

**NATIONAL ARCHIVES****IRELAND**

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*Rees statement*

*Rees*

*9/9/94*  
*CS. 518966/H*

*memo*

*Received just before depart me of Ministerial party, led by Taoiseach, by London for meeting on 5.4.94*  
*Link*

S  
F-A1 LDNE  
E-A DUBLIN  
VERY URGENT FOR DORR DONLON AND SWIFT FROM GALLAGHER.

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF SEC OF STATE'S STATEMENT TODAY:

IT IS RIGHT THAT THE HOUSE SHOULD TODAY DEBATE THE AFFAIRS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. THE TIME IS RIPE FOR THE NEW ADMINISTRATION TO ASSESS THE PRESENT PROSPECTS AND TO PUT FORWARD THE POLICIES REQUIRED TO LEAD US FORWARD.

WHEN WE WERE IN OPPOSITION WE SUPPORTED THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION IN ITS POLICIES. WE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES BUT ON ALL MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE THERE WAS ALL-PARTY SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT OF THE DAY. IT IS OUR AIM TO MAINTAIN THIS APPROACH TOWARDS NORTHERN IRELAND IN THIS PARLIAMENT. OUR POLICIES WILL BE FIRMLY BASED ON THOSE FOLLOWED BY OUR PREDECESSORS IN OFFICE.

WHAT THEN DID WE SUPPORT IN THESE POLICIES? WE THOUGHT IT RIGHT THAT IN DEVISING A NEW CONSTITUTION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND THE VIEWS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE PROVINCE SHOULD BE TAKEN FULLY INTO ACCOUNT, AND WE KNEW THAT THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT WAS THE OUTCOME OF EXTENSIVE CONSULTATIONS. WE AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE DEVOLUTION OF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS TO NORTHERN IRELAND, THAT NORTHERN IRELAND SHOULD HAVE ITS OWN ASSEMBLY ELECTED BY MEANS OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION, AND THAT THE MACHINERY OF GOVERNMENT SHOULD INCORPORATE THE IMPORTANT CONCEPT OF POWER-SHARING. ALL THIS HAS NOW BEEN ACHIEVED.

THERE FOLLOWED LENGTHY TALKS AS A RESULT OF WHICH PRACTICAL EFFECT WAS GIVEN TO THE CONCEPT OF POWER-SHARING, AND A NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE REPRESENTATIVE OF A WIDE RANGE OF OPINION WAS FORMED. THIS WAS A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT, AND PARTICULAR CREDIT MUST GO TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE AT THE TIME AND THE PARTIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND WHO AGREED TO RECOGNISE EACH OTHER'S ASPIRATIONS AND ARE WORKING TOGETHER IN THE EXECUTIVE.



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I DO NOT BELIEVE THAT MOST PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND OBJECT TO THE SHARING OF POWER BETWEEN REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO COMMUNITIES. WHILE THERE REMAINS A WIDE DIVERGENCE OF ULTIMATE ASPIRATIONS, MOST PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND ARE INCREASINGLY ACCEPTING THAT POWER -SHARING IS THE ONLY REASONABLE AND FAIR WAY OF GOVERNING A COUNTRY IN WHICH THERE IS A DIVERGENCE OF VIEWS ON BASIC ISSUES.

THE HOUSE WILL KNOW THAT THE NORTHERN IRELAND CONSTITUTION ACT, PASSED BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY IN THIS HOUSE, IS FOUNDED IN SECTION 27 ON THE BASIS OF A FOUR-YEAR TERM FOR THE ASSEMBLY. OF COURSE THERE ARE PROVISIONS FOR AN EARLIER DISSOLUTION IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT THE FOUR-YEAR TERM IS THE NORM AND THIS HOUSE WILL, I AM SURE, WISH THAT THE NEW POWER-SHARING EXECUTIVE SHOULD HAVE A PROPER CHANCE TO SHOW TO THEIR ELECTORATE WHAT THEY CAN ACHIEVE.

DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS NEED AN OPPOSITION IF THEY ARE TO WORK, THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY IS NO EXCEPTION. WE ALL OF US REALISE THE DIFFICULTIES OF PARTIES IN OPPOSITION. OF COURSE, IT IS EVERYBODY'S RIGHT TO OPPOSE PEACEFULLY AND POLITICALLY THOSE THINGS WHICH THEY THINK WRONG, BUT THE PROBLEM IS TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE. I HOPE THAT THOSE PARTIES IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTED ON THE NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE WILL NOW FACE UP TO THEIR PROPER ROLE OF CONSTRUCTIVE OPPOSITION. THEY OWE IT TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE CONSTITUTION WHICH THE PARLIAMENT AT WESTMINSTER HAS PROVIDED FOR THEM - A PARLIAMENT TO WHICH SOME MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY NOW BELONG.



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THEN THERE IS SUNNINGDALE. IN OPPOSITION WE SUPPORTED THE GOVERNMENT IN REACHING THIS CAREFULLY BALANCED SETTLEMENT. I WOULD REMIND THE HOUSE THAT WHAT WAS AGREED AT SUNNINGDALE WAS NOT, AS ONE MIGHT SUSPECT WHEN LISTENING TO ITS CRITICS, SOLELY PROVISION FOR A COUNCIL OF IRELAND. THE SETTLEMENT INVOLVED MANY ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH - THERE ARE PROVISIONS ON THE STATUS OF NORTHERN IRELAND WHICH THE TAOISEACH HAS RECENTLY CLARIFIED. THERE IS THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION SET UP TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS AS A MATTER OF EXTREME URGENCY ABOUT THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF DEALING WITH THOSE WHO COMMIT CRIMES OF VIOLENCE NORTH OR SOUTH OF THE BORDER. OUR HOPE IS THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE REPORT OF THIS COMMISSION BOTH GOVERNMENTS WILL BE ABLE TO AGREE ON A FULLY EFFECTIVE MEANS OF DEALING WITH FUGITIVE OFFENDERS WHICH CAN BE PUT INTO OPERATION QUICKLY. ON THE VITAL PROBLEM OF BORDER SECURITY, WE ARE, IN THE SPIRIT OF THE SUNNINGDALE AGREEMENT, IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH THE DUBLIN GOVERNMENT TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN IMPROVE COOPERATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER, AND WE HOPE THAT WE SHALL, IN AGREEMENT WITH THEM, FIND THE MEANS OF REDUCING TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN THE BORDER AREAS AND PREVENTING THE USE OF THE REPUBLIC AS A BASE.

AS FAR AS THE COUNCIL OF IRELAND IS CONCERNED, IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT THE BASIC REASON FOR ESTABLISHING IT IS TO PROVIDE A MEANS OF IMPROVING COOPERATION BETWEEN THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH ON A WIDE RANGE OF COMMON INTERESTS. FOR EXAMPLE, HOW BEST TO UTILISE SCARCE SKILLS, TO AVOID UNNECESSARY DUPLICATION OF EFFORT IN THE INTERESTS OF ECONOMY AND EFFICIENCY AND TO ENSURE COMPLEMENTARY RATHER THAN COMPETITIVE EFFORTS WHERE THIS IS TO THE ADVANTAGE OF AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.



THESE ARE EMINENTLY SENSIBLE PROPOSALS, AND THE INTERESTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND ARE MORE THAN PROTECTED BY THE VITALLY IMPORTANT UNANIMITY RULE WHICH MEANS THAT THE COUNCIL CAN ONLY TAKE ACTION WHICH HAS THE WHOLE-HEARTED SUPPORT OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE. THE SETTLEMENT MUST BE SEEN AS A WHOLE AND NOT BROKEN DOWN INTO PARTS. WE THINK THAT THIS SETTLEMENT WAS RIGHT AND FAIR, AND WE EXPECT ALL PARTIES TO FULLY DELIVER THEIR OBLIGATIONS. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY OUR PART TO GIVE EFFECT TO IT AS A BALANCED PACKAGE.

WHEN DEALING WITH NORTHERN IRELAND, AN OVER-RIDING CONSIDERATION MUST ALWAYS BE THAT OF SECURITY. AT THE MOMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND THE SECURITY FORCES -THE ARMY AND THE R U C -ARE TRYING TO RESTORE PEACE AND LAW AND ORDER, BUT THEY DO SO ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY. LAW AND ORDER CAN ONLY BE MAINTAINED BY THE COMMUNITY ITSELF, AND IT IS IMPORTANT TO STRESS AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT LAW AND ORDER CAN ONLY BE BROUGHT BACK IF ALL, I REPEAT ALL, THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND WHOLEHEARTEDLY WISH IT AND COOPERATE. THE SECURITY FORCES HAVE A VITAL ROLE, AND I WANT TO PLACE ON RECORD AGAIN OUR RECOGNITION OF THE SKILL AND FORTITUDE WITH WHICH ALL MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCES, BOTH POLICE AND ARMY, CARRY OUT THEIR DUTIES. BUT THEIR SUCCESS DEPENDS UPON THE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNITY AT LARGE AND THE ACCEPTANCE BY THE COMMUNITY OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.

