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Title:	Memorandum to the Taoiseach, Liam Cosgrave, TD, from Dermot Nally, Assistant Secretary, Department of the Taoiseach, reporting on his conversation with Sir Arthur Galsworthy, United Kingdom Ambassador to Ireland, on the work of the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention
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Taoiseach

During the short conversation we had on the text of the letter I remarked that it was not very specific. The Ambassador said that the British, in their planning, would ensure in the event of a breakdown the security of people in threatened areas. I said that your message of 5th May had originated in exchanges last year when you met Mr. Wilson in London. On the first of these occasions, Mr. Wilson had stressed the futility of a strike which had no clear objective - or no attainable objective such as, for example, the downfall of the Executive. All a Government faced with such an aimless strike had to do was nothing.

I said that you had stressed on these occasions the danger to populations living in particular areas who might have essential services like water and electricity cut off. The Ambassador said that if water were cut off it could be conveyed to the areas, if necessary, by tanker. He did not mention the problem of electricity supplies. As we discussed the matter further, he said that he was not privy to the planning being done.

During the course of further conversation on the prospects for the Convention, the Ambassador said that if he had been in Belfast yesterday and had not gained the impression, which he thought was being fostered by the media, that there was a crisis. Things appeared to be reasonably calm. The Convention would probably spend most of the month of June fixing their rules of procedure, gathering facts etc. and had already decided to go on holidays for July. This pointed to a comparatively calm and leisurely approach. He said that he had formed the impression that any Loyalists who wished to be moderate could well be prevented from going in that direction by the memory of what had happened to Mr. Faulkner.

He mentioned that through the incident centre procedure they had "given hell" to the Sinn Fein representatives over the shooting of the police constable recently. He said that the Sinn Fein representatives had appeared to be utterly impervious to the sort of crime which had been committed. He mentioned that the profile of the Army was being reduced - through the withdrawal of heavy armoured vehicles - but that patrolling was still going on. In many areas military police had replaced soldiers. The soldiers themselves were patrolling in a more relaxed way - not running from doorstep to doorstep etc.

I thanked the Ambassador for the message.

A copy of your letter to Mr Wilson of 5th May is also attached

21st May 1975

(Copy to Mr. Donlon, Dept. Foreign Affairs).