



# PRESS RELEASE

THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A STATEMENT MADE TODAY BY LORD CAMERON, CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO THE EVENTS LEADING TO AND THE CAUSES AND NATURE OF THE DISTURBANCES SINCE 5TH OCTOBER, 1968.

My first duty is to read the Warrant of Appointment of this Commission. This commences in the following terms:

"WARRANT OF APPOINTMENT  
BY THE GOVERNOR OF NORTHERN IRELAND

WHEREAS on and since 5th October, 1968, sporadic outbreaks of violence and civil disturbance have occurred in Northern Ireland in consequence of the activities of certain bodies,

AND WHEREAS it is desired to investigate the causes and circumstances thereof.

NOW THEREFORE I, RALPH FRANCIS ALNWICK, BARON GREY OF NAUNTON, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, Governor of Northern Ireland, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability hereby authorise and appoint you

The Honourable Lord Cameron, D.S.C. (Chairman)  
Professor Sir John Biggart, C.B.E.  
James Joseph Campbell, Esq., M.A."

The Warrant of Appointment proceeds by giving the terms of reference of this Commission, which are as follows:

"Commissioners to hold an enquiry into and to report upon the course of events leading to, and the immediate causes and nature of, the violence and civil disturbance in Northern Ireland on and since 5th October, 1968; and to assess the composition, conduct and aims of those bodies involved in the current agitation and in any incidents arising out of it;"

The Warrant clothes the Commission with the usual powers and authorities given to Royal Commissions.

A considerable body of evidence has already been received, but the Commission are still open to receive further evidence. The Commission will decide if written evidence is to be supplemented orally, and the Commission will therefore feel free to ask witnesses to attend or give evidence. The Commission decided that its work would be facilitated by the appointment of solicitor and Counsel and requested a list of names from the Attorney General, from which they have made a selection.

Their function is to assist the Commission in the presentation of the evidence submitted and also to assist and advise witnesses who desire such help and advice in the presentation of their evidence.

The Senior Counsel are Mr. F. A. Reid, Q.C., and Mr. H. G. McGrath, Q.C., who will be assisted by Mr. C. M. Lavery and Mr. W. A. Campbell. The solicitor appointed by the Commission is Mr. J. W. Russell.

It will be within the discretion of bodies and organisations submitting evidence or making other written representations to decide whether or not to be represented by a solicitor or Counsel, or both, or by a member of their own organisation, in presenting their evidence to the Commission. This being the equivalent of a Royal Commission evidence will not be given on oath. The Commission desires to emphasise that witnesses will have a wide immunity in respect of any evidence given by them.

The following assurance has been given by the Attorney General on behalf of the Government of Northern Ireland:

- "1. No statement made to the Commission of Enquiry, whether orally or in writing, will be used as the basis of a prosecution against the maker of the statement or for the purpose of a prosecution of any person or body of persons.
2. No such statement will be used in evidence in any criminal proceedings. This does not apply to statements made by witnesses outside the Commission even if merely in repetition of oral evidence or republication of written evidence given to the Commission.
3. Nothing stated in the report of the Commission of Enquiry will be used as the basis of a prosecution or used for purposes of a prosecution of any person or body of persons."

In a letter dated 14th April, the Attorney has added:-

"Of course, persons giving oral evidence before the Commission or those who have submitted written evidence will be entitled to rely on the defence of

qualified privilege to any action that might be brought against them for damages or libel or slander in respect of their evidence - that is to say they will have a good defence in respect of anything said or submitted in evidence, given honestly and without any indirect or improper motive."

A list of those bodies and individuals who assisted the Commission with oral or written evidence will be printed in an Appendix to the Commission's Report, unless in the case of an individual he specifically expresses a desire that his name should be omitted.

The Commission reserves the right to recall witnesses to clear up doubtful points or deal with new points emerging from evidence subsequently given.

The Commission has decided to sit in private, and the decision to adopt this procedure was taken after very full consideration. There is ample precedent for such a course in the case of Royal Commissions, in particular in the comparatively recent Monckton and Devlin Commissions.

In private sittings witnesses will be able to speak with greater freedom and frankness and be free from apprehension of mis-interpretation or distortion of the evidence given, or of the possible consequences of expressing views or sentiments which may be unpopular or involve adverse criticism of other individuals or organisations. In addition, by adopting this course the Commission will eliminate the risk of the Enquiry being used as a public platform for the dissemination of controversial or provocative views which may serve to inflame rather than elucidate the issues which the Commission has been appointed to investigate.

The sittings for the consideration and hearing of written and oral evidence will begin on Monday, 5th May, and will continue thereafter until the investigation of fact is completed. Normally the sittings of the Commission will be on three days per week, and whilst initially hearings will be in Belfast, it is the intention of the Commission to proceed to Londonderry, Armagh and Newry and possibly also Dungannon. This does not mean that the Commission may not take the opportunity of visiting other areas where disturbances and events relating to the Enquiry took place and of making informal investigation and enquiry on the spot.

Having said this, the Commission would refer again to the assurances solemnly given on behalf of the Government of Northern Ireland which enable the Commission to declare that the Report which it will present at the conclusion of this Enquiry will be published in its entirety. In order that that Report may be of real, and one may hope of lasting value, it is essential that the Commission should have at its disposal as full and complete a body of honest

and reliable evidence as possible. I would therefore invite all who have any real contribution, to offer their testimony to the Commission fervently hoping that it will serve in some measure to assist in the peaceful and orderly progress of the province of Northern Ireland.

The Commission will now adjourn.

18th April, 1969.

Counsel to Commission of Enquiry

The Commission has appointed the following barristers to act as its counsel, and to present evidence from the public to the Commission.

MR. F. A. REID, Q.C.

Born 1915. Educated Trinity Public Elementary School, Bangor, Bangor Grammar School and Queen's University, Belfast. Called to Bar of Northern Ireland 1938. Q.C. 1956. Bencher of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland 1965. First Chairman of Northern Ireland Bar Council elected by the Bar as a whole.

MR. H.G. McGRATH, Q.C.

Born 1922. Educated St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Secondary School, Barrack Street, Belfast, and Queen's University. Called to Bar of Northern Ireland 1947. Q.C. 1965. Resident Magistrate, Belfast, June 1967 to September 1968. Bencher of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland 1968.

MR. C. M. LAVERY

Born 1934. Educated Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Greenpark, Armagh, and Queen's University. Called to Bar of Northern Ireland 1956.

MR. W. A. CAMPBELL

Born 1936. Educated Campbell College, Belfast, and Queen's College, Cambridge. Called to Bar of Northern Ireland 1960.

The Commission has already appointed Mr. J. W. Russell of Newtownards, to act as its solicitor.

18th April, 1968.



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# PRESS RELEASE

Lord Cameron's Commission of Inquiry has been meeting today in its Belfast offices. It has been considering the procedure which it will follow in carrying out its investigation.

The Commission has been joined by Mr. J. W. Russell of Newtownards who has been appointed to act as its solicitor.

The Commission has already invited the public to send in evidence by 14th April about the immediate causes and nature of the recent disturbances. There are indications of a useful response to this advertisement and the Commission hopes that all those wishing to present evidence will come forward, giving if possible a statement of their proposed evidence.

Anyone providing evidence will be immune from legal proceedings. The Attorney-General has given an undertaking that statements made to the Commission, whether oral or in writing, will not be used as the basis of a prosecution against the maker of the statement or for the purpose of the prosecution of any person or body of persons and in addition that no such statement will be used in evidence in any criminal proceedings.

The Commission will be holding a public session on 18th April at which it will explain fully its method of working.

1st April, 1969.