I BELIEVE THE CORNERSTONE OF SECURITY POLICY SHOULD BE A PROGRESSIVE INCREASE IN THE ROLE OF THE CIVILIAN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. SO LONG AS SO MUCH OF THE BURDEN IS BEING BORNE BY THE ARMY, IT IS ALTOGETHER TOO TEMPTING TO MANY MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY TO UNDERTAKE LESS THAN THEIR SHARE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND TO FEEL THAT LAW AND ORDER IS A MATTER FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN FOR THEM. THIS IS NOT A SITUATION WHICH CAN BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE INDEFINITELY.

MUCH WILL DEPEND UPON THE R U C WHO HAVE OPERATED IN APPALLING CONDITIONS OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. THEY HAVE SUFFERED MANY GREIVIOUS LOSSES OF LIFE AND INJURY. EVERYTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP THEM MUST BE DONE. I AM, THEREFORE, SUPPORTING THE CHIEF CONSTABLE AND THE POLICE AUTHORITY IN THEIR PLANS TO PRESS AHEAD WITH A NUMBER OF CHANGES IN THE R U C WHICH ARE DESIGNED NOT ONLY TO INCREASE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY BUT THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE R U C WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. I AM ALSO GOING AHEAD WITH THE IMPORTANT DECISION OF MY PREDECESSOR, ANNOUNCED IN THE SUNNINGDALE COMMUNIQUE, TO SET UP AN ALL-PARTY COMMITTEE FROM THE ASSEMBLY TO EXAMINE HOW BEST TO INTRODUCE EFFECTIVE POLICING THROUGHOUT NORTHERN IRELAND. THIS IS A PROBLEM WHICH IS IMMENSELY DIFFICULT AND WILL REQUIRE SUPPORT OF ALL MEN AND WOMEN OF GOOD WILL.

I PLAN TO MAKE A NUMBER OF ARRANGEMENTS AIMED AT ASSOCIATING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY IN POLICE MATTERS. SOME OF THEM, LIKE THE ALL-PARTY COMMITTEE FOR THE ASSEMBLY I HAVE REFERRED TO, WERE PART OF THE SUNNINGDALE COMMUNIQUE. ALTHOUGH SOME OF THESE WILL DEPEND UPON THE FORMAL RATIFICATION OF SUNNINGDALE BEFORE THEY CAN BE BROUGHT TO FULL FRUITION, THERE IS A GOOD DEAL OF PROGRESS THAT CAN BE MADE IN THE MEANTIME. FOR EXAMPLE, I PROPOSE SHORTLY TO LAY BEFORE THE HOUSE THE NECESSARY ORDER IN COUNCIL PROVIDING FOR THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE POLICE AUTHORITY. AMONG OTHER THINGS THIS WILL PROVIDE FOR THE INCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY IN THE POLICE AUTHORITY. I ALSO HOPE THAT IT WILL SOON BE POSSIBLE TO MAKE PROGRESS IN SETTING UP THE PROPOSED LOCAL POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEES.



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THE OPERATIONAL COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE RUC IS BEING REORGANISED TO PROVIDE ASSISTANT CHIEF CONSTABLES WITH OPERATIONAL COMMANDS FOR REGIONS BASED ON LONDONDERRY, BELFAST AND THE BORDER AREAS. THIS SHOULD IMPROVE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMAND STRUCTURE IS ALSO BEING REORGANISED BY THE CHIEF CONSTABLE. IN ADDITION, OTHER MEASURES ARE BEING TAKEN TO HELP TO BRING CATHOLICS INTO THE RUC AND THE RUC RESERVE AND TO INCREASE THEIR OVERALL STRENGTH, INCLUDING A NEW NON-PRESIDENTIAL CADET SCHEME. THERE IS ALSO TO BE INCREASED POLICE EFFORTS ON COMMUNITY RELATIONS. TO SUM UP, WE NEED TO MOVE AS FAST AS POSSIBLE IN RESTORING THE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR LAW AND ORDER TO THE RUC.

