

A

TRIPARTITE TALKS

In the context of Tripartite talks, it is worth while examining the positions of the three leaders involved. Such an examination may help in deciding upon strategy and tactics in relation to the talks.

THE UK PRIME MINISTER:

1. Mr Heath's primary objective must be the restoration of peace, with the consequent lowering of the British military, financial and diplomatic commitment to Northern Ireland.
2. A Further concern must be the preservation of the bipartisan approach in Parliament. It would seem important that the Irish crisis should not interfere in any way with the October Common Market vote.
3. The British Prime Minister must also be seen to be handling the situation, not only from the point of view of British public opinion, but also in relation to the international community especially the Common Market countries.
4. Mr Heath must also wish to avoid any open breach with the Irish Republic for economic, political and Common Market reasons.

For these reasons, the British Government is likely to be seeking a political solution and a greater effort on security (though not necessarily on the British Army's part). Its strategy presumably is to push the Stormont administration as hard as possible on political reform and to push Dublin as hard as possible on security, using progress on political reform as a quid pro quo. Its dilemma is whether it can push Stormont far enough on political reform and on matters such as internment to justify Mr Lynch taking risks on the security side, without toppling the Stormont administration into the hands of the Protestant extremists and risking a major Protestant backlash. It ~~would~~^{could} be that the British Government, while firmly adhering to Northern Ireland's link with United Kingdom, might press Stormont very hard indeed on political reform, but this would depend on what Mr Lynch may be able to offer as a quid pro quo on the security side, either in the form of action against the IRA south of the border or of approval or tacit acceptance of further British measures, north of border.

THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE IRISH REPUBLIC:

1. Mr Lynch has a difficult internal political situation. He must therefore appear to line up his Government firmly behind the minority

in the North and he must adhere to the dogma of eventual reunification. It would be politically extremely difficult for him to act against the IRA in the South, without achieving a major political breakthrough for the minority in the North. Thus, although the SDLP are not represented at the talks, their attitude to any general package deal would be extremely important.

2. Mr Lynch has a choice of strategies open to him.

Either (a) he can adopt a hard line demanding impossible concessions in relation to internment and political change in the North, the refusal of which will justify a refusal to co-operate in security action against the IRA. His eventual hope in adopting this line would be that reunification would soon be achieved because of British despair at finding a solution in the United Kingdom context, vide Paul Johnson in the New Statesman.

(b) he can try to negotiate a package deal to restore peace and stability trading Southern political and security measures ^{and} acceptance of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland Governments security measures in the North for Northern political reforms.

Which of these strategies he adopts depends upon political circumstances both in his own party and in relation to SDLP and upon the degree of pressure which the United Kingdom Government can bring upon him. From previous experience the latter would appear to be insignificant.

THE NORTHERN IRELAND PRIME MINISTER:

1. The first and most important principle which Mr Faulkner has to establish is the preservation of the link with Great Britain. This has already been established in that the Northern Ireland Prime Minister has emphasised that it is not to be a subject for discussion.

2. The second aim of Mr Faulkner must be to achieve a distinct and effective initiative in the security field. This cannot be achieved locally by the Northern Ireland Government alone. It is unlikely that the United Kingdom Government will agree to any further security initiatives prior to the Lynch talks, since security initiatives alone would threaten bipartisanship in Britain and might jeopardise the Prime Ministerial talks. Major security changes therefore are likely only to be forthcoming as a result of the talks, and in association with an announcement on political change.

3. Political change in the North will be sought both by Mr Lynch, both generally and as a quid pro quo for any security steps taken in the South and by Mr Heath as a justification for any further security initiatives by the United Kingdom Government. But political change will be opposed by a substantial proportion of the Protestant majority and if pressed too far could split the Unionist Party. Equally, however, failure to proceed on the security front might have a similar effect possibly with greater certainty. The Northern Ireland Prime Minister must therefore balance what can be obtained by way of security ~~and~~ other political improvements (eg recognition by the Republic) against what has to be conceded in terms of political and constitutional change. An important factor in judging this balance is that the political or constitutional changes must not appear to have been dictated by Mr Lynch. The position on internment too is quite crucial because it straddles the security and political reform fields. The withdrawal of internment would meet with a harsh Protestant reaction and would scarcely assist the security forces, but ^{Catholic parties are} ~~Mr Lynch might~~ insist on its withdrawal as part of any package. ~~A decision is required on whether internment is negotiable.~~

M. B. They may already have been taken

A PACKAGE DEAL:

The success of the Tripartite talks depend upon the willingness of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland Governments on the one hand and the Government of the Republic on the other being prepared to negotiate a package deal, involving the whole question of security, political change in Northern Ireland and political recognition of the Northern Ireland settlement.

Assuming that Mr Lynch is prepared to negotiate a package deal and does not enter the talks with the purpose of wrecking them, it is worth while thinking about the kind of package that could be negotiated.

