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Reference Code: 2005/7/664

Title: Report written by Donal O'Sullivan, Ambassador of Ireland to Britain, of his recent meeting with Stanley Orme, Minister of State at the Northern Ireland Office, at which the main topic of discussion was power-sharing with an Irish dimension in Northern Ireland. The report also includes the Ambassador's views on the experiences of the Irish in Britain following the Birmingham bombings of 21 November, 1974.

Creation Date(s): 16 December, 1974

Level of description: Item

Extent and medium: 2 pages

Creator(s): Department of the Taoiseach

Access Conditions: Open

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During the recent visit of the Minister for Justice to London, I had the opportunity over lunch of a fairly full discussion with Mr. Stan Orme, Minister of State. The Minister touched on the various suggested solutions of the Northern problem. He regarded integration as a possible solution as definitely not on the cards. UDI was also a non-starter as was any re-drawing of the border.

In his view power sharing in some form was the only possibility. He said that one could envisage various forms of power sharing and in his view it was essential that the minority side should not be over sticky in its demands, as otherwise the Convention would be unlikely to come up with a proposal which could be regarded as acceptable. The clear impression Mr. Orme left with me was that the Government might well be prepared to consider favourably a *watered down* downward version of power sharing. He was careful to avoid being in any way specific as to what he had in mind but the clear message which he wanted to leave with me was that the Dublin Government should use every endeavour to influence the SDLP in not being over sticky in its demands.

Another point which he strongly emphasised was that any institutionalised form of Irish dimension must now be regarded as out. Here too he was quite specific in saying that this is a message which will have to be brought home to the SDLP and that the help of the Dublin Government in bringing influence to bear in the matter would be greatly welcomed.

A final point which Mr. Orme made in quite forceable terms was that it would be completely wrong to assume that a prolonged period of direct rule is to be expected in the event of failure by the Convention to produce some sort of acceptable solution. There is, he said, a growing feeling among the major parties in Westminster that the sooner direct rule can be brought to an end the better and the pressure in the House for the ending of it will undoubtedly increase. This, he stressed, was another reason

Why it is essential that the Convention is given every opportunity of coming up with a solution which can be regarded as acceptable.

The foregoing is the substance of my talk with the Minister of State.

It is perhaps worthwhile to mention here the reactions being felt by the Irish in Britain following the outrages in Birmingham. Immediately following the Birmingham explosions the Embassy, the Offices of the State-sponsored bodies and Irish clubs were inundated with telephone calls of abuse and with bomb threats. While phone calls and letters of protest have now virtually ended there is undoubtedly a stronger anti-Irish feeling in Britain now than at any time in the past five years and there is little evidence so far that this feeling is easing in any way. The combination of the O'Connell television interview and the Birmingham bombings a few days afterwards have created a particularly angry attitude on the part of the British.

There has been some evidence of a tendency to boycott Irish goods. The C6ras Trachtála office has in fact been told by a few previous handlers of Irish products that they are no longer prepared to do business. There have also been some instances of refusal to handle containers of Irish produce. So far there does not seem to be any positive evidence of a reluctance by business interests to consider investment in Ireland. Shortly before coming to Dublin I gave one of my periodic dinners for the IDA and the attendance at it was unusually good.

N.S.
14/12/74