I AM SURE THE WHOLE HOUSE WILL WARMLY WELCOME A STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE AFTER THEIR MEETING ON TUESDAY THIS WEEK, IN THE COURSE OF WHICH THEY SAID THIS:

"WE ALL WANT TO SEE NORMALITY IN NORTHERN IRELAND - A NORMALITY IN WHICH DETENTION WILL HAVE ENDED AND IN WHICH LAW AND ORDER CAN BE PRESERVED BY A CIVILIAN POLICE FORCE AND NOT BY THE PRESENCE OF HEAVILY ARMED TROOPS.

"WE NOW CALL UPON ALL THOSE IN NORTHERN IRELAND WHO ARE APPALLED AND DISGUSTED BY THE RECURRENT VIOLENCE TO RECOGNISE THAT THERE ARE PRACTICAL STOPS WHICH THEY CAN TAKE TO CREATE THAT SITUATION OF NORMALITY. IF RELIANCE UPON THE ARMY IS NOT TO BE REDUCED, THE LOCALLY RECRUITED SECURITY FORCES MUST BE IN THE POSITION TO TAKE ON FURTHER RESPONSIBILITIES. THIS THEY CAN ONLY DO WHEN THEY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY. THIS IS OUR OBJECTIVE.

"THE BEST WAY TO DEAL WITH MEN OF VIOLENCE IS THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE OPERATION OF THE ORDINARY PROCESSES OF THE LAW. BUT THE LAW CANNOT BE EFFECTIVE UNTIL EACH CITIZEN ACCEPTS A PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO SEE TO IT THAT HIS AREA, HIS HOUSING ESTATE, HIS STREET IS NOT USED BY THE BOMBER OR THE GUNMAN".



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THIS IS AN ADMIRABLY FORCEFUL AND CONCISE SUMMARY OF PRECISELY THE POLICY WHICH THE GOVERNMENT INTEND TO PURSUE ADXXX AND TO WHICH THEY INTEND TO GIVE THEIR MAXIMUM SUPPORT.

THIS IS ONE OF THE REASONS WHY, WITH MY RIGHT HON FRIEND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE, I HAVE CALLED FOR A SECURITY REVIEW. WE ARE LOOKING AFRESH AT THE ROLE OF THE ARMY IN THE TOWNS, IN THE RURAL AREAS AND ON THE BORDER. THE QUESTION OF THE NUMBER OF TROOPS AND THE DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY WE CAN PRODUCE ARE CLOSELY BOUND TOGETHER. WHAT WE ARE AIMING FOR IS THE MINIMUM NUMBERS OF TROOPS ACTUALLY IN NORTHERN IRELAND WHICH THE NEEDS OF THE SITUATION REQUIRE, TOGETHER WITH THE MAXIMUM DEGREE OF FLEXIBILITY AND SPEED IN RESPONSE TO ANY CHANGE IN THE SITUATION. IT WILL BE POSSIBLE IN THE NEXT D FEW WEEKS TO WITHDRAW ONE UNIT FROM NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THIS WILL COME FROM THE LONDONDERRY AREAS. IN PREPARATION FOR THIS WE HAVE, WITH THE CHIEF CONSTABLE, TKXX TAKEN STEPS TO ENSURE THAT THERE WILL BE A CONSEQUENTIAL INCREASE IN CIVIL POLICING IN LONDONDERRY.

