

SECRETARY OF STATE:

THE WHITE PAPER AND AFTER

1. I submit a paper prepared by Northern Ireland Permanent Secretaries meeting as the Future Policy Group.
2. In the paper we draw attention to the risk of serious unrest among the majority if the White Paper should appear to provide for the imposition of an unacceptable settlement; and we suggest how this risk might be reduced through both the timing and content of the White Paper. Our main points are:-
 - (a) The White Paper should be published as soon as possible after the result of the Border Poll has been declared.
 - (b) It should deal in a practical way with matters which are of daily concern to working-class people in both communities and should carry a clear commitment to social and economic objectives.
 - (c) It should take special account of the mood of the Protestant Community by reiterating that Northern Ireland will remain part of the United Kingdom unless the majority of its people decide otherwise, proposing increased representation at Westminster and making it clear that arrangements for a Council of Ireland will not be made over the heads of the people of Northern Ireland and will be contingent on a proper response from the Government of the Irish Republic.
 - (d) To increase the chances of acceptance, it should not propose any particular form of Executive but leave it for discussion with elected representatives after elections have been held for a new Assembly.

D C B Holden

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Central Secretariat
STORMONT CASTLE

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