

S E C R E T

A COMMENTARY
by the Government of Northern Ireland
to accompany
THE CAMERON REPORT
incorporating an account of
progress and a programme of action

Cmd.

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1. His Excellency the Governor of Northern Ireland, acting on the advice of the Government of Northern Ireland, appointed a Commission on 3rd March, 1969 "to hold an enquiry into and to report upon the course of events leading to, and the immediate causes and nature of, the violence and civil disturbances in Northern Ireland on and since 5th October 1968, and to assess the composition, conduct and aims of those bodies involved in the current agitation and in any incidents arising out of it".
2. The Commission consisted of The Honourable Lord Cameron D.S.C., Professor Sir Henry Biggart C.B.E. and James Joseph Campbell Esq. M.A.
3. Their Report - referred to for convenience as the Cameron Report - has now been received and published (Cmd. 532).
4. The Government wish at once to express their gratitude to Lord Cameron Sir Henry Biggart and Mr. Campbell for their work. They appreciate in particular their care in inviting and examining such a large body of evidence, the pains which they have taken, the time they have devoted, the depth of their scholarly analysis and the despatch with which they have completed their heavy task and have drawn up their voluminous and well documented report. The Government feel sure that the community at large will share in this public expression of thanks and appreciation to those three persons of the highest professional standing, integrity and independence.
5. Further, the Government commend the Report, taken as a whole, for widespread public study and reflection.
6. As soon as Parliament resumes, a Notice of Motion will be tabled in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister in order that the Report and this accompanying Commentary may be debated. A similar Notice of Motion will be tabled in the Senate by the Leader of the Senate. It is probable that the Government will ask the Houses of Parliament to consider the Cameron Report and this Commentary. The Report is, in certain passages, openly critical of some actions by Government and of some mistakes and excesses by a few members of the Police forces; and the Government readily and fully recognize that there are practical lessons to be learned from those findings. Further, the Report renders a great service by putting on record and making available to world opinion the provocation offered to the Police and the immense strain which sporadic disturbances in different parts of the country impose on a small Police Force, as the Royal Ulster Constabulary is in relation to the tasks it faces. The Report also confirms publicly and independently the operation within Northern Ireland of "... persons whose immediate and deliberate intention it is to prepare, plan and provoke violence reckless of the consequences to persons or property" (paragraph 235). In commending the Report for public study and reflection, the Government attach only one condition, namely that it should be taken as a composite whole. When this is done, a pattern emerges which the country has for long recognized as existing and as threatening civil and constitutional stability. It is a pattern of some genuinely held grievances; of the formation of well-meaning organisations to ventilate those grievances but also of the prompt exploitation of those organisations by ill-disposed persons for their own ends, not the least of which is a systematic attempt first to discredit and then to undermine all constituted authority - the local authorities, the Police, the Ulster Special Constabulary and ultimately the Parliament and

Government of Northern Ireland - in a determination to achieve either the merging of this State into the Irish Republic or the setting up of a new Irish Workers' Republic.

Economic and Social Development up to 1968

7. At paragraph 146 the Cameron Report acknowledges the "rapid economic and social progress" made in Northern Ireland up to the Autumn of 1968. That statement is borne out by the immense programmes that had been carried through in the fields of industrial development; industrial training; housing, water supply, sewerage; roads; schools, colleges and Universities; agricultural services and education, forestry, drainage; town and country planning; public transport; hospitals, health, welfare, child care; tourism, amongst many others; to which of course must be added the comprehensive social security arrangements in close parity with the arrangements in force in other parts of the United Kingdom. Those programmes are fully documented in published literature.

8. This is not the place to elaborate those well-known achievements. The aim at this point is simply to place them firmly on record, to endorse the finding of "rapid economic and social progress" in paragraph 146, and to draw attention to the findings of the Cameron Report in the socially vital field of house-building.

9. In Tables embodied in the Report the main statistics of house-building since the 1939-45 War are set out. A total of 161,000 dwellings have been built by all agencies since the War, one for about every nine persons or for every two-and-a-half families, as an addition to the country's existing stock of houses. This means that around two people in every five are living in modern post-war houses or flats.

