

1. M² Tuzo
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Mr. Tuzo

Mr. Wood

Sir P. Allen to see.

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Representative in Northern Ireland
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30 December 1971

P J Woodfield Esq CBE
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Dear Philip

I think you will be interested to see the enclosed copy of a paper written by Frank Kitson. It was mentioned at my last working lunch with Harry Tuzo and Robert Ford, and Ford has now sent me a copy on a personal basis. I should be grateful if you would restrict it to the Department.

The main interest of the paper is that it shows how the man on the ground is feeling the lack of policy guidance on matters going wider than the redevelopment of Belfast (a subject on which I am trying to bring myself up-to-date): "... unless some general policy guidance is given on the long term situation our operations are very likely to seriously prejudice the future." You will also see that the first paragraph expresses a cautious view about prospects of success in dealing with the IRA. JIC (A)(71) 56 of 20 December on the current state of the IRA suggests that we have a long way to go on that front; I find the picture it presents a pretty gloomy one, and I shall probably be writing separately about that.

Yours ever

Howard

(Howard Smith)

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FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN BELFAST : BY COMMANDER 39 AIRPORTABLE BRIGADE

Introduction

1. Operations In Belfast since 9 August have been carried out on the basis of so weakening the IRA that a future political initiative can be launched under favourable circumstances. Despite the clumsiness of the Security Force machine good progress was made in September, October and November, largely because both wings of the IRA were also clumsy, and indeed much too big for the purpose for which they were designed to fulfill. It is likely that having fined down the enemy organizations to the extent that we have done, future successes will be increasingly hard to achieve from an operational point of view, unless we are able to make our own organization very much more efficient. As you know we are taking steps to do this in terms of building up and developing the MRF and we are also steadily improving the capability of Special Branch by setting up cells in each Division manned by MIO/PTINCOs and by building up Special Branch's records with Int Corps Sections.
2. At the same time, as has been said on several occasions, the present favourable situation with regard to the attitude of the public towards our activities is not likely to continue for long in the New Year unless we take steps to show that we have some constructive suggestions to put forward in addition to making searches and arrests. To this end we are making re-newed efforts in the fields of Community Relations and in the separate sphere of Area Rehabilitation. But in both cases we are handicapped by lack of a government policy relating to the way in which the community in Belfast should develop. The purpose of this letter is to outline various possibilities and to elicit guidance.

The Basic Alternatives

3. In very general terms there are two ways in which the Belfast community can develop which could be described under the headings of Integrated or Segregated. Under the integrated system the aim would be to break down sectarian religious barriers and build up a way of life in which Protestants and Catholics lived together in integrated housing estates, and organized their political activities in relation to left and right as opposed to Catholic and Protestant. Under the segregated system the aim would be to develop both communities separately but fairly in which case politics would be polarized as at present, separate housing estates would be arranged for each community, Catholic police would work in Catholic areas either as a separate force to the police operating in the rest of the Province or as a separate branch of the main police force, and government would in effect be a federation of the leaders of each community. The Cyprus Zurich agreement of 1959 shows how such an arrangement might work in practice.
4. In both cases an ultimate union between the North and South of Ireland could be arranged if required although it would probably be easier for an integrated and reformed South to join an integrated and reformed North, than an integrated South tried to join a segregated North. However it could be argued that the machinery of segregation used in the North might act as a pattern for Protestant safeguards in a united Ireland.
5. Clearly recent statements by the SDLP including the oft repeated cry of "Catholic Participation as Of Right" indicate that they at least visualize some form of segregation. It is not at all clear where either the British Government or the Northern Ireland government stand. It is probable that either alternative could be made to work if pursued vigorously and equitably. The main danger at

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the moment lies in failing to make a decision and conducting our operations in such a way that we get forced into adopting one or other of the alternatives under unfavourable circumstances. Already we are having to make decisions in the field of housing and policing in a policy vacuum which could seriously inhibit our freedom of action in the future.

