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Title: Report, by Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave of a meeting held between and Irish government delegation and a delegation from the Social Democratic and Labour Party on 26 July 1973, discussing internment, policing, and the proposed Council of Ireland and Northern Ireland executive.

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REPORT OF MEETING

A delegation from the SDLP comprising:

Ivan Cooper,
Paddy Devlin,
Paddy O'Hanlon,
Desmond Gillespie and
Tom Daly

met the Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Posts and Telegraphs and myself at 3 p.m. on Thursday, the 26th July, 1973.

They said they were anxious to have a meeting because of a recent interview with Mr. Whitelaw and also to discuss a number of other matters.

They dealt with them in the following order:-

They said that the immediate urgent need was to have those interned in Compound 8 released, all of whom were not in the I. R. A. or had severed their connection with the I. R. A. They said that these people were undergoing considerable hardship, in particular because of the bitter atmosphere between them and other internees. They repeated that there was no doubt that these persons were non-I. R. A. or persons who had severed their connection with the organisation.

They then mentioned the question of the Council of Ireland having control of a reformed police force. Mr. Cooper said that the Secretary of State had said that the SDLP proposal to put the police force under the control of the Council of Ireland was counter to that of the Irish Government. I said, and this was confirmed by the Tánaiste and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, that the question of putting the police under the control of the Council of Ireland had not been discussed with the British Government; that the Government here had made no proposals in the matter and that we were at a loss to understand how this impression could be created.

They then said that the Secretary of State had said that we were in favour of an immediate creation of an Executive. Again, we repeated that this matter had not been discussed except in general terms. I said that no formal proposals had been put to the British Government but we had raised, repeatedly, the need to reform the police force and make it acceptable to Catholics and the need to establish a Council of Ireland and

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an Executive with effective power-sharing, but that no definite proposals on how these various objectives should be carried out had been made.

We said that we would keep in touch with the SDLP about all these matters.

The SDLP said that the Provisional I. R. A. campaign was now ended except in certain rural areas.

They discussed, also, in a general way, the question of the Assembly next week.

Dictated by Taoiseach

27. 7. 73.