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NIOM (82) 3RD MEETING

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE  
ON FRIDAY 9 JULY 1982Prime Minister

For information.

A.J.C. 14.

## Present:

Mr Marshall	)	
Mr Blelloch	)	
Mr Angel	)	NIO
Mr Burns	)	
Mr Abbott	)	
Mr Harrington	)	
Mr Fisher	)	
Mr Burrows	)	
Mr Stephens	)	
Mr Miller	)	MOD
Colonel Morton	)	
Major Hughes	)	
Major Wynn-Davies	)	
Mr Eldon	-	FCO
Mr Pilling	-	Home Office
Mr Colvin	-	Cabinet Office

Security

1. On most criteria, the position remained unchanged. PIRA attacks on security forces continued particularly in the north west of the Province where at least one ASU was operating effectively. There had been a spate of car bombings but anniversaries including those of the deaths of hunger strikers had passed off relatively peacefully. INLA had been active and drawing on explosives stolen in the Republic earlier this year. They had been responsible for individual attacks including that on the Rev. Beattie (Lisburn Borough Council and DUP Executive Member). There had been little Protestant para-military response to the arrest (but subsequent release on bail) of UDA leaders. Generally the rate of RUC arrests and convictions had been good but a corollary of the success of the arrest of some senior men had been that without differences to settle those more junior had been acting more purposefully.



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members of the Gardai

2. In the Republic, some uniformed / had been transferred from border areas partly to counter the high crime rate in Dublin. The RUC view was that this had not affected border co-operation or counter terrorist operations but there was a need to remain watchful. The trial in Dublin of Gerard Tuite (for explosives offences committed in London) was an encouraging sign of the intent of the Irish to make greater use of the extra-territorial legislation, but the case was a unique one.

### Force Levels

3. Secretary of State had agreed in principle to the withdrawal of a roulement unit but a short term holding arrangement would be necessary to avoid this coinciding with the Assembly elections in October. The turn of the year would be the most appropriate time to withdraw the unit as well as to make other changes. After its withdrawal there would be six resident and two roulement units (all infantry) and the Maze Prison Guard Force.

4. Proposals agreed with the Chief Constable and Police Authority were being put to the Secretary of State. Police manpower would be allowed to reach 8,000 at which point it should level off. Certain manpower intensive sections of the RUC were to be looked at by the Inspectorate over the next two years. No difficulty was being experienced in recruiting to the RUC Reserve but recruitment to the part-time reserve was not being encouraged.

### Lough Foyle Security

5. Both as a deterrent and to reassure merchant shipping naval patrolling was to be extended. Rules of engagement had been virtually agreed.

*Passage deleted and closed, 40 years, under  
FOI Exemption. O'Wayland, 2 October 2012*

The Irish Government would be told of the decision to introduce patrols once Ministerial approval had been obtained; our position (and especially our claim to sovereignty over the whole lough) would however be compromised if the Irish were to know (more than informally) the rules of engagement. Mr Butler is shortly due to meet the Irish Fisheries



E.R.

Minister (Mr Daly) to discuss salmon fishing in the Lough. The meeting should not be allowed to become the opportunity for complaint about the introduction of the patrols. The rules of engagement would need to provide for any confrontation with armed salmon poachers operating in the Lough.

### Prisons

7. There were now 200 'no work' protestors in Maze Prison, about half the number there were at the end of the hunger strike. Few new committals had joined the protest. Some hardliners had left it but it was their influence which lay behind Republican prisoners recently refusing to mix with Loyalist prisoners during association and recreation. The issue was being treated in a low key, but could not continue to be if an attempt were made to achieve segregation during work. A modus vivendi along the lines of that existing at Crumlin Road prison might need to be reached.

8. The campaign to repatriate to NI Irish prisoners in GB jails had not intensified. Maghaberry Prison was due to open next year, no announcement had yet been made on the future of special category prisoners at Maze.

### Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) Act (EPA)

9. The powers had been debated and renewed in both Houses without major difficulty. Both debates had been dominated by considerations affecting the announced review of the legislation. The review was to be on the same basis as that being conducted by Lord Jellicoe into the operation of <sup>the</sup> Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act (PTA), namely to examine the efficacy of and need for the present powers. The Secretary of State had Lord Elwyn Jones in mind to head the review. It would need to take account of the outcome of Lord Jellicoe's report, on which decisions should be possible by March 1983 when the PTA was next due for renewal. It would therefore be well into next year before the report on the review of the EPA would be available.



## ●E.R.

NI Constitutional Bill

10. The Bill was making progress despite the filibuster in the House of Commons; it had received a Second Reading in the House of Lords and was on course for Royal Assent by the end of July. The substance of the Bill was largely unchanged; but one amendment made to it would enable the Assembly to debate minimum reserved (most law and order) matters. The date for elections to the Assembly would be 20 October. Serious campaigning was unlikely before that month. The SDLP would probably participate in the elections, albeit reluctantly. The elections would be fought on a basis of 12 Parliamentary constituencies. The elected Assembly would meet in early November; it was unlikely that its members would behave in the physically absurd way of its 1973 predecessor but there would be no swift agreement within the Assembly on how devolved functions are to be exercised.

Anglo-Irish Relations

11. Relations with the Government of the Republic of Ireland had been damaged by their recent attitudes but NIO and Irish Ministers were meeting when this was of benefit to NI. The Taoiseach was sensitive about the state of present relations and the Department of Foreign Affairs had expressed a wish to improve them.

Economic and Social Matters

12. Unemployment stood at 20% (24.8% adult male). There was little hope of any early rescue of De Lorean. Shipbuilding order had been placed with Harland & Wolff but there was little immediate prospect of other orders. British Enkalon had closed. There was no new investment on the horizon, but the newly created Industrial Development Board would be intensifying efforts to create incentives and jobs. The real difficulty however lay in the worldwide recession and Northern Ireland's image. Unemployment gave rise to an atmosphere of pessimism and hopelessness which ultimately fuelled the problems of the security forces. Robberies had increased.



SECRET

E.R.

13. No Ministerial decision had been made but the purchase of Kinsale Gas was a commercially viable proposition and increasingly likely. It was hoped that European Community funds would be made available for housing but on public expenditure generally there could be difficulties if unexpected demands arose.

NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

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