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HONIP(69) 12

COPY NO. 3123rd July 1969NORTHERN IRELAND: POLITICAL SUMMARY FOR THE PERIOD  
15TH-22ND JULY 1969Memorandum by the Home OfficeIncidents in Northern Ireland

1. Violence was resumed in Londonderry on Monday night, 14th July, but was on a less serious scale than during the previous weekend. There was also some rioting in Belfast during the nights of 14th and 15th July. Since then the situation has been tense and crowds have gathered from time to time, but there have been no serious incidents.
2. The funeral of Mr. Francis McCloskey took place in Dungiven on 18th July, and of Mr. Sam Devenny in Londonderry on 20th July. Both attracted large crowds but passed without incident (estimates of the crowd at Mr. Devenny's funeral vary between 15,000 and 30,000). Mr. McCloskey died from injuries received during the disturbances at the weekend; allegations that he had been beaten by the police are being investigated. At his funeral the Roman Catholic priest appealed for "peace and cool heads". Mr. Devenny had alleged that the police had broken into his house during the disturbances in April and that he and his family had been attacked; he had claimed compensation from the Northern Ireland Government and investigations were proceeding. The cause of his death is reported to have been a coronary thrombosis. His widow has said that she hopes his death will not be the cause of any further violence. Inquests are being held into the deaths of both men, but are not complete.
3. Three Roman Catholic families have left their houses in a predominantly Protestant area of Belfast because of threats that they would be burned down. One of the houses was in fact damaged by fire early on 19th July. The three families are "squatting" in a building owned by Belfast Corporation and used for school meals. A Protestant family is "squatting" in an empty house in Londonderry for fear of attacks by Roman Catholics.
4. Members of People's Democracy held a peaceful "sit-in" in the council offices in Armagh on 16th July. They were again protesting against the exclusion of the public from meetings of the council.
5. A petrol bomb is thought to have started a fire in the house of Mr. William Craig, former Minister of Home Affairs, on 17th July. Mr. Craig and his family were on holiday.
6. A man was shot in the street at Culladuff, County Londonderry, on 20th July while guarding Roman Catholic property in the village. The incident is not however regarded as having any political or sectarian significance. Later on the same day stones were thrown at the police in Dungiven and three arrests were made, but no-one was hurt.

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7. The Civil Rights Association cancelled the demonstrations which were to have taken place in Fermanagh on 19th July (paragraph 4 of HONIP(69) 9) for fear that they would lead to further violence.

Demonstrations in London

8. In London, a "sit-in" took place at the Ulster Office on 17th July: the issues were said to be the use of Special Constables, the publication of the Baillie report (paragraph 9 of HONIP(69) 2) and the need for a public inquiry into Mr. McCloskey's death. The "sit-in" passed peacefully and reports of a petrol bomb incident were mistaken.

9. On 20th July the Irish Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign organised a rally in Hyde Park which was followed by a march to the Ulster Office. About 400 people took part, including anarchists, International Socialists and representatives of various Irish groups. The main purpose was evidently to make Northern Ireland a live political issue in Great Britain. There was no violence.

Reactions to Riots on 12th to 14th July

10. The riots during the weekend 12th to 14th July have been condemned by responsible leaders on all sides. Roman Catholic priests have been firm in warning their followers not to take part; the hierarchy has been less forthright but the Bishop of Londonderry, Dr. Farren, has expressed the hope that every effort will be made to restore peace and maintain it. Amongst Opposition members at Stormont, Mr. John Hume (Independent member for the Foyle Division of Londonderry) has proposed a "citizens' council" for Londonderry and Mr. Ivan Cooper (Independent member for mid-Londonderry) has said "There will have to be a purge in the civil rights movement. Anyone who believes in violence will have to get out". Mr. Eddie McAteer, leader of the Nationalist party in Londonderry and formerly a member at Stormont, has called for a "cease-fire" and a separate police force for Londonderry. The Minister of Commerce, Mr. Bradford, has expressed concern about the effect of the disturbances on the economic development of Londonderry.

11. The Chairman of the Londonderry Development Commission has claimed that the cost of the damage during the weekend was greater than the cost of all the previous demonstrations since the present civil rights campaign started in October 1968. Claims for damage from previous demonstrations amounted to £137,000. He said that the Northern Ireland Government would meet 50 per cent of all claims in respect of damage to property and 100 per cent of those in respect of personal injury. The Commission is arranging a series of meetings to discuss ways of avoiding similar riots in future.

12. The Waterside Young Unionist Association in Londonderry has attacked the civil rights movement in general, and Mr. Hume in particular, for the example and encouragement they are said to have given to the Roman Catholics since October 1968; the Association has asked the Minister of Home Affairs to station troops on the border with the Republic because they believe the rioters to be receiving assistance from the Republic.