10. A second figure given in the Report relates to the number of post-war houses built by public authorities for letting: 103,000 (as distinct from the 57,000 built by private enterprise mainly, but not wholly, for owner-occupation). This means one house, built by public authorities since the War for letting to persons in need, for every four families or thereabouts in addition to the 1939 stock.

11. Thirdly, the Report at paragraph 139 brings out the fact that in Londonderry "a vast programme" had been carried through in the South Ward. The figure given for the City of Londonderry as a whole is over 4,000 houses built or being built by public authorities for letting, up to September 1968. This was above the average for Northern Ireland as a whole, high though that average was.

Northern Ireland Development Programme 1970-75

12. In May 1968 the Government invited Professor Sir Robert Matthew of Edinburgh, Professor Tom Wilson of Glasgow and Professor Jack Parkinson formerly of the Queen's University of Belfast and now of Nottingham University to draw up a programme of economic, physical and social measures for the period 1970-75. This involved a review of progress made under the Matthew Plan of 1963 and the Wilson Economic Plan of 1965, both of which had been accepted and acted upon by the Government of Northern Ireland.

13. Intensive work was started as soon as the Consultants were appointed. Much evidence from a wide range of bodies has been received and studied, and note has been taken of similar economic or physical plans for other regions in the British

Isles and abroad. The report of the Consultants is now in the final stages of preparation and is due to be published before the end of the year. It will propose measures for economic expansion in a great number of fields and for social improvement; it will also face the problems of manpower, employment and unemployment; and the recommendations will be closely related to the finances likely to be available. One of the promising features is the way in which physical and economic strategies are being blended into one consistent programme for the development of the whole of Northern Ireland.

14. Just as the Development Programme builds on the programmes of the past, it looks ahead to the need for similar programmes in the years following 1975.

15. This Programme is singled out here for mention because it is the most comprehensive piece of work in hand, and - provided sufficient money is available - is likely to have the greatest impact on investment, employment and location. Many other inquiries and studies have been commissioned in recent years and eminent persons from outside Northern Ireland appointed to conduct them, for example the Benson Report on the Railways; the Lockwood Report on Universities and other aspects of Higher Education; the Hall Working Party on Employment and Unemployment; Building Design Partnership Reports for planning in the Belfast Urban Area; R. Travers Morgan Reports for transportation in the Belfast Area, to mention only some of the most outstanding.

16. In view of the work done by these and other Consultants of the highest standing and in view of the great amount of co-operation given by authorities, private enterprise and individual persons all over the country, the Government consider it right to emphasise the strenuous, consistent and sustained efforts made over many years to improve conditions in Northern Ireland and to keep on improving them.

The Reforms of November 1968

17. The violence and civil disturbances which the Cameron Commission were asked to examine started on 5th October 1968. On 22nd November 1968 the Government of Northern Ireland announced a series of reforms as follows:

"1. Allocation of Houses:

The Government undertook to ensure that all housing authorities placed need in the forefront in the allocation of houses, and that future housing allocations would be carried out on the basis of a readily-understood and published scheme.

2. Investigation of Citizens' Grievances:

The Government agreed to consider the need for effective machinery to investigate grievances in an objective way, and in the area of Central Government activity, to introduce legislation to appoint a Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration.

3. Implementation of Londonderry Area Plan:

The Government announced that it would take all possible steps to ensure that prompt and effective action would be taken to implement a Plan, designed to transform the economic and social life of the City, and to assist this objective by the appointment of a strong, well-qualified and objective Development Commission.

4. Reform of Local Government including the Franchise:

The Government indicated its firm intention to complete a comprehensive reform and modernisation of the local government structure within a period of three years - that is, by the end of 1971 - to review the franchise in the context of the organisation, financing and structure of the new local government bodies, and to abolish the company vote in local government.

