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1. The following were present at a working lunch at the Irish Embassy in London on 5 March 1975:

Irish side: Dr. G. FitzGerald, Minister for Foreign Affairs
Dr. D. O'Sullivan)
Mr. Seán Gaynor) Irish Embassy
Mr. Seán Donlon, Department of Foreign Affairs

British side: Mr. M. Rees, NI Secretary of State
Sir F. Cooper)
Mr. D. Janes) NI Office
Mr. J. Bourn)
Mr. K. Jordan)
Mr. B. Harding, FCO

2. Ceasefire

The British side gave as their general feeling that the ceasefire was sticking at the moment. The incidents of violence in recent weeks were either of Protestant or Official IRA/IRSP origin. They mentioned that there were rumours both of movement of arms into the South during the ceasefire and Provisional IRA men "were gone on courses" in the South, somewhere south of Dublin. But these were only rumours. There was no hard information. There were also rumours of arms being landed at Warrenpoint on 18.2.1975 but the G.O.C. was satisfied that there was no substantial movement of arms.

The general British assessment of the Provos. was that there was at the moment general distrust between the Provisionals in Belfast and Dublin and that there seemed to be no cohesion of policy. The Belfast end was getting disillusioned but had not got the means or the power to influence policy.

There seemed to be three ways of looking at the ceasefire, viz.

- (i) it was merely a ten-week rest;
- (ii) it would last much longer, at least six months;
- (iii) it was all a devious plot on the part of the Provisionals at the end of which they would come out again after a period of restocking and regrouping.

The British felt that the Provisionals themselves did not know what the outcome would be. They were, the British thought, good at short-term exploitation and while there was no clear indication as to what was going to emerge, the balance of their opinion was with (ii) above, viz. that there would be a longer ceasefire but that they did not know what was going to happen after that. Their view, however, was that if the Provisionals stopped for long they would find it very difficult to start again.

Mr. Rees said that they had no detailed knowledge of movements of persons as they had before the truce, because of the lower Army profile. While this was a disadvantage militarily it had political advantages. He added that the Provisionals had been hammered for six months and in last December were in a very weakened military position.

3. Movement of Explosives

Mr. Rees brought up vigorously the question of the movement of arms and explosives from the South and at one stage in the discussion mentioned that the Prime Minister himself was taking a personal interest in the whole question of the use of fertilisers as explosives. Mr. Rees said that it was important to minimise the risk of explosions in the middle of the Convention elections as this would ruin the political prospects. Most of the nitrogenous fertiliser comes from the South. The British believed that the bulk of the processing of the fertiliser to make it usable in bombs was done in the South rather than in the North as they had never discovered evidence, such as smoke, to suggest that processing was done in Northern Ireland.

He pressed that we should do something about nitrogenous fertilisers as an earnest of our intent to do everything possible to facilitate the Convention. The adding of polysaccharites, which costs £6 per ton, was "80% successful." He would shortly report to the House of

Commons on the addition of polysaccharites to fertiliser manufactured in Northern Ireland. This would be considerably cheaper than the payment of compensation in respect of the explosions which would otherwise occur. He pressed that the South should do likewise. The Minister questioned why the Republic should be asked to do this when it was not being done in Great Britain. Mr. Rees maintained that there was control of the manufacture and sale of fertilisers in Great Britain. The Minister disputed why we should do it when it was not being done in Great Britain and pointed out that if there were three sources of supply it would seem illogical to propose something which was not applicable to all three.

In addition to considering action on fertilisers, Mr. Rees said that the question arose of tighter control over frangex manufactured at Enfield. Cooper introduced this item and Rees added that from the 1st November to Christmas all 400 sticks of gelignite found in Northern Ireland were undyed frangex. Mr. Donlon intervened to say that the Department of Justice did not accept that all such material came from the South and pointed out that the first time hard information had been given to us in relation to explosives recovered in Northern Ireland was on 5 February 1975. This information was being followed up through the recognised police channels. He asked if some might not have been exported to Britain and Janes replied that frangex was not exported to Britain although small quantities were exported to Malta. Mr. Rees interjected that Roy Jenkins' "net" also showed that the stuff comes from the South. The control of frangex from Enfield was, he said, important. The Minister asked if it was possible to identify the date of manufacture of frangex recently recovered in Northern Ireland. This would enable the Irish authorities to establish if the Enfield leak had now been plugged. Bourn said they would probably be able to give us the date of manufacture of the material found and he would follow this up. Further discussion might take place during the forthcoming Bourn visit to Dublin on

13th or 14th March. Mr. Rees said that it would help if we could put additive in the fertiliser to which the Minister replied that we do not have the off-setting savings which they have in Northern Ireland and that he did not see why we should spend the money if the additive was not being put in in Great Britain. Finally it was decided that the discussion should be left at this point and that the matter should be further considered by the appropriate people on both sides. The Irish side expressed their preference for technical matters to be pursued through the traditional technical channels but the British said that their main worry about this was that experts tended to go away and take months to work anything out. (During the meeting the Minister gave Mr. Rees a written reply to the latter's recent communications. This is attached as Appendix I.)

