

Mr Stout and I attended a meeting at the Home Office on Thursday, 15 July. Also present were Messrs Howard-Drake and Leyshon of the Home Office. Mr C E Johnson and Major Rothery of the Ministry of Defence and Colonel McCord and Colonel Brennan of Headquarters, Lisburn. The subject was Internment.

We were told by Colonel Brennan that the list of potential internees stood at between 325 and 375. It was impossible to predict how many would be brought in by the first swoop but this might be anything between 15% and 40%. It was proposed to take arrested persons to holding centres for interrogation. They would have to be segregated and interrogation might last up to 72 hours. If there were a large take as a result of the initial swoop there would have to be some queuing for interrogation.

We had a short report on progress at Long Kesh. Phase I was due for completion by 11 September and Colonel McCord said that 150 internees could then be accommodated although extra guards would be needed until the perimeter defences were completed. It was agreed that once a decision to introduce internment was made negotiations should begin between the Commissioner of Valuation and the Lands' Officer with a view to a suitable rent being fixed. In addition to the rent the Ministry of Home Affairs would be responsible for the cost of the special perimeter defences and of restoring the camp to its original purpose at the conclusion of the lease. The Ministry of Home Affairs would take over accommodation stores at an agreed scale and cost.

It was agreed that the next step should be for a contingency plan to be prepared and we undertook to do this for consideration at the next meeting. The contingency plan would have a number of appendices including a joint operational plan by the Police and the Army. It was also agreed that we should have discussions in Belfast with the Police and the Army before the next meeting at the Home Office which was fixed for 20 August. The question whether there should be Police representation at this meeting was left open.

Mr Howard-Drake said he would look into the question whether the Home Office would like to nominate a member of the Advisory Committee.

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