

NOTE FOR THE RECORDNORTHERN IRELAND DEFENCE FORCE - WHITE PAPER

1. After discussion with copy addressees of the proposals for amendment of the draft White Paper contained in Northern Ireland signal 031530Z November, Minister(A) spoke to the Northern Ireland Minister of Home Affairs (Mr. Porter) at 10.30 this morning. The points made in the discussion were as follows:

Title of Force

2. Mr. Porter said that the Northern Ireland Government greatly preferred the title "Ulster Defence Force". This would not inhibit reasonable Catholics from joining, whereas the use of "Northern Ireland" in the title would be likely to lead to difficulty. Some people who wanted to make trouble would complain of a "sell out". It was possible that the use of "Northern Ireland" would put off members of the USC who already felt that they were being made political scapegoats. Minister(A) undertook to report these views to his colleagues.

Para 5

3. In the first sentence, Mr. Porter asked that the word "armed" should be deleted from the phrase "armed attack and sabotage". His thought here was that inclusion of the word "armed" could prove restrictive in some way that could not at present be foreseen. Minister(A) said that he would ensure that Parliamentary draftsmen would consider this point carefully in relation to the Bill, but obtained Mr. Porter's assent to leaving the White Paper unaltered in this respect.

4. Mr. Porter asked that the last sentence (it is not the intention to employ the new force upon crowd control or riot duties in cities) should be deleted for presentational reasons. The USC were greatly maligned, and the inclusion of this sentence would rub this in. Further, looking to the future, he envisaged that use of the force for such purposes might be desirable and indeed acceptable if the force was more representative. Minister(A) undertook to consider whether the position might not be improved presentationally by dealing with the functions that the new force would and would not have in paragraph 2 of the White Paper.

5. Mr. Porter suggested that provision should be made for use of the force in aid of the civil power. Minister(A) said that he imagined that it would automatically have a common law obligation to do this, and Mr. Porter said that on this understanding he was content.

Para 6

6. Mr. Porter suggested that we should not place a ceiling on the size of the force, but should say that it would be in the region of 6,000. This would allow flexibility for the future, bearing in mind the possibility that we might need rather more than 6,000. He was quite optimistic about the prospects for recruitment bearing in mind that many would transfer straight from the USC, the hope that

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numbers of responsible Catholics would join, and the likelihood that many ex-members of the TA would wish to do so. Minister(A) pointed out that the larger the force appeared to be, the greater would be the fear that its function might be expanded into the civil field. Nonetheless, he undertook to report Mr. Porter's view.

Para 7

7. In the interests of greater flexibility, Minister(A) agreed to recommend that the passage "and companies will recruit administrative personnel locally" should be amended to read "and administrative personnel will be recruited locally".

Para 8

8. Minister(A) accepted that the re-wording suggested by the Northern Ireland Government was presentationally an improvement. He proposed, however, two amendments:

Sub-para a.

The passage "and would in practice act in consultation with the Security Committee presided over by the Minister of Home Affairs" was misleading in its implication that the Secretary of State would do this. Mr. Porter took this point readily but asked nonetheless that for presentational reasons the point about consultation should be repeated in this paragraph. Minister(A) undertook to consider how this might be done.

Sub-para b.

The phrase "or sabotage" should be deleted from the second sub-paragraph, as this had been lifted from the Army Reserve Act. Mr. Porter assented.

Para 10

9. Mr. Porter asked that the phrase "without discrimination" should be deleted, as its inclusion implied that the Government of Northern Ireland had practised discrimination in the past. Minister(A) attached considerable importance to including the point, and to assuage the doubts of those who did indeed feel that this had been the case, but agreed to report Mr. Porter's view.

10. Mr. Porter asked that the phrase "of good character" should be inserted after "all male citizens of the United Kingdom". Minister(A) agreed to recommend this.

11. Mr. Porter argued the importance of security vetting, and warned of the danger that "fifth columnists" would otherwise join. Several persons of doubtful acceptability had already indicated they wanted to do so. After discussion, Minister(A) agreed to recommend that the penultimate sentence should read "acceptance of recruits will be subject to strict security vetting".

/Para 12 .....

Para 12

12. Minister(A) accepted Mr. Porter's suggestion that the words "recruited or" should be inserted before "allowed to serve beyond the age of 55".

Para 14

13. Minister(A) accepted Mr. Porter's recommendation that the word "exceptional" should be replaced by "certain".

Para 15

14. Mr. Porter raised a number of points about the training obligation:

- a. Many potential recruits, e.g. small farmers, would be ready to accept full time service in an emergency but would be reluctant to accept a liability for several consecutive days training. Minister(A) said that he would draw the attention of his colleagues to the likelihood that this requirement would affect recruiting, but pointed out the need - which Mr. Porter personally accepted - for training in camp.
- b. The White Paper ought to make clear, consistently with the Bill, that no more than 8 days training would be consecutive; and it would be helpful if "8" could be reduced to "7" to avoid breaking into a second week. On the latter point, Minister(A) explained that "8 days" meant Saturday to Saturday; on the former he undertook to clarify the wording of the White Paper so that it would reflect our actual intentions.

15. Minister(A) emphasised that the entire training obligation had already been reduced to less than the amount that military advisers had recommended, and made the further point that the justification for a bounty must depend on liability for a week's training in camp.

Other points

16. Mr. Porter asked that figures should not be published for the target strengths for the various battalions of the new force. This would draw attention to the areas that we regarded as being at risk, and failure to meet such targets would cause concern locally. Minister(A) undertook that no such figures would be made public.

17. Mr. Porter asked that the Northern Ireland Government should be consulted if any difficulty arose over recruiting. Minister(A) replied that we would expect to consult the Northern Ireland Government on recruiting throughout.

*Chiffen*

PS/Minister(A)  
4th November, 1969

/P.S. ....

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P.S. Mr. Porter came on the phone again to me at 1 p.m. to refer again to the difficulty that would be caused to small farmers and owners of one-man businesses if we insisted on a week's camp. Although he could well see the military desirability of this, and accepted that it might be made obligatory in the longer term, he felt that it would be very helpful to recruitment if we could relax our requirement initially and give men the option of doing several weekends in lieu. He claimed that General Dyball had told him that this would be an acceptable alternative from the military point of view. I have asked AUS(GS) to pursue this point.

P.P.S. Mr. Porter came on again to me at 3.45 to say that as an alternative title they would be quite happy with "Ulster Defence Regiment". I took note. (I understand that the paper considered by the Army Board on 27th October included "Ulster Defence Regiment" as its third choice in order of preference but that this was dropped during discussion although without detailed discussion of the point).

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