5. Special Powers:

The Government announced that after discussions it had agreed with the United Kingdom Government that -

- (i) as soon as the Northern Ireland Government considered this could be done without undue hazard, such of the Special Powers as are in conflict with international obligations would, as in the past, be withdrawn from current use; but
- (ii) in the event of the Northern Ireland Government considering it essential to re-activate such powers, the United Kingdom Government would enter the necessary derogation." /From the obligations imposed by the European Convention of Human Rights.⁷

Progress achieved on those Reforms

18. The following table summarises briefly the action taken since November 1968 to implement the reforms announced at that time and the progress made in implementing these proposals is then examined in detail in the following pages. There is also reference to additional steps taken by the Government to meet legitimate grievances, and to plan for the future economic and physical development of Northern Ireland.

CHECKLIST OF ACTION TAKEN ON REFORMS

<u>Allocation of Houses</u>	Guidance on the principles which should underlie any housing allocation scheme prepared by Ministry of Development and issued to housing authorities together with a model allocation scheme incorporating these principles.
<u>Investigation of citizens' grievances</u>	Parliamentary Commission for Administration appointed and at work by 1st July 1969. In addition legislation to appoint a commission to deal with citizens' grievances and to set up a Community Relations Board to be introduced in the autumn of 1969
<u>Implementation of Londonderry Area Plan</u>	Londonderry Commission established in February 1969. Urgent action taken to prepare and expedite a major housing programme for Londonderry
<u>Local Government reform including the franchise</u>	Action ahead of the announced timetable with the publication of the second white paper in July 1969 and with the decision to reform the local authority franchise on a one man one vote basis announced in May 1969
<u>Special Powers</u>	No action possible in the prevailing circumstances, but a full investigation carried out into the possibility of withdrawal of certain Special Powers when circumstances permit

Allocation of Houses

19. The Government decided that the best way to ensure that all housing authorities allocated their houses fairly was to issue guidance to them setting out the principles which should underlie any housing allocation scheme and to accompany this with a model allocation scheme incorporating these principles. The guidance and model scheme was published in final form after considerable research and consultation with many bodies in Northern Ireland and Great Britain. No other Government Department in the United Kingdom has issued such detailed advice on allocations to housing authorities.

20. The Ministry's proposals were published in June 1969 and already the model scheme has been adopted by the Northern Ireland Housing Trust, the three Development Commissions and the majority of local authorities. All but a few of the remaining local authorities have put forward modified versions of the model which are consistent with the principles set out by the Ministry. Those authorities who have not yet submitted any proposal will be having early

meetings to discuss the problem. The response from housing authorities has therefore been excellent with to date over 90% of authorities having decided either to adopt the Ministry's model as it stands or a modified version of it.

21. There are of course considerable administrative problems involved in bringing the new machinery into operation. This applies particularly to authorities with large waiting lists where it will take some time before the new arrangements can be fully implemented. In the meantime, housing authorities have been asked by the Minister to follow the principles of the Ministry's scheme.

22. Once the legislation on citizens' grievances has been enacted, it will be open to any housing applicant who considers that a housing authority's allocation scheme has been administered in a biased way, to exercise his rights under that legislation.

Investigation of Citizens' Grievances:

23. The statement of 22nd November 1968 specifically mentioned legislation to appoint a Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration to investigate cases of alleged maladministration by Northern Ireland Government Departments. The drafting of a Bill and the administrative problems involved in setting up the Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner were urgently pursued and the Bill was presented to the Northern Ireland Parliament in early March 1969.

24. After extensive debate in the Northern Ireland Parliament, Royal Assent to the Bill was given on 27th June 1969. It came into force as the Parliamentary Commissioner Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 on 1st July 1969. Sir Edmund Compton, K.C.B., K.B.E., Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration in the Westminster Parliament agreed to become Parliamentary Commissioner in Northern Ireland and his office in Bedford House, Belfast, became fully operational when the provisions of the Act came into force.

25. The Government's statement of 22nd November 1968 which promised legislation to establish a Parliamentary Commissioner Office in Northern Ireland, also gave an undertaking that consideration would be given to the need for effective machinery to investigate citizens' grievances in an objective way outside the area of central government activity.

