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OFFICE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE IN NORTHERN IRELAND,

Conway Hotel,
Dunmurry,
Belfast.

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25 September, 1969

Londonderry

I spent yesterday in Londonderry, which I had not visited since I accompanied the Home Secretary there at the end of August. Meanwhile all our attention has been concentrated on the Belfast barricades and on the reform programme, so we had tended to put Londonderry on one side. Now that Belfast seems, temporarily at any rate, to be on an even keel, I thought I had better find out what was going on in the Bogside. I went; saw the Army Commander; had lunch with the Londonderry Commissioners; called on Mr. Eddie McAteer; and had tea with Mr. John Hume M.P. I didn't see Commander Anderson, Unionist M.P. for the City of Londonderry, as he was in Belfast for Chichester-Clark's meeting with his backbenchers.

2. Londonderry presents a different problem from Belfast, at one and the same time less serious but possibly more difficult. It is less serious because the atmosphere is much better. Derry is a predominantly Catholic city and is generally regarded as being much less sectarian. The Londonderry City Council was one of the most terrible local governments in the land, but that blight has been removed with the formation of the Londonderry Development Commission. The Commission is clearly doing a good job and still retains the goodwill of all concerned, with the possible exception of the Unionist extremists.

3. It is also less serious because life is steadily returning to normal there. The 'bus services are running normally in the city, the tradesmen trade normally, traffic flows, the normal services are in operation. Men go to work, housewives shop, children attend school. The barricades are down and are replaced by a symbolic white line. Anyone can now go in to the Bogside except the police, military or civilian. As Brigadier Leng told me, there is peace in Derry, but no law and order.

4. This, paradoxically, makes it more difficult to restore law and order to Derry. In Belfast, we were able to get the Army in and the barricades down by offering those behind the barricades security instead of fear. In Londonderry, there is no fear worth talking about and therefore nothing we can offer in order to get the forces of law and order in by consent. Free Derry is in a sort of limbo.

5. This could be very worrying if the Protestants were ever to get around to working up an anger about it. So far, however, they have been occupied with other things. In any case, as seen from Belfast, Londonderry is very much at the end of the line, is Catholic territory anyway and so can be left to stew in its own juice. The Army has nothing to offer that the citizens

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of Free Derry want, and cannot negotiate about their political demands. But many of their political demands are going to be met in any case in course of time, when the Hunt Committee's proposals for the police are put into effect and when the reforms go through Stormont.

6. Perhaps the best thing we can hope, for the moment, is that people will continue to forget about Derry and be content to leave it in limbo. But it is a very keep-your-fingers-crossed situation.

7. I am recording separately my talks with Eddie McAteer and John Hume. The important points which I think the Department ought to hoist on board from these talks are :-

*see file
for reply from
Waddell*

- a) We ought to look very carefully at the Northern Ireland Government's proposed legislation on local government reform. This, according to John Hume, is a most ghastly gerrymander : if this is so, we can hardly allow it to go through in its present form, I should have thought, now that we have involved ourselves more closely in Northern Ireland affairs.
- b) Something really will have to be done about Londonderry's unemployment problem. Derry is pretty sore about the second university going to Coleraine : perhaps there is something in an idea John Hume put to me of a "double campus" with certain departments centering on Magee University College. If Roger Lavelle's team have received no ideas on Londonderry from their Ulster oppos, they ought perhaps to goad them into some thinking.
- c) A more general point. It is interesting that in all the recent schemozzle, there has been almost no call at all for a united Ireland. Indded. the two main chaps I called on symbolised this fact. Hohn Hume beat Eddie McAteer, the venerable Irish nationalist, on a straight civil rights ticket. I think this point has its bearing on any dialogue we may decide to start with Dublin.

(Oliver Wright)

cc. Sir E. Peck
Sir A. Gilchrist

P.S. No sooner had I dictated the above than Derry had a riot and a man was killed. First reports suggest that it was pure hooliganism and all very unfortunate. The consequences will be determined by what the Protestant extremists intend to make of it. I see that Paisley has already telegraphed the Home Secretary. It will of course have added to the Prime Minister's difficulties at his Party meeting tomorrow and provided excellent fodder for Craig's meeting on Saturday and Paisley's lobbying of Stormont. It has put the lights back to amber when they were thinking of changing to green.

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RECORD OF CONVERSATION WITH COMMANDER A. W. ANDERSON,
Member of Parliament for City of Londonderry

I had missed Commander Anderson on my visit to Derry on 24 September as he had been in Belfast for a meeting of the Unionist Parliamentary Party with the Prime Minister. On my return to Belfast, I got in touch with him again as a matter of civility, and he came to see me this afternoon fresh from a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Party. He stayed for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

2. Commander Anderson, who had been extremely discourteous to the GOC the previous day, was in a fairly subdued mood and argued rationally, although the cloven hoof showed through from time to time. For the most part he took the Protestant die-hard line, which I need scarcely record. But he made the following interesting points.