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13. The Civil Rights Association have said that "neither Stormont nor Westminster are aware of the present crisis existing in Northern Ireland.....it arises from the failure of the Unionist Government to recognise grievances and act quickly enough to grant full reform.....all should recognise the fundamental economic basis to the disturbances in Derry.....". A statement by the People's Democracy has given social and political conditions as the cause of the disturbances. "Riots in Ulster, like the riots in America, are the product of frustration and miserable living conditions and a Government, police force and State which the rioters see as openly and aggressively against them..... The Civil Rights Movement raised hopes.....but there has been no real change in their conditions".

#### Plans to Prevent Future Violence

14. There are fears that violence may return to Londonderry on 12th August, if not before, when the Apprentice Boys of Londonderry<sup>(1)</sup> hold their annual celebrations to commemorate the relief of Londonderry in 1689. A meeting was held in Londonderry on 19th July at which representatives of a wide range of organisations (including both Protestants and Roman Catholics) met to consider action which might be taken to prevent further violence. They proposed excursions to the seaside during periods of likely tension; more contact between the Development Commission and young people; publication of the Baillie report; the closing of public-houses on 12th August; joint meetings of Protestant and Roman Catholic tenant and youth associations; integrated Protestant and Roman Catholic clubs; and an appeal to the Apprentice Boys to help avoid trouble on 12th August.

15. Plans are being made to stage a series of "pop" concerts in Belfast and elsewhere to cool tempers and keep young people off the streets during the summer. The idea came from Mr. Patrick Devlin (Labour member for the Falls Division of Belfast) and a Roman Catholic Priest, Father Tony Marcellus. A committee has been formed which includes representatives of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Churches and Unionist and Opposition members at Stormont.

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(1) The Apprentice Boys are a Protestant organisation similar to the Orange Order. They are named after the thirteen apprentice boys who locked the gates of Londonderry against the Earl of Antrim in 1688 and so began the siege.

**CONFIDENTIAL**The Special Constabulary

16. The only specific criticism which has been made of the Northern Ireland Government in relation to the most recent disturbances has been in the use of Special Constables. As usual, it has been argued that they are a sectarian and prejudiced force. Since 5th October about 250 Special Constables have been called up for full time duty and have been used mainly to relieve the regular police in routine work, although some had to be used in connection with the riots in Londonderry and Dungiven on 12th and 13th July. On 14th July the Minister of Home Affairs, Mr. Porter, announced:-

"In view of the serious nature of the occurrences of the last 48 hours - occurrences which have stretched the resources of the Royal Ulster Constabulary to the limit - I have decided after consultation with the Inspector General, to strengthen the police force without delay. This will be done immediately by alerting stand-by parties of members of the Ulster Special Constabulary, who will be equipped only with batons."

17. The decision means in practice that when a serious situation can be foreseen in their areas, County Inspectors of the Royal Ulster Constabulary will have authority to approach their opposite numbers in the Ulster Special Constabulary who will immediately assemble 40 or 50 special constables for standby duty. These men will be equipped with truncheons and will be used to assist the Royal Ulster Constabulary under the orders and control of the regular police. It is not intended that they should carry arms, and the latest decision does not involve "mobilising" the Special Constabulary for whole-time duty. Officers of the Special Constabulary will be armed with revolvers as usual.

Visit to Londonderry by the Minister of Development

18. The Minister of Development (Mr. Brian Faulkner) visited Londonderry on 22nd July for the opening of the new factory of the West German Arntz Belting Company. He said that the future of the people of Londonderry was largely in their own hands, and described the Government's own plans and achievements for the city. They included the negotiation of 4,500 new jobs in manufacturing industry since 1966, a target of 12,000 new jobs and 9,600 new houses by 1981, and the rebuilding of much of the existing city centre. Capital investment will be £110 million, three-quarters of it in the public sector. The new factory for the Arntz Belting Company will provide about 130 new jobs.

Meetings with Lord Stonham

19. Mr. John Hume and Miss Bernadette Devlin, M.P., saw Lord Stonham in London on 22nd July. The meetings took place separately and at their request; both wished to explain to the United Kingdom Minister the situation in Londonderry as they saw it.

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20. Mr. Hume said that he was extremely anxious about the conditions which might develop on 12th August, when 20,000 Orangemen were threatening to descend on Londonderry to join the Apprentice Boys in their celebration and present a show of Protestant force. He expressed concern about the policing of the city, stating that the Roman Catholic population had no respect for and indeed hated both the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Special Constabulary, and he said that the unemployment and poor housing were at the root of the recent disturbances. The situation could be transformed if between 2,000 and 3,000 jobs could rapidly be created. He suggested the presence of independent observers and a visit to Londonderry by the United Kingdom Prime Minister or Home Secretary.