26. The Parliamentary Commissioner Act (Northern Ireland) 1969 was closely modelled on the Westminster legislation of 1967 and consequently did not apply to the activities of local or public authorities. Ministers have no direct responsibility for the services of these bodies and the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration was therefore not enabled by the legislation to investigate their activities except where conducted on an agency basis for central government.

27. On 15th May 1969 the Prime Minister announced that the Government's consideration of the need for machinery to consider grievances outside the scope of the Parliamentary Commissioner had progressed far enough for it to conclude that the need for such machinery had been established. He therefore promised that legislation on this complex subject would be introduced and passed into law during the present session. He promised that a system of investigation would be provided which would complement the Parliamentary Commissioner system and would cover maladministration (in a broad sense) by local or public authorities, including any form of alleged improper bias or discrimination on any grounds by a public body or authority against a citizen.

28. Work on the drafting of the legislation has proceeded urgently but the necessary consultations on all the details of the proposals have not yet been completed. Nevertheless the broad outline of the proposals can now be given. It is proposed that the Bill will be presented after the end of the summer recess to provide for the appointment of a Commissioner and staff who will deal with citizens who claim to have suffered grievances. Complaints will be received direct by the Commissioner and will not be channelled through Members of Parliament or local Councillors and Aldermen. The Commissioner will not only investigate allegations of maladministration but in the case of any complaints which he finds to be genuine will endeavour to achieve conciliation by persuasion. In most cases this should enable any genuine grievances to be settled, but if need be redress may be sought in the County Courts. There will be safeguards against frivolous or vexatious complaints so that these will not slow up the whole machinery and so frustrate the investigation and settlement of genuine grievances.

29. The Government also believe that a valuable part can be played by a Community Relations Board and have already announced that they will provide for its establishment. This will be done either in the legislation to deal with grievances or in a separate Bill. Such a Board would have the primary task of improving and restoring harmonious community relations, both by its own efforts and by co-ordinating and assisting the activities of other bodies with similar aims. Assistance would include financial help and the Board would also be available for consultation by the Commissioner - who would himself be a member of it - and members could be asked to render him direct assistance in individual cases.

30. The brief description of the proposals which are being considered shows what the main differences will be between the Parliamentary Commissioner Act of 1969 and the new legislation. It will, however, be important to ensure that both systems work closely together and the legislation will include provisions designed to achieve this end. For example, the Parliamentary Commissioner himself will be appointed ex officio as a member of the new Community Relations Board.

31. Members of Parliament will have no direct involvement in the investigation of individual cases under the new legislation but both the new Commissioner and the Community Relations Board will be required to submit annual reports to Parliament.

Implementation of Londonderry Area Plan

32. In order to set up the Londonderry Development Commission, the New Towns Amendment Bill had to be passed by Parliament. The Bill was introduced on 4th December 1968, and in the space of only a week had passed through all its Parliamentary stages, receiving Royal Assent on 12th December 1968.

33. On 5th February 1969, the Londonderry Area Designation Order (Northern Ireland) 1969 was made designating the area of land comprising the County Borough of Londonderry and the Rural District of Londonderry as an area to be developed in accordance with the New Towns Act (Northern Ireland) 1965, and on the same day the Londonderry Development Commission Order (Northern Ireland) 1969 was made establishing the Commission and appointing the members of it.

34. By the Order, Mr. Brian Norton, F.A.I., was appointed Chairman of the Commission and Mr. Stephen McGonagle, Vice-Chairman. Other members appointed to

the Commission were - Mr. J.S. Agate, O.B.E., B.Sc., C.Eng., A.M.I.Mech.E., F.I.Plant.E., M.B.I.M.; Mr. J.T. Eaton, T.D., J.P.; Dr. R.F. Keys, J.P.; Mr. J.B. McCuckian, B.Sc.(Econ.); Col. E.D.R. Shearer, O.B.E., T.D., D.L.; Mr. T. Gallagher and Mr. R.G. Toland, J.P. The first meeting of the Commission was held on 7th February 1969, in Londonderry. On 3rd April 1969, it took over the municipal functions of Londonderry County Borough and Londonderry Rural District Councils. The Commission has appointed Mr. G.J. Bryan, C.M.G., C.V.O., O.B.E., M.C., as their General Manager. Mr. Bryan, who at the time of appointment was head of the Isle of Man Civil Service took up duty in mid-May 1969.