Northern Ireland Government wants from the Government of the Republic -

(a) Active co-operation to suppress terrorism The active co-operation of the Government of the Republic against terrorism would imply

(i) Ruthless suppression of the IRA in the Republic, especially in Border areas. This would require firm action by the Republic's Army and Police working in close conjunction with the British Army and the RUC. A firm statement of intent might be sought on this.

- (ii) The introduction of internment of known IRA leaders in the Republic. Much could be made in this context of the Joe Cahill case.
- (iii) An overt and public commitment to work for the suppression of violence and illegal organisations.
- (b) The full and public recognition by the Republic of the existence of Northern Ireland and of its Government involving a formal amendment to the Constitution of the Republic of Ireland.
- (c) A public recognition of all the aspects of the Government of Ireland Act 1949 and of the Downing Street Declaration of 1969, indicating that Northern Ireland would remain part of the United Kingdom so long as the majority in the Northern Ireland Parliament and the majority of the population wished it.
- (d) Cessation of the support given by the Government of the Irish Republic to the civil disobedience campaign sponsored by SDLP and NICRA.
- (e) Overt encouragement of SDLP and all other parties to participate fully in any revised Parliamentary and executive framework within the context of the link with Great Britain.
- (f) Full participation with the Northern Ireland Government in cross-border economic co-operation.

and from the British Government, -

- Perhaps possibly
United with
cover this.*
- Vigorous action to limit of the UDR on the new basis*
- (a) ~~Some form of third force if necessary in the form of a full-time UDR regiment or by the call up of the TAVR.~~
 - (b) More rigorous suppression of rioters etc by the Army.
 - (c) Army or police presence in force in No Go areas to counter intimidation.

In return the Northern Ireland Government might be in a position to offer.

- (a) The Green Paper changes, PR, Larger House of Commons, restructured Senate, Parliamentary Committees.

- (b) Minor changes on internment procedures.
- (c) Increased cross-border co-operation.
- (d) Other minor initiatives in relation to appointments. [?]
- ~~(e) Referenda on the constitutional question (quite likely to be recommended by Crowther).~~

On the face of it this does not seem to be enough.

Mr Lynch may seek further concessions and may be supported by Mr Heath in doing so.

In order of acceptability (is this the correct order?) to the Northern Ireland Government these might be -

- (i) A Westminster Bill of Rights ^{with or without special enforcement machinery} (which may be recommended by Crowther) and legislative guarantee of the reform programme.
- (ii) A veto power on legislation for the Governor and a delaying power for the Senate.
- (iii) Replacement of Special Powers Act by equally effective emergency legislation.
- (iv) An All Ireland Council as envisaged by Harold Wilson.
- (v) Calling in of licensed firearms.
- (vi) Harold Wilson's Parliamentary Commission.
- (vii) The Swiss system with an executive elected on PR by an assembly elected on PR.
- (viii) Law and order withdrawn from Stormont.
- (ix) 50-50 sharing of power.
- (x) Dual citizenship.

Of these proposals only (ix) and (x) might endanger the link with Great Britain and ^{be} therefore definitely unacceptable. The acceptance of certain other of the proposals however would almost certainly cause a political storm within the Unionist Party ^{by} the withdrawal of law and order from Stormont. How far to proceed down the list would depend upon what could be obtained in exchange, but the pressure from the British Government is likely to be for a large

comprehensive package, with a reasonably dramatic impact. Mr Lynch may be anxious to create division between the Northern Ireland and United Kingdom Governments by putting forward proposals acceptable to the United Kingdom Government but not to the Northern Ireland Government. For this reason it is important to consider in advance what might be acceptable in Northern Ireland, if the proposal had Westminster support.

If a package deal is on the cards there is much to be said for holding all initiatives in reserve, so that they be bargained for. On the other hand if they appear as part of package, they will appear to have extracted from a reluctant Northern Ireland Government, and any credit will accrue to Mr Heath or worse still to Mr Lynch, and, in so far as this is the case, they will be that much more difficult to sell to the Protestant majority.

A WRECKING APPROACH BY MR LYNCH

As indicated Mr Lynch has another option open to him. He can make demands which he knows are unacceptable, can refuse any security concession because of the refusal of the United Kingdom or Northern Ireland Governments to accede to these demands, and make propaganda out of the whole exercise.

If such an approach was adopted it would seem to be important that the Northern Ireland and United Kingdom Governments are seen to be in close concert and that failure is not due to intransigence on the Northern Ireland Government's part. This is easier said than done. Mr Lynch in such a situation would take every opportunity to discredit the Stormont administration and Mr Heath would be anxious to avoid the stigma of failure. Stormont might become the whipping boy.

If it is thought that the talks might take this form it would be wise to take the initiative and to publish the Green Paper immediately. At least the Northern Ireland Government could be credited with a moderately constructive approach.