21. Miss Devlin took the same view of the policing of the city and of the causes of the disturbances. She also said that any use of troops to control riots would be extremely unpopular, and that the population feared the imposition of a curfew enforced by the military.

#### The Civil Rights Movement

22. A meeting of the Executive Council of the Civil Rights Association was held in Lurgan on 20th July. It proposed:--

- (a) the formation of voluntary committees which could move into troubled areas and bring to bear the forces of logic and reason;
- (b) a summer session of the Northern Ireland Parliament to consider the situation in general and a crash programme of housing in particular;
- (c) the diversion of money and resources from the new town at Craigavon to the depressed areas (Londonderry, Strabane, Newry and west of the Bann as a whole), together with additional funds provided from Westminster; and
- (d) publication of the Baillie report before 12th August.

The demonstration which was planned to take place in Belfast on 9th August has been postponed until 6th September; further meetings are to be held to discuss demonstrations in Fermanagh and Armagh (where a demonstration has been planned for 26th July), and a march from Coalisland to Dungannon. The principle of marches in the summer was reaffirmed, but local groups will be left "to decide the local temperature and fix dates".

23. Seven members of the Civil Rights Association in Armagh resigned on 21st July following a disagreement with the People's Democracy over the organisation of the proposed civil rights demonstration. They could not accept the political objectives of the People's Democracy and claimed that it would "ultimately destroy the civil rights movement". A member of the People's Democracy described their resignations as a "Hibernian tactic" and criticised the Civil Rights Association for inactivity.

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24. In London, the Irish Civil Rights Solidarity Campaign is planning a national "day of action" to take place in the autumn and to include strikes by Irish workers in Great Britain and the United States and a mass demonstration. Miss Bernadette Devlin, M.P., the president of the Campaign intends to extend its activities to Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Oxford and to call a conference to elect a steering committee of representatives of all organisations and individuals willing to participate. A march from Runnymede to Trafalgar Square is planned for 6th to 7th September, and other meetings are to be held between August and October.

#### The Rev. Ian Paisley

25. Mr. Paisley has postponed until 16th August his proposed march through Newry. The Newry Urban District Council has decided to ask the Ministry of Home Affairs to ban the march, and to ask Protestant and Roman Catholic leaders to co-operate in helping to prevent incidents which might arise from it. (Newry is one of the few local authorities which has a majority of Roman Catholic members).

#### Reaction in the Irish Republic

26. Answering questions in the Dail, the Taoiseach, Mr Lynch, has said that the use of Special Constables might add to the troubles of Northern Ireland. He rejected suggestions that he should seek an immediate meeting with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom or of Northern Ireland, saying that he wanted to make sure that any action would not add to the troubles. Irish newspapers regard the disturbances as straight-forward hooliganism, with little or no political significance, but also criticise the use of Special Constables.

#### The Labour Party in Great Britain

27. A resolution tabled for the Labour Party Conference in Brighton on 29th September to 3rd October demands the withdrawal of all troops from Northern Ireland, an "all-embracing struggle against Toryism, both Orange and Green", and the use of party resources to aid the civil rights movement and to work "for a united front of all Ireland". Other resolutions call for the repeal of the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Acts and an end to gerrymandering and discrimination, if necessary through the use of the powers of the United Kingdom Government under the Government of Ireland Act 1920.

#### General

28. Most thoughtful comment on the most recent disturbances has regarded the ultimate cause as the chronic unemployment in Londonderry and the bitterness and frustration to which it leads. Traditional sectarian and political differences are recognised as relevant to the form which the disturbances took, but only to the extent of providing a natural and well-remembered channel. The Situation is disturbing to the extent that no complete or permanent solution is likely to be found until the unemployment

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has been relieved: this must inevitably take a number of years, and violence must be expected to break out periodically in the meantime. The situation is encouraging to the extent that the issues are not seen as the legitimate political grievances of a minority against a repressive government. Whatever such grievances there may have been in the past, the Northern Ireland Government is now for the first time firmly committed to their removal. This fact is recognised by moderate opinion on all sides, and moderate leaders of all groups are showing an increasing readiness to join together in preventing the kind of violence which Londonderry and other towns have just experienced. Whether the more extreme factions will also co-operate remains to be seen, and neither the People's Democracy nor Mr. Paisley have so far committed themselves. Both have shown unfortunate signs of militancy during recent weeks, but there are grounds for hope that, if they do resort to organised violence in the present climate, they will become increasingly isolated and that the ordinary forces of law and order will more easily be able to contain them. A critical time will be the anniversary of the relief of Londonderry and much will depend on whether the militant Protestants do in fact make it the occasion for a show of force.

Home Office  
S.W.1.

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