- a) The meeting of the Standing Committee of the Unionist Party had given Major Chichester-Clark a vote of confidence by 200 votes to 2 that morning. Commander Anderson claimed a certain amount of credit for this result. But he went on to say that this did not mean that the Unionist Party was at all happy about the programme of reforms; on the contrary, a great number of his friends were very unhappy about them. But Ulstermen were curious people: they trusted James Chichester-Clark and therefore would do what he told them was necessary, however much they disliked it. The trouble with Terence O'Neill had been that nobody liked him and nobody trusted him; it was therefore beyond his power to do what Major Chichester-Clark was now doing (? a Kennedy / Johnson situation).
- b) Commander Anderson had to tell me frankly however that the same trust did not extend to Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. Ordinary Unionist Members like himself believed that HMG had put the screws on Major Chichester-Clark and had clearly told him that the alternatives were reforms or a takeover from Westminster. "Some of us", said Commander Anderson, "might even prefer that to happen. At least the reforms would not be on our responsibility."
- c) Although nobody whom I spoke to in Derry on the eve of the latest riots expected them to happen, Commander Anderson told me that he had foreseen this trouble all along. The lawless situation in the Bogside was intolerable to all decent Protestants. It was insufferable that the Catholic minority should openly offer no allegiance to the State, but in fact derive every advantage from the State in the way of social security benefits, etc., while
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at the same time openly defying the forces of law and order of the State. He implied that if the Army did not swiftly restore law and order to the Bogside, "his people" might be forced to do so.

3. Since Commander Anderson and the views he represents have clearly been defeated in the Unionist Party, to judge by the vote, I thought it best to give him therapeutic treatment and let him talk himself out. I consistently said that whatever were the rights and wrongs of the past, the present and future were what mattered and in this, Westminster and Stormont were in harmony as to what needed to be done. I could assure him that to take over the government of Northern Ireland by direct rule was the last thing that the Home Secretary wanted. We wished to have good relations with the Northern Ireland Government; we believed we had worked out in collaboration with the Northern Ireland Government a programme of necessary reforms to redress undoubted grievances, and we hoped that these reforms would be carried by the Stormont Parliament. It was my business to try and ensure that Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Northern Ireland Government stayed on the same wavelength. I believed that they did see eye-to-eye at present and would continue to do so in the future.

4. On the question of law and order, I said that I did not approve of the lawlessness of the Bogside any more than he did. But I would approve even less of a Protestant lawlessness trying to restore order to a lawless Bogside. What we were trying to do in Ulster was to see that British standards and values prevailed here as they did in other parts of the United Kingdom. That, I assumed, was what Commander Anderson meant when he spoke of his loyalty to Britain. I was sure that together the two Governments could make sense and good order prevail, but it would need the support of all influential figures in public life if we were to succeed.

5. My own view is that Commander Anderson and his fellow extremists have sensed that things are no longer going their way and indeed that, in political terms, they have been defeated. This makes it all the more important to solve the law and order problem, for the Protestant extremists will do all they can to make a meal of this in order to delay or prevent reforms.

(J. O. Wright)

OFFICE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE
IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

26th September, 1969.

cc. Mr. J. Waddell; Sir E. Peck.

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I called on Mr. John Hume, Independent Stormont M.P. for Foyle, at his hotel in Londonderry this afternoon and stayed for an hour.

2. In answer to my enquiry as to how he saw things in Derry at the moment, Mr. Hume said that, for the most part, things had already returned to normal; people were going about their business in a fairly relaxed way and he hoped that things would stay like that. I said that everything was normal, except that there was no law and order. Mr. Hume said that this was the point that worried him. He was certain that the people in the Bogside would have absolutely nothing more to do with the R.U.C. or the U.S.C. He hoped that when Hunt reported, the police would have a new name, a new uniform, a new leadership, a new function, a new body to be responsible to, and would be disarmed. I said he might well get most of the substance of what he wanted, but in return he might have to concede some of the shadow, like the name 'Royal Ulster Constabulary'. In the meantime, he said, what he would like would be some London bobbies to police the Bogside. He said he had been in touch with the Home Secretary about this, but understood that there were legislative difficulties. He was quite certain that the people of the Bogside would accept London police. I asked why, if that were so, they would not accept the military police. He said this was because the military police could only hand over suspected offenders to the R.U.C. for prosecution. If bobbies took over the whole business, they would also be responsible for preferring charges, etc. (I might interject here that of the people I spoke to, Brigadier Leng and Mr. Hume were in favour of London bobbies; Mr. McAteer and the Londonderry Development Commission thought that a reformed R.U.C. would do.)