AT THE SAME TIME WE WILL BE MOUNTING SPECIAL OPERATIONS AS THE SITUATION MAY REQUIRE - AS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE MASSIVE SEARCH OPERATION IN ORMEAU ROAD LAST WEEK. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE YEAR BETWEEN 1 APRIL 1973 AND 1 APRIL 1974 THEY SEARCHED OVER 4 MILLION CARS AND REMOVED FROM TERRORISTS HANDS NEARLY 1600 WEAPONS AND OVER 35 TONS OF EXPLOSIVES - 19 TONS FOUND BEFORE IT WAS MADE INTO BOMBS AND 16 TONS FOUND IN MADE-UP BOMBS. IN THE SM XX SAME PERIOD OF A YEAR, 1292 TERRORISTS HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL OFFENCES, ALMOST ALL OF THEM OF A VERY SERIOUS NATURE RANGING FROM MURDER TO ARMED ROBBERY. AND TODAY A TEMPORARY REINFORCEMENT OF TWO COMPANIES HAS BEEN DESPATCHED TO NORTHERN IRELAND AT THE REQUEST OF THE GOC TO ASSIST THE TROOPS ALREADY THERE IN A MAJOR OPERATION DESIGNED TO PREVENT THE MOVEMENT OF ARMS AND EXPLOSIVES INTO THE CITIES. IF, AS SEEMS POSSIBLE, WE ARE ABLE TO DEVELOP THIS APPROACH OF INCREASED FLEXIBILITY IN OUR MILITARY RESPONSE, THERE WILL BE FURTHER LIMITED WITHDRAWALS OF TROOPS ACTUALLY STATIONED IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE COURSE OF THE YEAR. LET NO- ONE SUPPOSE THAT THIS IMPLIES ANY WEAKENING IN OUR DETERMINATION TO DEAL WITH TERRORISTS. AS I SAID IN THE HOUSE ON MONDAY LAST WEEK, I PLEDGE THIS GOVERNMENT TO ACT RESOLUTELY TO DEAL WITH THE TERRORISTS FROM WHEREVER THEY COME.



LET ME SAY AGAIN, QUITE CLEARLY AND CATEGORICALLY, THAT SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF THE ARMY WILL REMAIN IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO ASSIST IN MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER. BUT WE BELIEVE THAT IN THE LONG TERM IT MUST BE THE COMMUNITY ITSELF AND NORMAL POLICE ACTIVITIES, NOT MILITARY OPERATIONS ALONE, WHICH WILL FINALLY DEFEAT THE TERRORIST.

AS INDICATED TO THE HOUSE IN MY STATEMENT ON MONDAY, THERE IS A LOT THAT CAN BE DONE BY SELF-HELP. I WAS VERY GLAD TO LEARN THAT THERE WAS A RECENT MEETING IN BELFAST BETWEEN THE SECURITY FORCES AND THE TRADERS AND THEIR REPRESENTATIVE BODIES IN WHICH A NUMBER OF NEW IDEAS FOR IMPROVING SECURITY IN THE CITY CENTRE WERE PUT FORWARD. THESE ARE BEING ASSESSED, AND I HOPE THAT OUT OF IT MAY COME DEFINITE MEASURES TO IMPROVE SECURITY AGAINST THE BOMBER.

I RECOGNISE THE DIFFICULTIES, BUT THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT SECURITY IN STORES AND SHOPS IN MANY PARTS OF NORTHERN IRELAND COULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN IT IS. TO TAKE LISBURN, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH HAS SUFFERED SEVERE DAMAGE IN THE TOWN CENTRE. SEVERAL MONTHS AGO THE SECURITY FORCES STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE TOWN CENTRE SHOULD BE CLOSED TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC, BUT THE LOCAL TRADERS FELT THAT TO DO THIS WOULD MAKE IT REALLY DIFFICULT FOR THEM TO EARN A LIVELIHOOD. MEASURES TO PREVENT THE DESTRUCTION OF CITY CENTRES ARE BOUND TO BE INCONVENIENT AND MAY WELL REDUCE THE VOLUME OF TRADE IN SOME CASES, BUT THERE IS A LIMIT TO THE RISKS WHICH IT IS REASONABLE TO RUN.

TREMENDOUS PROBLEMS WOULD STILL REMAIN EVEN IF THE POLITICALLY MOTIVATED VIOLENCE ON EITHER SIDE WERE TO COME TO AN END. BEFORE THE CURRENT EMERGENCY, ARMED ROBBERY WAS AN UNCOMMON CRIME IN NORTHERN IRELAND BUT THE TOTAL VALUE OF GOODS STOLEN BY ARMED OVER THE LAST TWO YEARS COMES CLOSE TO ONE AND A HALF MILLION POUNDS. PROTECTION RACKETS AND OTHER FORMS OF INTIMIDATION PROLIFERATE. PUBLICANS, HOTEL MANAGERS, SMALL BUSINESSMEN LIVE UNDER THE THREAT OF "PAY UP OR BE BLOWN UP". THE INFLUENCE OF PARENTS, SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES HAS GIVEN WAY TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE TERRORIST AND THE GUNMAN. THUS A WHOLE GENERATION OF YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN IS GROWING UP IN NORTHERN IRELAND WHO OFTEN LACK NOT ONLY THE OPPORTUNITY OF HONEST EMPLOYMENT, BUT ALSO ANY DESIRE OR INCENTIVE TO TAKE IT UP. THIS INDEED IS A PROBLEM WHICH CALLS FOR THE UNITED EFFORT OF THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE AND INDEED IT IS ONE WHICH MUST BE OF DEEP CONCERN TO THE UNITED KINGDOM AS A WHOLE. WE MUST AND WILL TACKLE IT TOGETHER, AND I LOOK TO ALL THE PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND TO SUPPORT ME IN THIS AND TO SHOW THAT THEY HAVE THE WILL AND DETERMINATION TO RE-CREATE A PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY SOCIETY.



