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1970/Joint Sec/71

CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE JOINT SECURITY COMMITTEE HELD ON  
MONDAY, 6 JULY 1970 IN STORMONT CASTLE AT 11 30 AM

PRESENT:

- The Prime Minister
- The Minister of Home Affairs (in the Chair)
- The Minister of Development
- The Minister of Education
- The GOC
- The Chief Constable
- The Deputy Chief Constable
- The Secretary to the Cabinet
- The Director of Intelligence
- The UK Representative
- The Security Liaison Officer  
(Mr Gibb and his successor Mr Eastwood)
- Chief Superintendent, Crime Special Branch

ALSO PRESENT:

- The Parliamentary Secretary in the  
Prime Minister's Department
- The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs  
Senior Assistant Secretary (Mr Morrison),  
Ministry of Home Affairs
- The Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet
- The Legal Assistant, Ministry of Home Affairs
- The Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
- The Press Officer to the Prime Minister

Mr T A Cromey

1. LOWER FALLS SITUATION

The GOC reported that the weekend search exercise had been completed satisfactorily, although the invasion by the women from Andersonstown had created minor problems. (The Chief Constable indicated that the Police were in a position to prosecute some of the women if the Attorney-General so advised.) There was the inevitable aftermath of complaints. The GOC proposed setting up two Centres - in Springfield Road and Hastings Street Police Stations - for the receipt of complaints. In these, specific complaints by specific people would be accepted. On the suggestion of the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs it was agreed that there should be liaison between these Complaints Centres and the Supplementary Benefits Branch of the Ministry of Health and Social Services. The SB Branch was paying, and would continue to pay, benefit as required to people who were already in receipt of supplementary benefits, but all other claims for compensation cases should be notified through the Complaints Centres to minimise the possibility of duplication.

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Apart from five entry/exit points where close check was still being kept on movement the Lower Falls area was now free from control. One battalion of soldiers was stationed within the area to watch developments.

The GOC said the general clampdown, including the road checks, was producing tangible results. The Prime Minister suggested that publicity should be given to these results if only to justify the checks and alleviate any annoyance caused by them.

The GOC mentioned that control barriers had now been erected in the Ardoyne area to help the security forces to control the area.

Against the possibility of another 'curfew' the Minister of Home Affairs suggested, and the GOC agreed, that the GOC's Civil Adviser should consult with the Minister's Legal Adviser about the legalities involved in making the 'curfew' Order.

*meeting held on 7/7/50.*

## 2. FUTURE SEARCHES FOR ARMS

It was important to demonstrate that the weekend's exercise had been anti-arms, not anti-catholic. It had been sparked off by a search carried out on the strength of information received. A similar search would be carried out in any area where Intelligence suggested it should be done. There was no firm information about protestant arms at the moment.

There was need for balancing publicity about the Military action which was taken in the Shankill Road area last October (with casualties). The Parliamentary Secretary in the Prime Minister's department would undertake this. It was considered that information about the more recent searches in protestant areas should be given by the Army, although it was accepted that the necessary sifting of records would take time.

The idea of another Arms Amnesty at this point in time was attractive but dangerous. It would create obvious embarrassments. Warning should nevertheless be given that searches would continue. This might encourage voluntary surrender. On the other hand it was appreciated that the effect of recent events might be to drive arms further underground.

## 3. LEGITIMATE ARMS

The Chief Constable indicated that the Police were reviewing the whole position about arms legitimately held.

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4. POLICING IN THE FALLS

The Chief Constable said that normal policing will now continue in the Falls area. At present mobile foot patrols were operating without restriction in the vicinity of twenty fixed points.

5. PROSECUTION FOR ARMS OFFENCES

The GOC was assured that the straightforward arms prosecutions would be pressed by the Police as a matter of urgency.

6. MARCHES

The GOC expressed concern about the 'Orange' marches which were being held between now and 13 July. The Deputy Chief Constable pointed out that Wednesday's parade by No 1 LOL District had been re-routed away from Unity Flats and that the only other likely flashpoint was Duncairn Gardens.

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Home Affairs were meeting representatives of the Orange Order this afternoon. The ideal would be a total voluntary ban on marches.

7. NICRA

The Chief Inspector, Crime Special Branch, warned that intelligence coming through at the moment indicated that NICRA were planning to stage a widespread call-out (meetings, processions etc) possibly for next weekend. A meeting was also being planned for Newry on 13 July. NICRA were also planning to blow up the 'atrocities' angle of the weekend's events.

8. CLOSING OF PUBS

A decision about the closure of pubs around the 'Twelfth' would be taken at Thursday's meeting. The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, informed the Committee that the entire executive of the Licensed Vintners Association were now in favour of closing on 13 July. They suggested that announcement of the closure should be left as late as possible.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be on Thursday 9 July at 11 30 am.

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