

PM's notes on
HIO's BSC memo
of 12/7/79



10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

I have the following comments about the
otherwise excellent paper on Northern Ireland.

- 1 The paper gives little idea of the
resources of the terrorist activities, neither
in the number of circles / R.U.C. / soldiers
killed, nor the tactics used, both in Ulster and
in the U.K. Anyone reading this paper would
think the situation difficult but not serious.
Nor is there any indication of where the arms
come from nor of where knowledge of things
is held.
- 2 There is no reference to the Border Pole or
its results.
- 3 A calendar of events (across all parts)
from Nov. 69 to now would help. It should
include the most violent incidents.
- 4 Can we not include something about the
difficulties of ^{collecting} terrorist weapons in the border area?

↑ For that there is no contradiction with
with Linné. The difficulties will come on
the part of the matter in dealing with terrorism.

⑤ Do all R.C.'s work really with Linné?
The Dalgren would contest that. Is it not
also worth mentioning that the last chief
constable of the R.U.C. was himself a Roman
Catholic.

⑥ The £800 'subvention' is not put in
very covert way - the eye could just
run across it - without any impact.

⑦ No mention of local government or the
difficulty of getting even that.

⑧ No mention of the volunteer Ulster Defence Regiment
(? is that the same) which does much valuable work.

⑨ - Special status for prisoners who have been sufficiently
undesirable unless ^{fully} defined and ^{or} ^{as}
_{or military detained.}

6488406
 PREM 19/80
 Return by (08/09/2010)
 7846827 (Anne Cadwallader)

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- (v) The Prime Minister has asked whether we believe that all Roman Catholics in Northern Ireland favour unity with the Republic. She thinks it might be worth mentioning in the paper that the last Chief Constable of the RUC was himself a Roman Catholic.
- (vi) On page 2 of the paper on Government policy, the Prime Minister thinks that the point about the UK Government's £800 m. subversion to Northern Ireland could be put more cogently, rather than as little more than a footnote to the paragraph in which it appears.
- (vii) The Prime Minister would like to see a reference in the papers to the problems of local government in Northern Ireland.
- (viii) The Prime Minister would also like to see some reference to the valiant work carried out by the Ulster Volunteer Force.
- (ix) The Prime Minister thinks that the question, covered in the paper on security policy, of special category status for imprisoned terrorists may not be sufficiently understood unless the history of the problem is more fully described and the special status itself better defined.
- (x) In addition, the Prime Minister has raised the following points in detail on the text:-

"The Background"

(a) Page 3, last line: The UK Government should not be described as "resuming" direct rule since it was never formally abandoned.

"Present Government Policy"

(b) Page 2, line 6: More details of "anti-discrimination legislation" needed.

"Security Policy"

(c) Page 2, paragraph 2: Include reference to the favourable findings of the Bennett Committee, which was on the whole complimentary to the Government.

I should be grateful if you would arrange for the three papers to be revised as quickly as possible in order to take account of the Prime Minister's comments. It would be helpful if the amended versions could reach me not later than noon on Friday, 20 July.

I am sending a copy of this letter to George Walden (FCO).

B. G. CARTLEDGE

M. W. Hopkins, Esq.,
 Northern Ireland Office.

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