I TURN NOW TO THE QUESTION OF THE LAW AND VIOLENCE IN THE  
CONTEXT OF NORTHERN IRELAND. THERE IS A SPECIAL PROBLEM HERE.  
THERE ARE PARA-MILITARY FORCES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. THERE  
IS BOMBING. THERE ARE SECTARIAN MURDERS. MAY I REMIND THE  
HOUSE THAT 717 WERE KILLED IN THE LAST 2 YEARS ALONE. THE  
EXTENT OF DAMAGE TO PROPERTY HAS BEEN EVIDENCED BY THE AMOUNT  
OF COMPENSATION THAT HAS BEEN CLAIMED - ABOUT £110 M. SINCE 1969.

WITHOUT GOING INTO THE HISTORY OF IT ALL, IT WAS TO MEET THIS  
SITUATION THAT THERE IS NOW ON THE STATUTE BOOK THE NORTHERN IRELAND  
(EMERGENCY PROVISIONS) ACT, 1973, WHICH HAS TWO PARTS WHICH DEAL  
WITH FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF JUSTICE. FIRSTLY, MODIFICATION OF  
PROCEDURES IN THE COURTS AND, SECONDLY, THE PROVISIONS FOR  
DETENTION BY COMMISSIONERS. AS I SAID IN THE HOUSE WHEN THE

BILL WAS BEING DEBATED, WE DID NOT DENY THE GOVERNMENT THE SECOND  
READING OF THE BILL BECAUSE OF THE PECULIAR SITUATION IN NORTHERN  
IRELAND, BUT WE DID HAVE GRAVE CRITICISMS AND DOUBTS ABOUT IT.  
WE SHALL, THEREFORE, WANT TO MAKE SOME CHANGES TO THE LEGISLATION.  
IN THE MEANTIME, WE HAVE TO FACE THE FACT THAT THE EMERGENCY  
PROVISIONS ACT WILL RUN OUT IN JULY OF THIS YEAR. WE CANNOT BE  
READY WITH FRESH LEGISLATION BY THEN. I AM NOT PREPARED TO LEAVE  
THE SECURITY FORCES WITHOUT ANY COVER WHILE WE TALK HERE IN THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS ABOUT THE BEST WAY OF PROVIDING CHANGES IN THE  
LAW WHICH WE THINK NECESSARY. I SHALL, THEREFORE, AT THE  
APPROPRIATE TIME, INVITE THE SUPPORT OF THE HOUSE FOR AN ORDER  
EXTENDING THE DURATION OF THE EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT FOR A  
FURTHER PERIOD. WE SHALL AS A GOVERNMENT OF COURSE BE THINKING  
OF WHAT CHANGES MAY BE NEEDED BUT, AS THE HOUSE MAY RECALL,  
I QUOTED HERE IN DECEMBER 1972 FROM A LETTER I HAD WRITTEN TO THE  
HON MEMBER FOR WEST BELFAST PROPOSING THAT THERE SHOULD BE SET  
UP A COMMISSION WHICH WOULD EXAMINE THE QUESTION OF THE  
MAINTENANCE OF THE RULE OF LAW IN CIRCUMSTANCES SUCH AS THOSE  
WHO HAVE PREVAILED IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN RECENT YEARS. I  
THINK THERE IS STILL A NEED FOR A N ENQUIRY ON THESE LINES.



