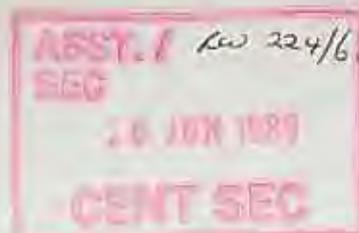


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FROM SIR K P BLOOMFIELD  
DATE 23 June 1989

cc. PS/SOS B&L - B  
PS/Min of State B&L - B  
PS/Ministers B&L - B  
PS/PUS B&L - B  
NI Perm Secs  
Mr Burns - B  
Mr Stephens - B  
Mr Miles - B  
Mr A Wilson  
Mr Thomas - B  
① Mr Spence - B  
Mr Wood B&L - B  
Mr J McConnell - B



Mr R E Templeton

① Mr Wilson  
27/6

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATION

As requested by Dr Mawhinney in his minute of 22 June to the Secretary of State, I am passing on directly to you my comments on the draft text for the forthcoming publication which has now been circulated.

May I say first of all that there is rather more text than I had expected there to be; I had envisaged what was essentially a book of striking photographs with just sufficient text to introduce and adequately link the material. As it is, I feel that we have a rather discursive text covering a wide variety of themes, and I would still see some advantage in focussing on the nature and effects of terrorism as the central theme of the publication.

In the final paragraph on page 1 of the material about civil rights, I am inclined to question the inference that the influential members of the minority community involved in the civil rights movement were "prepared to work for political change within the existing framework". They were certainly prepared to press within that framework for the changes they wanted; but in the case of quite a number of them it became clear in due course that this was only the first item on their agenda, which extended to more fundamental changes.

On page 2 of the material on civil rights, I wonder whether it can really be said that the IRA had "renounced violence". Certainly they had stood down their 1956-62 campaign, but I think it would be taking matters a bit too far to say that this amounted to a renunciation of violence.

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In the following paragraph that deals with the "one man one vote" demand, it would I think be useful to make it clear that the franchise issue really centred around local government elections.

Then, at the bottom of page 2 of the material on civil rights, I wonder whether the description of the Special Powers Act legislation as "tough" may not provoke the riposte that much of the present legislation in force is also "tough".

Turning to page 3 of the material on civil rights, I think it would be better in the first paragraph to refer to "extreme loyalists" rather than "extreme protestants".

In the material which follows on that page the impression is given that no reforms of any kind had been introduced until after the violence of August 1969. For the sake of completeness, some mention should be made of the first tranche of reform undertaken in 1968, including the setting up of the Londonderry Development Commission. We do not want to have the text criticised as a partial view of events.

On the same page it is implied that local councils themselves were quite free to fix their electoral wards as they wished. I do not think this was so; but no doubt those who are closer to these matters could confirm.

Again, I think the story becomes a little confused in sequence by the mention of proportional representation at this stage. This was not, of course, part of the 1969 reform package but part of the later package following the introduction of direct rule.

On page 4 of the material dealing with civil rights, I would prefer to avoid emotive language such as local councils being "stripped of their housing powers". And in the same paragraph I am sorry to see once again the familiar reference about "the worst slums in Europe". No doubt such silly things were said; but they must have been said by people who have never visited such places as Naples or Oporto.

Also on page 4 of the material on civil rights, I would check whether the actual decision to abolish the 'B' Specials was taken during 1969, or a little later as a result of the decisions on the Hunt Report.

On page 5 of the material on civil rights, I find it rather odd to use the words "the initiative" about internment in the third paragraph. And in the rest of the paragraph, the events leading to direct rule are a little truncated. For the sake of accuracy it should perhaps be made clear that the British Government decision to prorogue the Northern Ireland Parliament was only made after the Northern Ireland Government had refused to accept the proposed transfer of law and order responsibilities from itself to the British Government.

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On the same page, I think it is rather stretching matters to say that Northern Ireland has "the same model of administration as for Scotland and Wales". There remain a number of striking differences.

Yet again, at the foot of page 5 there is a reference to payments by "United Kingdom taxpayers". Since Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom it follows automatically that any payments come from United Kingdom taxpayers, including those who live in Northern Ireland.

In the second paragraph on page 6 of the material on civil rights, it should perhaps be made clear that we are talking about the exceptional cost of an extra British Army presence; after all, there were always some garrison troops here, as in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Further down that same page there is the statement that "in reality the overwhelming majority [of the minority] are presently content to live within the Northern Ireland framework". I am not sure how we can claim to be confident about this.

I now turn to the section on "The Violence". In the first paragraph of page 1 of that section, we are told that there is "no precedent for the barbarity of the violence". I do not think this is so. The numbers killed and injured have certainly been exceptionally large, but there have been innumerable barbarous acts over the last couple of centuries. One only has to think of such episodes as the Phoenix Park murders.

Further down that page there begins a rather graphic description of the impact of violence in urban communities. This certainly brings out the full viciousness of the attacks which have been mounted on the community; but is there not a danger that such descriptions will be used out of context to the detriment of our tourism and investment interests?

On page 3 of the same section we find again a reference to amounts "paid out by the British taxpayer".

On page 1 of "Protecting the Community" we have yet again a reference to our old friend "the British taxpayer".

On page 1 of the section on "Rejection of Violence" I would be inclined to leave out reference to the Peace People. I think that particular movement has subsequently been devalued in a pretty major way, particularly within Northern Ireland.

Further down the same page, I must say that I am always reluctant to place too much weight on public opinion polls, which tend to be peculiarly unreliable in Ireland.

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On page 2 of the same section, at the foot of the page, I am rather surprised to learn that "those maimed by terrorism get priority treatment". I would take it that in practice they get whatever degree of priority the nature and extent of their injuries may require; but I would not believe that someone who has had a mangled leg in a terrorist incident would actually get priority over someone who has a similar injury from a road accident.

On page 3 of that section I think the suggestion that compensation money is diverting resources away from social and economic programmes is rather a double-edged affair. It is true, of course, that our resources are not limitless; on the other hand the overall level of those resources takes account of various special problems which we have, whether on the security, social or economic fronts.

On the first page of the section dealing with "Political Developments" there are extensive references from the Anglo Irish Agreement. I think some reference should be made to the Northern Ireland Constitution Act as the statutory basis for Northern Ireland's present constitutional position.

I am not sure that I see the value in a publication of this sort of the litany of political developments which begins on page 2. These events are all too well known to local readers, and not likely to be of tremendous interest to readers outside Northern Ireland.

On page 4 of that section we make the statement that the Unionist perception of the Anglo Irish Agreement as establishing joint British-Irish rule was not only unfounded but "increasingly seen to be so". It may be seen to be so by us; but I am not sure that it is seen to be so by the Unionists, and in any event I suspect that we are better to avoid value judgements of this kind.

On page 2 of the material on "Making Belfast Work" we quote a figure of £55m. This leaves out the first year money, and I think we should use instead a figure of £65m.

I hope these comments will be of assistance to you.

Signed

K P BLOOMFIELD

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