

NOTE FOR THE RECORD

11.4.75

Mr Blackburn reported on a talk with Mr H West who came to see him to protest about the numbers of staff being taken on for the Convention. They would not be needed. The Convention would only last six weeks. UUUC would use their majority to vote through: (1) return to pre-1968 Stormont; (2) return of local government to pre-Macroxy structure; and (3) 21 members at Westminster. Mr Enoch Powell had advised them that the British Government would not accept this but they were not going to take his advice. He did not see why the Convention should be kept going to allow SDLP and Alliance to make speeches denegrating Ulster. They must be stopped and given no voice in affairs at all.

16.4.75

Mr Blackburn reported a further conversation with Mr West. UUUC would not produce proposals at first. They would make points progressively in speeches and then table a composite motion - leaving the minimum amount of time for amendment and vote on proposals as a final report. They would use the closure procedure to prevent SDLP/Alliance filibuster. They were not anxious to begin the Convention too soon after the election, but once begun would press to a rapid conclusion. They saw no need to plicate opposition groups. He again mentioned the refusal to take advice of Mr Powell. Said Westminster backbenchers were discussing: (1) retention of additional powers in Westminster in future Direct Rule situation; and (2) establishment of a County Council type administration in Northern Ireland. UUUC were united, they would not tolerate any submissions from the public except through elected members, and would not allow any minority reports from the Convention.

M N HAYES

21 April 1975