

Notes on telephone conversations with the Home
Secretary on Wednesday, August 6th.

1. The Home Secretary stated that H.M.G. had no intention or desire whatsoever to assume responsibility for Northern Ireland affairs. The two situations in which this might arise were (a) in the event that progress on the reforms discussed at previous Downing Street meetings was not satisfactory. He added, however, that the Government of Northern Ireland were to be congratulated on their progress in this regard and that he felt this situation was entirely satisfactory. (b) The continuing use of troops to control riot situations.

2. On the question of the use of troops, the Home Secretary said that he envisaged two alternative situations which might arise:
 - (a) a solitary occasion when troops would be used once to quell hooligans of any faction. Provided that this was only an isolated incident involving the use of troops he felt that nothing much would be called in question.

 - (b) In the case of continuing use of troops H.M.G. would undoubtedly feel that they would have to control the circumstances of their use. He felt that it would be difficult to separate the function of law and order, which H.M.G. might wish to control, from other functions of the Northern Ireland Government and, therefore, his personal view was that it was a case of taking over all Northern Ireland's affairs or none. He would, however, instruct his officials to examine the possibility of taking over the law and order function only.

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The Home Secretary then went on to say that he would consult the Northern Ireland Government before any drastic action of this kind was taken and that this would be done before he went to Parliament for legislation. He made considerable point that there would be definite consultations between himself and the Northern Ireland Government before action was taken.

3. CS. gas. The Home Secretary will look at their proposals for the modification of the conditions laid down for its use. He had some sympathy with our proposals and noted that we needed an answer before the 12th August. He would, however, have to consult the Secretary for Defence and the Prime Minister.

4. Police recruiting. He volunteered the information that he felt more publicity should be given to the R.U.C. recruiting drive and that this would do a good deal of good in England were it known that efforts were being made in this direction. He particularly emphasised the need to recruit Roman Catholic police.

5. Use of British police. He saw many difficulties in the way of borrowing British police, but he would look at our proposals sympathetically. In the meantime he was awaiting our replies on a number of points raised by Home Office officials.

6. He then discussed the 12th August in Derry and inquired our thoughts as to banning, and seemed to be in agreement that bans in general were not desirable. After a number of generalisations he concluded the conversation by saying once again that the continuing use of British troops would almost certainly mean that the Westminster Parliament would have to assert its authority.