

SECRET

CAB4/1635/15

1972/4

CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT STORMONT CASTLE
ON MONDAY 31 JANUARY 1971 AT 3 30 PM

PRESENT: The Prime Minister
 The Minister in the Senate
 The Minister of Finance
 The Minister of Health and Social Services
 The Minister of Education
 The Minister of Agriculture
 The Minister of Commerce
 The Minister of Development
 The Minister of State at the Ministry of Development
 The Minister of State at the Ministry of Home Affairs
 The Minister of State at the Ministry of Finance
 The Minister of State at the Department of the Prime Minister

ALSO PRESENT: The Attorney General

 The Secretary to the Cabinet
 The Government Security Adviser
 The Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet
 The Principal

1. RUC

Commenting on the damaging rumours which had been circulating about the RUC, the Prime Minister said that in addition to his recent denial of the allegation about the disbandment of the Force he had found it necessary to issue a further statement refuting suggestions of substantial re-organisation.

2. EVENTS IN LONDONDERRY ON SUNDAY 30 JANUARY

Reviewing events in Londonderry on the previous day in which 13 civilians had been killed in riots following an attempted Republican march in defiance of the Government ban, the Prime Minister said that the Home Secretary would be announcing at Westminster the intention to hold a public inquiry. Ministers considered and agreed the terms of a statement to be issued by the Government of Northern Ireland agreeing with the United Kingdom Government decision, stressing the dangers of defiance of the march ban and urging the need for responsible representatives of the minority to come forward for talks to try to find a way out of the present situation.

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The Prime Minister confirmed that the GOC was fully aware of the implications of a threatened so-called "Civil Rights" march in Newry the following weekend and had assured him that there would be no change in the Army's attitude to handling any such attempted breach of the law.

3. POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS

The Prime Minister gave an account of his talks in London the previous week with the United Kingdom Prime Minister and Home Secretary.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. J. ...', with a horizontal line underneath.

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