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NOTE OF IPCC MEETING HELD IN STORMONT CASTLE ON 2 APRIL 1975

Present: Mr Cudlipp - NIO
Mr Roberts - NIO
Mr Gilliland - NIO
Mr Webster - NIO
Mr Montgomery - Central Secretariat
Mr Newman - RUC
Brigadier Campbell - HQNI
Mr McDine - HQNI
Mr Hill - NIO

1. The Committee took note of the report of the Sub-Committee on the Educational Information Programme.
2. The Committee then discussed what information policy should consist of in a ceasefire situation; Mr Cudlipp pointed out that while the battle was going on roles were clearly defined whilst the present delicate situation was one in which there was a danger of over-caution and resulting inaction.
3. Mr McDine said that the Army felt that opportunities were being missed by all to score points; PIRA had made propaganda capital out of the Ross Street shooting while the blowing up of the UDR landrover, admitted by PIRA, had not been publicised. PIRA were also denigrating the Convention without being countered. One result was that Army morale was suffering.
4. Mr Cudlipp pointed out that it was difficult, constitutionally, for NIO to comment on the Convention and that it was only possible to leak Government views - for example on the Provisionals' refusal to stand - in the most discreet fashion. Furthermore we were constrained in that, unlike Provisional Sinn Fein, our information had to be exact.
5. Brigadier Campbell commented that the reports made every day by COs in Northern Ireland contained useful factual information of which more use could be made. Was it Government policy at present to lie low?
6. Mr Cudlipp replied that this was the case. The Secretary of State had not spoken on TV or radio since the autumn and had only made statements in Parliament, in order both to preserve his impact and not to confuse a delicate situation. It was unfortunate that Ulster interviewers were of poor quality which led to NI elected representatives being uncritically interviewed.
7. Mr Gilliland was of the opinion that there was more interest in politics than previously. The Incident Centres had provoked great interest, although this was now declining.

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8. Mr Newman stated that the RUC were following the NIO policy of keeping a low profile. Statements were made on normal police work but no attempts were made, for example, to counter the allegations of Father Faul.
9. Mr Roberts suggested that the impact of statements on security matters was increased if they were made weekly after the Security Review Meeting.
10. Mr McDine suggested that the police successes of the day be phoned through to the HQNI Duty Watch Keeper who in turn telephoned through an account of the previous day's events to the BBC. It was this account that set the tone of the day. He continued that if there was another incident for which PIRA claimed responsibility we should exploit it and warn PIRA that they were endangering the ceasefire.
11. Mr Cudlipp commented that in doing this one must be extremely careful; although it was tedious one must consult; it was better to be late and right than early and wrong.
12. Mr Webster put forward the view that the stress should be away from security matters and rather on the benefits of peace. This was the best form of anti-IRA propaganda in the present circumstances.
13. Mr Roberts thought that people in the troubled areas knew the PIRA for what they were and now had little sympathy but were still very wary.
14. Brigadier Campbell thought that ~~some use could be made of material from intelligence sources as dirty propaganda.~~ *see correction in number of weekly held on 7 April 1975*
15. Mr Gilliland suggested that the NIO and the Army write down their ideas on ceasefire strategy for use at the next meeting, which was agreed. He also agreed to send Mr McDine a supply of leaflets on the Convention.
16. The next meeting was arranged for 12 pm on Monday 7 April.

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