

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



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SERIAL NO 839

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IMMEDIATE

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TO HQ FROM LONDON
FOR ANGLO-IRISH FROM THOMPSON

SUBJECT: STATEMENT ON HOUSE ON PROPOSED STRIKE ACTION IN N.I.

1. MOST OTHER SPEAKERS TOOK THEIR KEY FROM MASON'S STATEMENT. AIREY NEAVE PLEDGED HIS PARTY'S FULL SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND ITS ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ DETERMINATION TO DEFEND WORKERS FROM INTIMIDATION. HE STRESSED THAT THE STRIKE WOULD IMPEDE THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SECURITY FORCES AGAINST TERRORISM.
2. MPLYNEAUX POINTED OUT THAT THE STATED OBJECTIVES OF THE STRIKE ACTION WERE NOT ATTAINABLE BY THE KIND OF ACTION THAT WAS PROPOSED AND ALSO EMPHASIZED THE HAMPERING OF THE SECURITY FORCES' NORMAL WORK.
3. CLEMENT FREUD SAID THAT IF THIS WAS THE ACTION OF LOYALISTS, HE SHUDDERED TO THINK WHAT THE ACTION OF TRAITORS WOULD BE. MASON DEPRECATED ~~US~~ THE USE OF THIS EMOTIVE TERMINOLOGY, POINTING OUT THAT MANY, MANY LOYALISTS AND ALL (SIC) THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN N I AS WELL AS ALL MAJOR TRADE UNION BODIES AND CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE HAD DECLARED THEIR OPPOSITION TO THE STRIKE. HE STRESSED THAT IT WAS THE JOB OF THE RUC, WITH THE HELP OF THE ARMY IF NECESSARY, TO PROTECT WORKERS FROM INTIMIDATION.
4. GERRY FITT ASKED THE SOS TO ENSURE THAT THE STRIKERS WOULD NOT GET SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS AS THEY HAD IN 1974 (THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY GASPS OF AMAZEMENT FROM TORY BENCHES). HE ASKED IF PAISLEY HAD BEEN MADE AWARE THAT THE ACTION HE WAS PROPOSING WAS TREASONABLE AND THAT HE COULD BE CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES. MASON REPLIED THAT WHILE BAIRD AND PAISLEY HAD INITIATED THE PRESENT PROPOSED STRIKE, HE THOUGHT THAT THEY NOW FELT THEMSELVES TO BE IN THE GRIP OF THE PARAMILITARIES. PEACEFUL PICKETING WAS NATURALLY ACCEPTABLE BUT THE BACKING UP OF PICKETS BY INTIMIDATION WAS ILLEGAL AND WOULD BE RESISTED.
5. MOLYNEAUX AND POWELL WERE THE ONLY UNIONIST MEMBERS PRESENT. BOB MELLISH SAID THAT IT WAS DISGRACEFUL THAT PAISLEY WAS NOT PRESENT IN THE HOUSE TO ACCOUNT FOR HIS ACTIONS TO FELLOW MEMBERS. MASON SAID THAT HE WAS SORRY TO HEAR THAT PAISLEY HAD SAID THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO ATTEND THE HOUSE AGAIN AS IT WAS A WASTE OF TIME.

END

ST 2/5/77 16.42

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