The Integrated Solution

6. Quite apart from the question of ultimate Irish unity, the advantages of the integrated solution are obvious: doubly so to anyone who has seen segregation worked out over a period of years as in Cyprus. For all the polarization of the past three years, Belfast is still essentially integrated but if it is intended to keep it that way urgent steps must be taken to prevent further segregation. These steps mainly concern the problem of making integration appear to be fair and would have to include the following:

a. Controlling segregationist bodies such as the Republican Movement and the Orange Order so that they were not able to exert direct pressure on political parties.

b. Making different arrangements for the policing of the existing Catholic areas so that an official police force moves in behind the army once the IRA is sufficiently weakened. At the moment there is every likelihood that a new vigilante system - possibly based on the Catholic Ex Servicemens Association - will try and fill the gap which would be unhelpful in the context of an integrated solution. In order to make the RUC acceptable to the extent where at least some Catholics would back it, would entail either divorcing that part of the organization which deals with subversion i.e. Special Branch from the RUC proper, or taking the whole of the RUC, together with responsibility for Security, away from Stormont and placing it under Westminster via the GOC. Of these two alternatives the first would be extremely difficult to arrange in practice but might just be possible if Special Branch was turned into a Security Service under the Director of Intelligence (thus ultimately responsible to London) and the rest of the RUC placed under a proper Police Authority. In either case a decision is required in the very near future.

c. Reverting fully to the allocation of housing in a non-sectarian basis. Since August it has been necessary to adjust allocations in various newly built parts of the city such as Suffolk to take account of the security situation but building is going ahead fast and whole new segregated areas will soon come into being unless the problem is tackled quickly in the light of a conscious choice of one of the ^{main} ~~many~~ alternatives.

7. There are many major difficulties in adopting the integrated solution, some of which, such as segregation of education, may take decades to overcome. On the other hand the opportunity to adjust the responsibility for security which now exists, is one which will diminish as every week goes by. Certainly if the matter is not tackled by the time the question of lifting the ban on marches becomes a live issue it may be too late and as a result the alternative of an integrated solution may disappear altogether.

The Segregated Solution

8. The segregated solution is attractive because it might in the short term appear very much easier to implement. If this course is to be adopted it would

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be necessary in very broad outline to take the following steps:

a. Select a group of Catholics such as the Minority Rights Group and arrange for legislation to reform Stormont in such a way as would enable their leaders to persuade the Republican Movement to turn against violence. As the IRA is weakened it would quickly be possible to patch up a cease fire which would turn into a peace with the release of internees etc.

b. Allow policing of the Catholic areas to be undertaken by vigilantes in conjunction with the British Army until the reformed constitution is established after which they could probably work in conjunction with the RUC as Reserve Constables.

c. Recognize current unofficial methods of allocating houses so as to extend the existing physical segregation of the communities.

d. Legalize the Republican Movement and permit it to exert the same sort of influence on Roman Catholic political groups as the Orange Order has traditionally exerted on the Unionists.

9. The immediate difficulty about adopting this alternative is that it would provoke violent opposition from the Protestant community. However, if the Catholic community did not press for too much in the new constitution, and if the army acted firmly and quickly against the Protestants it might - bearing in mind the general state of war weariness - be possible to get a solution accepted which would hold for a few years. If however the Protestants decided to oppose the army with an underground organization using proper force like the IRA as opposed to mere street disorders, we would have a new campaign to fight which would involve as a start the setting up of an intelligence organization capable of discovering how the new subversive group operated.

10. The less immediate problem, assuming that an agreement was reached in the short term, would be to prevent the Catholic leadership being infiltrated by extremists acting either to bring about premature re-unification of the country or to bring about a left wing revolution under cover of a campaign of re-unification. There is no doubt that the country would be extremely vulnerable to such a situation arising and virtually helpless if it did, since the Catholic community would regard action by the Provincial Government's forces as an infringement or an aggression but would itself be in complete subjection to its own Republican Movement through whom such pressure would be exerted. It is even possible that a similar situation could arise from the action of a right wing "patriotic" group in the Republic. There are many permutations to this theme.

Conclusions

11. Undoubtedly the analysis given above is a gross over simplification and no actual solution is likely to fit exactly into one of the two main alternatives mentioned. On the other hand unless some general policy guidance is given on the long term situation our operations are very likely to seriously prejudice the future. Housing problems, how to handle vigilantes, policy relating to the way in which the RUC are used on all matters which crop up almost daily and our Community Relations and Area Rehabilitation programme must take some regard to the fundamental question of whether we want to encourage moderate Catholic leadership to influence the population or whether we should be trying to persuade the people to think and act on their own behalf.

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12. It is doubtless tempting to let things run on until the long awaited political initiative manifests itself but the one thing we can not do is to delay taking practical decisions on the some of the points mentioned. It is no part of our business to recommend one solution rather than another but it is necessary for us to receive some direction beyond our immediate mission of destroying the IRA.

6 December 1971

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