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NOTE OF A MEETING BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY HELD AT STORMONT CASTLE ON TUESDAY 19 DECEMBER 1972.

Those Present:-

Secretary of State

A P McMaster

Dr Paisley

Rev William Beattie

Mr John McQuoid

Mr Samuel Robinson

Councillor John Crowe

Councillor Robert Donaldson

Dr Paisley said that this is not a time for discussion about the future, the real issue at present is the survival of Northern Ireland as a community. Since Direct Rule there has been no significant change in the security situation. He would much rather therefore press hard for immediate action in the field of security than discuss the Green Paper. He believed that there will be a spate of murders in the near future and that the country is on the brink of anarchy, and called, therefore, for very firm actions to deal with the situation. The Secretary of State said that he was extremely worried about assassinations. Detection was proving difficult. He would probably be making a statement about legislation arising out of the Diplock Report but pointed out that laws are of no use if detection is missing. The low detection rate is probably a result of lack of information because witnesses are fearful. The Secretary of State said he believed that the Task Force which was recently introduced was already having an effect in East Belfast. He assured the deputation that strenuous efforts will continue, to remove the men of violence.

Dr Paisley said that we are facing an emergency situation, a breed of compulsive killers is being raised, and to combat this, drastic measures are needed. He therefore suggested that capital punishment should be brought in, not only for murder but for intent to kill (carrying guns, explosives etc illegally). He also suggested that mandatory sentences should be introduced because in several cases recently Judges had imposed a minimum sentence which, in his view, had only very slight deterrent effect. He also called for corporal punishment for young hooligans. In his view some leaders of the Protestant community are now preaching sedition, some Judges are cracking under the strain, and the time has arrived therefore to consider Military Courts. He appreciated that there is a shortage

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of manpower and asked therefore if some form of Civil Defence Force could be established to supplement the Army and Police. The Secretary of State said that many more recruits were required for the Police Reserve and that his fear was that any officially recognised Force along the lines suggested by Dr Paisley would have to be armed; this in turn would require legislation.

Dr Paisley went on to suggest that it should be made an offence to fail to pass information to the security forces about terrorists. He believed that the Kilwee and the Tunnel areas of Portadown and the Drumarg Estate in Armagh should be cleared out by the Army and be dominated by them. In such circumstances the flow of information would be dramatically increased as had happened in other Catholic ghetto areas.

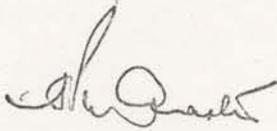
Councillor Crowe referred to extra security arrangements at an Army post at St Angelo Airfield near Enniskillen and complained that barbed wire barriers erected there following the attacks with rockets were creating a traffic hazard. In spite of representations he had made locally, nothing had been done to remedy the situation. He also alleged that some information passed to the police was not getting anywhere. The Rev Beattie said that with the assistance of the Chamber of Commerce in Lisburn they had been able to arrange for employees in premises in the town to join the RUC Reserve. This had had a dramatic effect in reducing the planting of bombs. He also had heard that many people believed 'phone contact with the police and Army was dangerous because lines had been tapped.

The Secretary of State said he did not think it was possible to tap the Robot 'Phone service and would look into the possibility of publicising this fact. He also said that his Private Office could be used for passing information.

Dr Paisley, winding up, said he would like to have another meeting before the publication of the White Paper. He felt that if the White Paper were to indicate any "weakness" in the constitutional link with GB, this would push certain elements over the brink. By "weakness" he meant, for example, the idea of a Council of Ireland being established while the Republic continued to claim jurisdiction over the six Counties of Northern Ireland. He felt that unless the Republic disclaimed such jurisdiction the elements in Northern Ireland and led by people like William Craig would resort to violence. These elements wanted a "confrontation" and this proposal would provide them with an excuse.

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Dr Paisley also suggested strongly that the Border Poll should precede the publication of the White Paper, otherwise the number of spoiled votes would be very large indeed. The Secretary of State said that he would be glad to have a further meeting before publication of the White Paper.



A P McMASTER

21 December 1972

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