4. Police Co-operation

Mr. Rees mentioned that from interviews he had with private soldiers in the North in another connection, the men on the ground held that from the time of the commencement of an incident it took forty-five minutes for the RUC and Gardaí to get in contact. Accordingly the soldiers' reaction was to "shoot first from behind the ditch" and carry out the process of contact afterwards.

The Minister replied that if the time was disproportionate they should let us know. He felt that it should surely be possible for the men's officer or NCO to initiate the necessary contact forthwith.

Bourn intervened to say that the contact now is much better and it is working well. However, the people on the ground are conscious that the contact is RUC to Gardaí not Army to Army. It would be better for the man on the ground if there was direct contact.

Mr. Rees wondered whether border security arrangements could not be speeded up and the Minister said he would like information as to how it can be speeded up, if it was a fact that we were not operating quickly enough. Mr. Donlon said that there was a very speedy Garda reaction and Mr. Rees and Mr. Janes said that the speed of response was better. On the basis of returns received in recent weeks from the British, Mr. Donlon pointed out that the speed of response was remarkable considering the nature of the roads. The British side said that while they accepted that the Gardaí now turned up quickly, there was usually little to show as a result. Mr. Donlon pointed out that this was probably because there was nothing to show. The Minister said that we would continue to keep the matter under close study and in this connection would appreciate the fullest information from the British on every single incident.

5. Convention Elections

Mr. Rees opened by referring to the appointments of Lord Chief Justice Lowry and of Maurice Hayes and John Oliver. In addition the Clerk of the Assembly would be Clerk of the Convention. A date for the Convention Elections has yet to be fixed. The elections will need to be got out of the way well before the referendum.

He hoped that the Convention would divide into fact-finding committees on matters such as law and order, local government, the economy and the 1973 Constitution Act. He thought that if these committees put their minds for three or four months to researching facts and obtaining information they might come up with something and learn to work together. What he wanted to avoid was that the Convention would come to the crunch before the facts were researched and it was for this purpose that he was trying to plant the fact-finding committee idea in people's minds. He hoped that the Convention would come up with a series of ideas in the form of

a report. It would then be up to Westminster but if instead of fact-finding "hell were let loose early on in the Convention" there would be no end of problems. He thought that the Glengall St. Unionists would behave but he was worried about the SDLP who he said "saw the future of Ireland being settled 36 hours after the elections".

Cooper asked the Minister what he thought of the SDLP's present position. The Minister thought their morale was low as they feel they were put upon and "it might be worth your while to get a better relationship with them". The Minister said they would stand at the elections but were unhappy.

On the general question of the Convention he asked what further plans Mr. Rees had and whether he could do anything more than he had mentioned. Mr. Rees replied that he would do all he could but only the Convention could come up with proposals and when they had done so he thought Parliament would act reasonably on them.

6. Clady

A problem arising out of the disposal of a bomb at Clady was raised by the British side. The Minister undertook to look into the matter again on his return to Dublin.

7. Internment

The Minister raised the problem of medical facilities at Long Kesh and referred to reports of the James Moyne inquest. Cooper said he could not agree at all that the first doctor had taken one hour to arrive. In fact there were two doctors, one having got there in forty minutes and the second (Dr. Spence) in one hour twenty minutes, not one hour as was suggested. He felt that the delay of forty minutes was less than in most cases of attendance on people who suffered heart attacks. Cooper said that they could give us a full summary of the Coroner's evidence and Rees said they would look at this matter and let us have it.

8. Kiltyclogher

The situation at Kiltyclogher was discussed briefly and the Minister pressed the British to re-consider their position, especially in the light of the new situation.

9. Aughnacloy

The Minister inquired about the delay in improving the check-through procedure. The British said they had encountered difficulties in purchasing land but this had now been resolved and they hoped the necessary work would commence shortly and be ready about six weeks thereafter. The Minister suggested that in the meanwhile extra troops might be assigned to the area to reduce the delays, especially on weekends.

10. Joint Approach to EEC

The Minister raised this with Mr. Rees as the latter was dashing away to a division in the House of Commons. The only comment Mr. Rees made was to the effect that the proposal had now become tangled in local Derry politics. The Minister handed the British side a letter setting out our present position. This is attached as Appendix 2.



Text of a letter from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
of Ireland to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

When we met in London on 19 December 1974, you handed me a document on the border situation. I have had this document examined together with your letter of 4 February 1975 and would like to make the following comments.

