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Acknowledged.
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1970/Joint Sec/90

CONCLUSIONS OF A MEETING OF THE JOINT SECURITY COMMITTEE HELD ON
MONDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 1970, IN STORMONT CASTLE AT 11 30 AM

PRESENT: The Minister of Development (in the Chair)
 The Minister of Education
 The GOC
 The Deputy Director of Operations
 The Deputy Chief Constable
 The UK Representative
 The Deputy Secretary to the Cabinet
 The Director of Intelligence
 The Security Liaison Officer
 The Assistant Chief Constable, Crime Special Branch

ALSO PRESENT: Mr J G Hill, Senior Assistant Secretary,
 Ministry of Home Affairs
 The Secretary to the Police Authority for
 Northern Ireland
 The Press Officer to the Prime Minister
 The Private Secretary to the Prime Minister

Mr T A Cromey

1. THE WEEKEND RIOTS

(a) The GOC referred to a statement by the Chairman of the Belfast Young Unionist Action Committee published in this morning's NewsLetter and affirmed that Military Police had not used any weapons or shown any brutality; they had not driven Landrovers along the footpath at innocent bystanders and there had been no question at all of entering into a deal with the Provisional Council of the IRA or any other Body. The terms of a statement denying the allegations made were agreed for immediate Press issue, as follows:-

"A statement by Mr W A Fraser Agnew, Chairman of the Belfast Young Unionist Action Committee, in one of this morning's newspapers, makes serious allegations against the Royal Military Police and the probity of the security Forces.

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"There is absolutely no truth in the accusation that the RMP drove Landrovers along footpaths at innocent bystanders, used foul and provocative language or subjected women and children to being mercilessly beaten. All this is a lie.

"A deaf and dumb youth was taken into custody, but not for the reasons stated.

"It is equally untrue that any 'deal' was done with the Provisional Council of the IRA and there is no shred of evidence to support the allegation.

"It is also completely inaccurate to state that only 200 troops were deployed. Over 600 were present on Saturday night and approximately 1,000 on Sunday, in addition to the RUC, who were augmented by reinforcements from outside the city".

- (b) The GOC commented on the riots. They represented a Shankill reaction to special security measures which had been taken to see the Linfield supporters quietly past Unity Flats. Shankill covers a big area and the often vicious attacks on the Security Forces were hard to deal with. He was not altogether satisfied with the conduct of the Military operations. All the units in the area were new to the situation and he was unhappy about the inconclusive outcome of the weekend's confrontations.

More trouble could be expected tonight and contingency plans had been made to meet it wherever it might arise.

- (c) The Assistant Chief Constable, Crime Special Branch, said there was no 'intelligence' of organisation behind the scenes. The evidence pointed to sheer hooliganism.

2. LINFIELD v MANCHESTER CITY

This game to be played on Wednesday night (September 30) was the next 'flash' date. The Deputy Chief Constable said that effective diversion away from Unity Flats was virtually impossible. The Senior Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs, was asked to approach the IFA and/or the Linfield Club with a view to bringing forward the time of kick-off to 5 30 pm or 6 00 pm in the hope that hunger would encourage folk to go straight home after the game.

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It was also suggested that the Linfield Club be invited to distribute a leaflet at the game (at Government expense) pointing out that the very existence of the Club was at stake and urging orderly return home from matches.

The GOC suggested that representatives of Government, MPs, Councillors, etc, Protestant and Catholic, should be invited to be in the Unity Flats area on the next football 'occasion' to see the situation for themselves. The suggestion was deferred for further consideration.

3. GENERAL

The following statement was agreed for immediate Press issue on behalf of the Committee:-

"The Joint Security Committee are in no doubt that the weekend situation arose when the offensive behaviour of a small section of a crowd returning from a football match became so marked that individuals had to be taken into custody.

"Those who subsequently made these events the excuse for unbridled and vicious attacks and rioting appear to be under the impression that there is a section of the community which can set itself above the ordinary restraints of the law. This is not so. The law will be enforced everywhere, without fear or favour.

"The Joint Security Committee reminds everyone, once again, that all those who participate in disorders are making themselves liable to severe terms of imprisonment. Those present, even as spectators, should appreciate that by remaining on the street in a riot situation, they are placing themselves at risk".

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