3. Turning to other matters, Mr. Hume said that something would really have to be done about the proposed local government reform. It was true that Mr. Faulkner had offered an independent enquiry into the ward boundaries; but the important thing was the outside boundaries. Mr. Faulkner had indeed offered discussion, but it would really have to be meaningful discussion. At the moment the local boundaries were a complete gerrymander; they were so drawn up as to give the Unionists the maximum and the Opposition the minimum.

4. The other major problem for the future, as he saw it, was employment. He had three main suggestions to make. First, he wondered whether State industries could not be established in the Londonderry area. The shutting-down of the BSR subsidiary had thrown 1,500 people out of work, but they were the sort of people who were familiar with light electrical work. Could not, for example, the Post Office set up a factory to manufacture some of their needs. His second suggestion was that Magee should be the centre of a second campus for Coleraine University; it was monstrous that Coleraine, that had no employment problems, should get the new university and should have to start from scratch there; whereas Londonderry, which had a basis in Magee College and a tremendous unemployment problem, should have got nothing. He said every student provided employment for 1.2 persons. He also suggested that the Londonderry retraining centre, which was very good, should have its functions changed. At the moment they put people through a three-month course of re-training, but then there was no work for them when they came out. What was wanted was a much longer course to produce skilled men who would be acceptable to the trades unions for employment anywhere.

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5. We then talked about broader issues and relations with the South. Mr. Hume said that he had good relations with the Dublin Government; he had been in Dublin the week before and hinted, without specifically saying so, that he might have had some influence on the moderateness of Mr. Lynch's speech at Tralee. He for his part was convinced that there was no demand at the moment for the reunification of Ireland and the least said about that, the soonest mended. That was not to say that nothing could be done to improve relations. The first thing he would like to see was the Dublin Government becoming better informed about affairs in Northern Ireland. For this, they needed permanent representation in Northern Ireland. I said that if this meant the appointment of an Irish consul in Belfast, that was getting very close to recognition; and what happened to the ^{consistency} situation of the Republic of Ireland then? Mr. Hume replied that in conceding that there could be no reunification except by consent, the Dublin Government were getting very close to recognition. Another helpful gesture might be if the Cardinal would appoint a chaplain to Strensall.

6. Mr. Hume asked when Mr. Callaghan was returning to Northern Ireland and whether he would be coming to Derry. I said that on present plans, the Home Secretary expected to be here during the second week in October. Would Mr. Hume advise a visit to Derry. Mr. Hume said that if Mr. Callaghan were to come to Derry to talk to the elected political representatives of the people, the answer would be 'yes'; but if it were to visit the streets again, his answer would be 'no'. The way to stop the politics of the streets was to strengthen politics by dealing with the elected representatives.

(Oliver Wright)

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RECORD OF CONVERSATION WITH MR. EDDIE McATEER

I called on Mr. Eddie McAteer this afternoon at his home in Londonderry.

It is difficult to have with Mr. McAteer the sort of conversation that can be recorded verbatim, so I will merely record the main points of an hour's conversation.

1. He wondered what sort of madness had got into Stormont's head to allow the police to issue writs against Bernadette Devlin. He said that "the girl was a bloody menace" and should be forgotten, not brought into prominence; thank goodness she wasn't at home; if she had been and the police had arrested her, the barricades would have been up in the Bogside again and wouldn't have come down for a long time. I assured Mr. McAteer that no-one in any authority at Stormont had known of the intention to serve the writs; if this proved the stupidity of the people we had to deal with, it also demonstrated that they did not act with malice aforethought.
2. He found the present mood in the Bogside difficult to gauge. The proposed reforms were more or less irrelevant; everybody assumed they would come and since they had been won by their own efforts, were not disposed to be grateful for them.
3. The nub of the matter was the police. It was absolutely essential that the Hunt Committee should produce the right answer for the future of the ordinary police and of the B Specials. After some allusive conversation, I got the impression that what was likely to come out of Hunt might well be tolerably acceptable to Mr. McAteer.
4. Mr. McAteer seemed to have a sort of fixation on Brian Faulkner. He expressed considerable respect for his abilities as a politician and seemed to indicate that it might be a very good thing for Ulster if Mr. Faulkner were to take over the leadership of the Unionist Party. He thought that Mr. Faulkner seemed now to be committed to reforms and, if that were so, might have a greater interest in getting them through.
5. He was urging the six Nationalist Stormont M.P.s in his own party to return to Stormont on 30 September and take part in the normal process of government. He expected that they would do so.
6. He thought that there was little point at the moment in trying anything

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in an all-Ireland context. "We don't want any spectacles across the border", he said, although there might be no harm if Brian Faulkner went to Dublin to talk about shirts.

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