35. The area over which the Commission's responsibilities extend comprises some 2,200 acres in the City of Londonderry and 83,000 acres in the former Londonderry Rural District (known as Londonderry Urban District with effect from 2nd April 1969). The respective populations at present are approximately 56,000 and 25,000 and by 1981 it is expected that the total population of the combined area will be of the order of 100,000.

36. The prime task of the Commission will continue to be the rapid implementation of the Londonderry Area Plan which was prepared by the James Munce Partnership and was generally welcomed by the community in Londonderry when it was published early in 1968.

37. The Area Plan sets out two principal targets - the provision of 10,000 new houses (to meet current and future needs) and 12,000 new jobs (6,000 in manufacturing industry and 6,000 in service industry) by the year 1981. It also outlines the provision of all the amenities, including roads, water and sewerage services, shopping, commercial, recreational, open space, cultural and educational facilities necessary for a modern, thriving city and surrounding area.

38. This programme will involve a total capital investment of £110 million (at today's prices) in the Plan period, and fully £77 million of this is expected to be spent in the next seven years. Three-quarters of the total capital investment will be in the public sector on houses, roads, factories, schools, re-development projects and other basic services.

39. Recognising that housing is one of Londonderry's most urgent and pressing needs, the Commission has given a top priority to this subject and a crash building programme has, in conjunction with the Northern Ireland Housing Trust, been instituted to provide over 3,500 new homes - one-third of the Area Plan target - during the next four years. Close on 1,000 of these houses are expected to be completed by the summer of next year.

40. The first 350 houses are already being built in the new residential area, planned to accommodate 15,000-20,000 people, which is being developed at Ballyarnett-Shantallow, north-west of the City, while the re-development projects for some of the older residential areas of the City are being pushed ahead.

41. While the Ministry of Commerce will continue to be responsible for encouraging new industrial development in the area, the Commission will have a vital role to play in improving and developing the area's attractions as a major centre for industrial expansion.

42. Already, excellent progress has been made in implementing the jobs target set down in the Area Plan for in the past three years successful negotiations

have been completed with no fewer than 12 new firms and these, plus a number of major expansion projects, including two new man-made fibre plants at Du Pont's Maydown complex, will provide a total of 4,500 jobs. Of these, 2,300 were negotiated in 1968 and this was one-third of the total jobs negotiated for the whole of Northern Ireland in that year. Approximately one-third of all Industrial Development expenditure in 1967-68 was for the Londonderry Area. Few other towns in the United Kingdom have experienced a higher rate of attraction of new industry in a comparable period. For too many years Londonderry has been over dependent on the shirt manufacturing industry, but with these latest projects and the firms which have already established factories in the area Londonderry is well on the way to becoming a highly diversified industrial centre.

43. Almost one million square feet of factory space (apart from the Du Pont complex) has been or is being provided by the Ministry of Commerce and some of this will be available in the form of advance factories at the Government industrial estates at Maydown and Springtown. A major Government Training Centre, which is vital to the area's future industrial development needs, is now fully operational at Maydown.

44. The recent disturbances in Londonderry have clearly made the task of implementing the Area Plan much more difficult especially in relation to the attraction of new industrial investment to the area. Accordingly the employment targets laid down in the Plan will be harder to attain. However the Northern Ireland Government are determined that the great momentum built up before the disturbances will not be lost and will along with the Londonderry Commission press ahead urgently with the task of converting an imaginative Plan into reality.

