

FUTURE POLICY GROUP

1. A meeting of the Future Policy Group was held in the Conference Room, Stormont Castle, at 11 30 am on Wednesday, 31 May 1972. Those present were:-

- ✓ Sir William Niell, Permanent Under Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office 3 ✓
- ✓ Mr Holden, Central Secretariat 4 ✓
- ✓ Sir Harold Black, Central Secretariat 5 ✓
- ✓ Mr Kidd, Ministry of Finance 8 ✓
- ✓ Mr Hill, Ministry of Home Affairs 9 ✓
- ✓ Mr Shea, Ministry of Education 10 ✓
- ✓ Mr Brooke, Ministry of Commerce 11 ✓
- ✓ Mr Slinger, Ministry of Community Relations 15 ✓
- Mr McAllister, Central Secretariat

BLOOMFIELD 6 ✓ WOODFIELD 7 ✓
Destroyed
30/8/79

Issued
2/6/72

AIKEN 12 ✓ YOUNG 13 ✓ OLIVER 14 ✓
LEITCH 16 (No Mins) ✓

SMITH 2 ✓ +17

Apologies were received from Mr Aiken, Ministry of Health and Social Services, Mr Young, Ministry of Agriculture and Dr Oliver, Ministry of Development. Mr Shimeld, Ministry of Finance, was on leave.

MR SHIMELD - 18 issued 13/6

SECURITY SITUATION

2. Sir William Niell said that further measures were being considered to combat the activities of the car bombers. It was agreed that the unattended car in the city centre in circumstances where there had been recent bombings without warning was a very serious problem. Mr Brooke emphasised that early measures to reassure people working in the centre of the city were essential. It was agreed that Mr Kidd should put the particular problem of Clarendon House, which was built round a car park which was due to re-open on 16 June, to Mr Woodfield.

3. In relation to a number of suggestions which were made about the security situation Sir William Niell said that new arrangements were likely to be introduced replacing the Joint Security Committee which would provide a forum for official discussion. It was agreed that ideas could be fed into this forum from the Future Policy Group where appropriate.

FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF "OPTIONS FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT"

4. Sir William Nield said that he hoped it would be possible to prepare a paper by the weekend which would set out the current thinking of heads of Northern Ireland departments on the options open for a political settlement in Northern Ireland.

5. Mr Holden said that Permanent Secretaries had had a further discussion on this important topic which could form the basis of at least a preliminary paper. Mr Holden said that Permanent Secretaries were agreed that Northern Ireland as an independent State and early reunification of Ireland should not be regarded as serious options at this point in time. The options open therefore could effectively be divided into "integration solutions" and "devolutionary solutions". Mr Holden then summarised the different approaches and the views of Permanent Secretaries on them.

6. It was agreed that Mr Holden's summary, subject to a number of minor points largely of clarification, should be used as the basis for the proposed paper giving the views of heads of Northern Ireland departments on the options open for a political settlement in Northern Ireland.

J B McALLISTER

1 June 1972