9 I HAVE THEREFORE DECIDED, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, TO SET UP A COMMITTEE TO UNDERTAKE THIS TASK. LORD GARDINER HAS ACCEPTED THE CHAIRMANSHIP, AND THE TERMS OF REFERENCE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

"TO CONSIDER WHAT PROVISIONS AND POWERS, CONSISTENT TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT PRACTICABLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES WITH THE PRESERVATION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES AND HUMAN RIGHTS, ARE REQUIRED TO DEAL WITH TERRORISM AND SUBVERSION IN NORTHERN IRELAND, INCLUDING PROVISIONS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, AND TO EXAMINE THE WORKING OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND (EMERGENCY PROVISIONS) ACT, 1973, AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS".

I WILL ANNOUNCE THE OTHER MEMBERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BUT I CAN SAY NOW THAT NORTHERN IRELAND WILL BE WELL REPRESENTED.

I SHALL NOT, HOWEVER, WAIT FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THAT COMMITTEE BEFORE BEGINNING TO DEAL WITH THE DIFFICULT PROBLEM OF DETENTION. THERE WAS A CLEAR STATEMENT IN THE SUNNINGDALE COMMUNIQUE OF THE POLICY OF THE THEN ADMINISTRATION ON DETENTION. IT WAS AS FOLLOWS:

"THE CONFERENCE TOOK NOTE OF A REAFFIRMATION BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT OF THEIR FIRM COMMITMENT TO BRING DETENTION TO AN END IN NORTHERN IRELAND FOR ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY AS SOON AS THE SECURITY SITUATION PERMITS....."

THIS IS OUR POLICY.



BUT I BELIEVE THAT WE MUST TRY A FRESH APPROACH AND ONE THAT ENGAGES THE HELP OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. SIMPLY TO RELEASE PEOPLE WITHOUT ANY ASSISTANCE IS NOT ENOUGH, AND THERE IS WITHIN NORTHERN IRELAND A FUND OF GOODWILL WHICH CAN BE USED TO HELP US BRING THE RELEASED DETAINEES BACK INTO THE LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY. I THEREFORE PROPOSE TO BEGIN A PHASED PROGRAMME FOR RELEASING DETAINEES AND AM CONSIDERING WHETHER THEY CAN BE ASSIGNED TO SPONSORS IN THEIR HOME COMMUNITY WHO WILL UNDERTAKE AT LEAST A MEASURE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR GOOD BEHAVIOUR AND HELP THEM TO BECOME ASSIMILATED ONCE MORE IN LOCAL LIFE AND TO AVOID BECOMING INVOLVED AGAIN IN VIOLENCE.

IN ALL THIS I BELIEVE THAT THE SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENTS OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE CAN MAKE A MAJOR AND CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION, AND I INCLUDE IN THIS THE MAKING USE, WHERE APPROPRIATE OF GOVERNMENT TRAINING CENTRES, WHICH COULD PROVE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE I HAVE ASKED MY HON FRIEND THE MINISTER OF STATE TO CARRY OUT AN URGENT STUDY OF ALL THIS IN CLOSE CONSULTATION WITH MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE. AND AS WELL AS THE VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND THERE ARE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS WHO I AM SURE WOULD BE WILLING AND ABLE TO PLAY A POSITIVE PART IN THIS VITAL WORK OF RESETTLEMENT.

IN CONSIDERING FUTURE RELEASES OF DETAINEES, ONE OF THE FACTORS WHICH I SHALL TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IS THE EXTENT TO WHICH INDIVIDUALS ARE PREPARED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SUCH FACILITIES AS WE CAN OFFER TO HELP IN THEIR RETURN TO THE ORDINARY COMMUNITY. AT THE SAME TIME, I MUST MAKE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT, IF RELEASED DETAINEES RETURN TO VIOLENCE, THERE WILL BE NO HESITATION IN DEALING WITH THEM.

I ALSO WANT TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE POSITION OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF TERRORIST OFFENCES BY THE CRIMINAL COURTS. THERE IS A WIDESPREAD BELIEF IN MANY QUARTERS THAT THESE SENTENCES WILL NOT, IN FACT, HAVE TO BE SERVED, AND THAT EARLY RELEASE CAN CONFIDENTIALLY BE EXPECTED. I HAVE NO INTENTION OF INTRODUCING AN AMNESTY FOR PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED BY THE DUE PROCESSES OF THE LAW OF CRIMES OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE IS A RESTORATION OF NORMAL POLITICAL LIFE IN NORTHERN IRELAND, IN WHICH THOSE WHO WANT CHANGES ARE AT LIBERTY TO ARGUE FOR THEM AND TO TRY TO PERSUADE. AS I SAID IN THE HOUSE ON MONDAY, WHAT I FIND IMPOSSIBLE TO UNDERSTAND IS THE MOTIVATION OF THOSE, FROM WHICHEVER SIDE THEY COME, WHO BELIEVE THAT POLITICAL ENDS CAN BE ACHIEVED BY VIOLENCE OR WHO SEEK TO DESTROY THE CONSTITUTION ACT AND POWER-SHARING NOT BY POLITICAL ACTION BUT BY BOMBING AND KILLING.