Reform of Local Government Including the Franchise

45. The statement of 22nd November made it clear that the question of the local government franchise was intimately bound up with the whole process of local government reform which began in March 1966, when the Northern Ireland Government announced their intentions of opening discussion on the re-shaping of local government. Since March 1966, the reform of local government, including the question of the local government franchise, has been expedited as follows:

46. Firstly, talks were initiated between Government and representatives of the local authorities; and research and studies were initiated by Government into the many problems involved.

47. On 20th December 1967, following this preliminary stage, a White Paper: The Re-Shaping of Local Government; Statement of Aims (Cmd. 517) was presented to Parliament and was debated in the House of Commons on 21st February 1968. The Paper outlined in general terms the Government's proposals for a new local government system and invited discussion on them.

48. Intensive and detailed negotiations with the local authorities followed the White Paper; consultations also took place with many other interests.

49. While these discussions and negotiations were under way, the Government announced the following decisions;

- (1) to have a new local government system in operation by 1971
(announced in the 22nd November 1968, Government statement);

- (2) to abolish the company vote in local government (announced in the 22nd November 1968, Government statement);
- (3) to postpone the local government elections ordinarily due in 1970 until 1971 (announced in May 1969);
- (4) to introduce in time for these elections universal adult franchise, i.e., "one man, one vote" (announced in May 1969).

50. On 2nd July 1969, substantially earlier than the promised publication date of the autumn of 1969 and following a massive series of further discussions and negotiations, a second White Paper: The Re-Shaping of Local Government; Further Proposals (Cmd. 530) was presented to Parliament. This Paper sets out in more detail (including a map of the new areas proposed) the Government's firm proposals for a new local government system. It embodies the undertakings mentioned in the previous paragraph, as well as an undertaking to appoint an independent statutory Commission to determine the electoral divisions of the new local government Areas. Public hearings will be instituted wherever and whenever required so that proposals for electoral divisions and objections to them may be openly discussed and reported.

51. Further and much more detailed and specific consultations have already been started with the local authorities and other interests on the basis of this second White Paper. The advice given in the Cameron Report, paragraph 231, in favour of the making of senior and principal appointments in local government by some central authority or of the creation of one unified public service to discharge the executive functions of both central and local government, raises a special difficulty in that, since 1966 the Government have been negotiating with local authorities on the assumption that they would continue to employ and discharge their own staff; and that there should merely be added an Interim Staff Commission to supervise the transfer of existing staff from the old to the new authorities. To adopt either of the two courses recommended in paragraph 231 would mean a radical change in policy and would inevitably entail a serious alteration in the power and standing of local Councils. The Government will earnestly examine the new situation created by this - obviously carefully considered - advice and refer it specially to one of the Working Parties mentioned in paragraph 61 below.

52. On 3rd July 1969, the Government also published a Green Paper which contains proposals for a new integrated structure for the Health and Welfare Services. Discussions with all the interests concerned are taking place on the basis of this Paper.

53. On 3rd July 1969, also, the Minister of Education announced that he was undertaking a review of the structure of the Education and Public Library Services. Discussions about this have already opened. The Government's time-table for local government reform remains firmly aimed at the election of new Area Councils under a new structure in the autumn of 1971.

54. The time-table requires that the new local government Areas should be finally settled before the end of 1969; that the electoral divisions of the new Areas should be determined by early 1971; that problems should be examined urgently by Working Parties and major legislation enacted in time for the 1971 target date.

Special Powers

55. Although the withdrawal of such of the Special Powers as were in conflict with the United Kingdom's international obligations was proposed in the statement of 22nd November 1968, the Northern Ireland Government has felt unable in the situation persisting since that time to withdraw any of the provisions of the Special Powers legislation. The soundness of this attitude was endorsed by the United Kingdom Prime Minister when he stated¹ :

"I believe that there would have been a ready and speedy response to our proposals concerning the Special Powers Act in April and that they would have been considered by Captain O'Neill's Government but for the devastating explosions and the damage which they did to thousands of citizens who had their water and other essential services cut off. In those circumstances, not a Government in the world would have gone on with what was proposed concerning special powers until they were assured that there would be a period of law, order, peace, calm and quiet".