The agreement reached at the security meeting held at Baldonnell on 18 September 1974 provided for technical discussions between the Garda Síochána and the RUC at appropriate levels with a view to improving co-operation in the prevention of terrorist activities, particularly in border areas. This dialogue between the two police forces is an ongoing one and provides a suitable forum for discussion of the various matters raised in the document with a view to resolving any misunderstandings of problems that may exist. I understand that useful progress has already been achieved as a result of the meetings that have been held at different levels between the two forces since the Baldonnell meeting and I believe that the development of these exchanges will lead to a better understanding of their joint problems and enable them to devise the best methods of dealing with them.

With regard to the particular matters raised in the document, the Garda Síochána accept that there was an increase in the level of IRA activity in border areas during the six-week period mentioned, particularly in areas adjoining Counties Louth,



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Monaghan and Cavan. The incidents raised in Annex B, however, represent only a proportion of all incidents known to the Gardaí over the period. They do not accept the assertion that all of the incidents raised are incidents when "the terrorists definitely use the Republic as a base for their operations". While the facts about many of these incidents as given in Annex B are not disputed, some statements concerning certain incidents are incorrect. Examples of some of these are given in an appendix to this letter.

It is accepted that in many of the incidents that have occurred on the South Armagh border in the period, the IRA may have been operating from positions within the Republic. Gardaí/Army searches on this side of the border have located arms, ammunition and explosives but the Gardaí are satisfied that the persons responsible for most of the incidents do not seek or find refuge in the Republic and are in fact persons residing in and operating from the Crossmaglen area. On many occasions on which vehicles have been stopped and hijacked by persons operating "check points" in the North on the concession road between Dundalk and Castleblaney, there is ample evidence that these unlawful activities were carried on for continuous periods extending over 30 minutes. In view of this, they cannot be described as "hit-and-run" activities.

It is accepted that all explosives not coloured pink must have come from outside Northern Ireland. However, the conclusion that it must therefore originate in the Republic is not valid. It is not disputed that some explosive used in bombings in



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Northern Ireland originates in the Republic but the statement that "we have clear evidence that almost all the bomb incidents in the North are caused by explosives and detonators which originate in the South" is one to which we take the strongest exception. At the time of presentation of the document under reference, no such evidence had ever been communicated by the RUC or by any other source to the authorities here. Control on explosives within the State are stringent and these controls are rigidly enforced.

You adverted again to the question of explosives in your letter of 4 February 1975. Details of individual finds of explosives in the North since 1 January 1974, giving the type of material and weight were supplied by the RUC to the Garda Síochána at a meeting between representatives of the two forces held on 5 February. Garda enquiries are now in progress with a view to establishing the sources of these explosives. These investigations may take some time but will be concluded as early as possible. This was in fact the first time that hard information was received by the Gardaí from the RUC in relation to explosives recovered in the North. The feasibility of adding chemicals to ammonium nitrate fertilisers to make more difficult the extraction of ammonium nitrate is being examined.

The statement in your letter of 4 February that the great majority of illegal weapons in Northern Ireland come in from the South is not supported by any positive evidence. As you know, we have rigid restrictions on arms. Since August 1972 firearms certificates are not being issued here for rifles of



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a calibre greater than .22 or for pistols or revolvers and all weapons previously licensed have been taken into military custody to ensure that legal firearms cannot be procured by subversives through larcenies, etc. While this does not prevent firearms from being brought into Northern Ireland from the Republic or from being brought into the Republic illegally, every effort is being made to curb illegal traffic in arms. One of the provisions of the Firearms Act, 1971, brings within the definition of "firearm" any component part of a firearm. This provision was designed to cover the possession and movement of weapons which have been broken down into separate parts. The Garda Síochána have had successes in seizures of arms and ammunition and they would be glad to have information regarding the alleged movement of firearms into Northern Ireland from the Republic.

You had suggested that John Bourn should visit Dublin for talks and I agree that such a meeting would be useful. I understand that details regarding this meeting are being discussed at official level.

March 1975

APPENDIX

<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Comment</u>
8 November	near Roslea	The brief account of the incident in Annex B is almost entirely inaccurate. The explosion occurred in Co. Fermanagh about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the border. The Gardaí have no evidence that the command wires led back to the Republic. If such wires were found they would have expected to be so notified on the occasion.
16 November	Aughnacloy	The basis for the statement that a Garda confirmed that a terrorist was hit is not understood. The Garda Síochána have no evidence or information that a terrorist was hit despite extensive enquiries made by them.
1 December	Aughnacloy	The account given is at variance with the facts as established by the presence of the Gardaí at the scene who heard no shots from the Southern side of the border.
5 December	Middletown	The entire incident occurred on the Northern side of the border and the hijackers were seen to approach from the North. The Gardaí have established that the lorry was parked cross-ways on the bridge which is North of the border.



