-

"So far as any Anglo-Irish body at Parliamentary level is concerned, the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State have made clear that it will be put to the two Parliaments concerned to decide about this; and if such a body is set up, the Assembly itself will have to decide (in agreement with the two Parliaments) to what extent it wishes to participate."