AS THE HOUSE KNOWS, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED DOUBTS ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WHOLE CONCEPT OF PROSCRIPTION AS LAID DOWN IN THE EMERGENCY PROVISIONS ACT, BUT THIS DID NOT AND DOES NOT IN ANY WAY IMPLY A WILLINGNESS TO GO SOFT ON DEALING WITH PARA-MILITARY ORGANISATIONS. THE WIDER MATTER OF PROSCRIPTION AS SUCH WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE UNDER LORD GARDINER. BY IN MY VIEW THERE ARE SIGNS THAT ON BOTH EXTREME WINGS THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO, ALTHOUGH AT ONE TIME COMMITTED TO VIOLENCE, WOULD NOW LIKE TO FIND A WAY BACK TO POLITICAL ACTIVITY. IT IS RIGHT TO ENCOURAGE THIS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. IT IS THE COUNTERPART OF OUR ACTION AGAINST THOSE WHO USE VIOLENCE. REPUBLICAN CLUBS WERE DE-PROSCRIBED BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION. I INTEND TO MOVE IN THE SAME DIRECTION AND WILL BRING FORWARD THE NECESSARY ORDER TO TAKE THE ULSTER VOLUNTEER FORCE AND SINN FEIN OFF THE LIST. I MAKE IT CLEAR THAT MEMBERSHIP OF A DE-PROSCRIBED ORGANISATION IS NO PROTECTION FOR MEN OF VIOLENCE, AND WE FULLY SUPPORT THE STATEMENT IN PARAGRAPH 94 OF THE WHITE PAPER THAT NO PERSON "CAN EXPECT TO BE ALLOWED TO CLAIM TO BE ACTING POLITICALLY AT ONE MOMENT AND THEN, GIVEN WHAT APPEARS A FAVOURABLE OPPORTUNITY, TO TURN TO VIOLENCE AND SUBVERSION".



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A DUBLIN

THIS THEN IS THE WAY FORWARD. THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS ARE BASED FIRMLY ON THE POLICY WE HAVE SUPPORTED IN RECENT YEARS. THERE IS A BALANCE TO STRIKE BETWEEN THE POLITICAL AND MILITARY ACTION. WE PLEDGE OUR SUPPORT FOR ACTION AGAINST VIOLENCE IN COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNITY. NOW IS THE TIME TO TRY TO MAKE FURTHER POLITICAL PROGRESS.

IRISH POLITICS IS FULL OF MAYBES. IT WAS W B YEARS WHO SAID:  
 "AND THERE IS A POLITICIAN  
 THAT HAS READ AND THOUGHT  
 AND MAYBE WHAT THEY SAY IS TRUE  
 OF WAR AND WAR'S ALARMS....."

I TELL THE HOUSE FRANKLY THAT THERE IS NO SIMPLE WAY TO SUCCESS. IN THE FACE OF 700 YEARS OF HISTORY THERE IS NO PROSPECT OF A SIMPLE SOLUTION. SUCH SIMPLICITY GETS STRONGER THE FURTHER FROM THE SCENE THAT MEN GET.

MY FIRST FULL MONTH IN THE PROVINCE HAS REINFORCED ONE BELIEF I HELD BEFORE. IT IS THE PEOPLE IN NORTHERN IRELAND ALONE WHO MUST SETTLE THEIR FUTURE. GAEL AND SCOT. ENOUGH OF THIS CRY TO "SCOTTISH SETTLERS" AS IF THEY ARE NOT IRISH.

AT THE BEGINNING OF THIS PARLIAMENT, I PUT BEFORE THE HOUSE OUR POLICIES. IT IS ONLY WITH THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT OF THIS HOUSE THAT WE CAN MAINTAIN THE WAY FORWARD.

END OF STATEMENT

DAG 4/4/74 6.35