Message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland
to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

I have received your message of 23 January 1975 on the subject of cross-border studies and have considered it with care. As you know the matter was raised with Mr. Stanley Orme, M.P., during his visit to Dublin on 6-7 February.

I would suggest that the reasons which underlay the view expressed by Mr. Faulkner in his letter to the Taoiseach of 22 February 1974 related to the position of the Northern Ireland Executive at that time. These circumstances have been overtaken by events and, in fact, the general agreement in principle has been reiterated at subsequent meetings held on 1 November 1974 and 21 November 1974.

I fully share your concern that no excuse should be offered to those who purport to see a "sell-out" by your Government in even the most commonsense approach to an everyday problem. I also agree with you that the matter needs to be taken out of a political context. I would suggest that these aspects of the matter can be handled in deciding the manner and form in which the eventual decision is to be announced, rather than the timing.

Let us first of all be clear as to what the study is intended to achieve. It is an indisputable economic fact that some of the most depressed areas in this island are to be found along the border. The people who live there have a right to expect as much from life as those who happen to live in more fortunate areas. Since the border was instituted the development of



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these areas has been artificially held back. For fifty years a very high emigration rate was to be found from border areas. They suffered the natural fate of a peripheral area.

It is our belief that circumstances have now changed to the extent that it is now within our power to do something to assist these areas particularly since the border will quite shortly no longer be the economic barrier which it has been.

The need is most acute in the North-West area and indeed that is where the impetus for the proposed studies came initially. From my own direct personal experience I can assure you that there would be widespread support for the proposal in the Derry area and this support transcends party divisions. The Mayor of Derry, Mr. Jack Allen, is particularly keen on the project. It has been discussed publicly on a number of occasions but never have I seen any evidence of resistance to it from within Northern Ireland.

I feel then that a broader study, if presented as the purely economic study that is intended, would not meet with any opposition from within Northern Ireland but would rather be likely to attract a large measure of support particularly in the areas most likely to benefit. It is not intended to demonstrate a political point, that planning could be carried out on an all-Ireland basis for surely this is a self-evident fact and was the case before the institution of partition.

Neither is it designed to prove that planning should be on an all-Ireland basis since this ground was fully covered in the discussions and studies carried out in the context of a Council of Ireland. Whether or not such a stage is ever reached depends



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on political factors. What is not in doubt is that the areas in question are suffering because of the present position and because of a lack of co-ordination and liaison between the planning authorities on either side of the border. I quite agree that there should be the greatest possible consultations between these authorities but feel that this alone would not suffice to meet the needs of the situation. Planners of necessity think in terms of their own areas of responsibility and may not be fully alive to the needs of areas beyond their own. I therefore see considerable merit in engaging an independent consultant who is not from the beginning committed to one side or the other taking a fresh look at the overall situation and providing recommendations based on a command of all the facts on the ground for further action on both sides of the border. Such an overall study appears to me to be logically prior to an approach which first identifies specific projects. The broader study might indeed indicate that such projects as might be so chosen are not in fact those which ought to be undertaken first.

The consultants' work may, under the terms of the contract, be subject at various stages to the supervision of the contracting parties. This provides a guarantee of control over the conclusions, a matter of particular importance if political implications arising out of the conclusions are feared.

I should say also that the conclusions of a study should not be seen as in any way binding on the respective planning authorities. They would have an indicative character which would serve to stimulate discussion and guide development on both sides of the



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border in the direction likely to be of the greatest possible benefit to those living in border areas.

Seeing the matter as I do in these terms, I have to say that the two projects which have been suggested for study would not be acceptable.

To take the second one first, I understand that there is already a considerable degree of co-operation between the fishery authorities on both sides of the border. The Fisheries Division of our Department of Agriculture and Fisheries is examining the proposal on its own merits. While their examination has not yet been completed it is not possible for me to comment on it although it may well be that they may decide that it is one with which they would wish to be associated. It is, however, not the kind of project which we had in mind, given the approach outlined above. While the subject is clearly a very important one, the proposed study could hardly be described as a cross-border one.

This latter consideration also applies to the proposal regarding the port of Derry. My feeling is that the terms as drafted are far too restrictive and have little relevance to the problems of the Donegal region.

I would be grateful if you would give further consideration to the matter in the light of the factors which I have mentioned above. I attach an outline of the kind of study which we have in mind. I am firmly convinced that a study of this nature is needed before more specific projects can be identified. I have



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every reason to hope that its results could be beneficial to people living on both sides of the border.

Ideally the entire border area should be studied but initially a study might perhaps be confined to the North-Western region where the problems are most acutely felt. I am satisfied that there is very broad support for the idea in this area.

March 1975