

Present:

Minister of State

Mr Hugh Smyth

Mr Stanley Gray

Mr Tommy West

Mr Ken Gibson

Mr James Allan

Mr Finlayson

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A handwritten scribble consisting of several vertical lines, followed by the date "25/5".

Mr Orme said that he had taken the de-prescription order through the House of Commons the previous night. Lord Donaldson would be dealing with the order in the Lords that day and once it was through the Secretary of State would sign an order de-proscribing Sinn Fein and the UVF. Seven days later this would take effect. He understood the anxiety which Mr Smyth and his colleagues had felt about the delay in proceeding to de-prescription and Mr Carson had spoken to him of this. However, he hoped that the deputation would be reassured by the steps which had now been taken. Mr Gibson said that there were two points concerning them, the first was the men detained and their position, and the second was that they would like to see elections in Northern Ireland to enable the UVF to campaign politically.

Mr Orme said on the detention issue the whole matter was under urgent consideration by the Government. The deputation would be aware of the consultations which he had had with Mr Gibson and others about the question of resettlement and they would be pleased to know that plans for this were going ahead at some speed. However the decision to release detainees would be the Secretary of State's and the Secretary of State's alone and it was not possible for him to give any indication of when releases would take place. The cases which the UVF had raised with him before had all been examined by both him and the Secretary of State and the points which the UVF had put about having certain detainees released because of their political abilities had been noted.

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