Joint Declaration of August 1969

56. Following a meeting at 10 Downing Street on 19th August 1969, a Declaration was issued by the United Kingdom Government and the Northern Ireland Government in these terms:

- "1. The United Kingdom Government re-affirm that nothing which has happened in recent weeks in Northern Ireland derogates from the clear pledges made by successive United Kingdom Governments that Northern Ireland should not cease to be a part of the United Kingdom without the consent of the people of Northern Ireland or from the provision in Section 1 of the Ireland Act 1949 that in no event will Northern Ireland or any part thereof cease to be part of the United Kingdom without the consent of the Parliament of Northern Ireland. The Border is not an issue.
2. The United Kingdom Government again affirm that responsibility for affairs in Northern Ireland is entirely a matter of domestic jurisdiction. The United Kingdom Government will take full responsibility for asserting this principle in all international relationships.
3. The United Kingdom Government have ultimate responsibility for the protection of those who live in Northern Ireland when, as in the past week, a breakdown of law and order has occurred. In this spirit, the United Kingdom Government responded to the requests of the Northern Ireland Government for military assistance in Londonderry and Belfast in order to restore law and order. They emphasise again that troops will be withdrawn when law and order has been restored.
4. The Northern Ireland Government have been informed that troops have been provided on a temporary basis in accordance with the United Kingdom's ultimate responsibility. In the context of the commitment of these troops, the Northern Ireland Government have re-affirmed their intention to take into the fullest account at all times the

¹ House of Commons: Official Report: 22nd May 1969, Column 667.

views of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, especially in relation to matters affecting the status of citizens of that part of the United Kingdom and their equal rights and protection under the law.

5. The United Kingdom Government have welcomed the decisions of the Northern Ireland Government in relation to Local Government franchise, the revision of Local Government areas, the allocation of houses, the creation of a Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration in Northern Ireland and machinery to consider citizens' grievances against other public authorities which the Prime Minister reported to the House of Commons at Westminster following his meeting with Northern Ireland Ministers on May 21 as demonstrating the determination of the Northern Ireland Government that there shall be full equality of treatment for all citizens. Both Governments have agreed that it is vital that the momentum of internal reform should be maintained.

6. The two Governments at their meeting at 10 Downing Street today have re-affirmed that in all legislation and executive decisions of Government every citizen of Northern Ireland is entitled to the same equality of treatment and freedom from discrimination as obtains in the rest of the United Kingdom, irrespective of political views or religion. In their future meetings the two Governments will be guided by these mutually accepted principles.

7. Finally, both Governments are determined to take all possible steps to restore normality to the Northern Ireland community so that economic development can proceed at the faster rate which is vital for social stability."

The Police

57. On 26th August 1969, the Government of Northern Ireland set up an Advisory Board consisting of Baron Hunt, C.B.E., D.S.O., Sir James Robertson, C.B.E., Chief Constable of Glasgow and Mr. Robert Mark, Q.P.M., Deputy Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police. Their Terms of Reference are "to examine the recruitment, organisation, structure and composition of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Ulster Special Constabulary and their respective functions; and to recommend, as necessary, what changes are required to provide for the efficient enforcement of law and order in Northern Ireland". This Advisory Board started work immediately.

The Scarman Tribunal of Inquiry

58. On 27th August 1969, the Parliament of Northern Ireland adopted a Notice of Motion put forward by the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland in the following terms:

"That it is expedient that a Tribunal be established for inquiring into a definite matter of urgent public importance, that is to say, the violence and civil disturbance which occurred at various places and at various times from April to August 1969 and the responsibility for the acts then resulting in loss of life, personal injury and damage to property."

The Tribunal was set up with wide powers under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921 and started work at once. The Chairman is Mr. Justice Scarman, a distinguished English High Court Judge and Chairman of the Law Commission; the other Members are Mr. George Lavery and Mr. William Marshall.

Visit of the Home Secretary

59. The British Home Secretary, the Rt. Hon. James Callaghan, M.P., paid a visit to Northern Ireland lasting from Wednesday, 27th, until Friday, 29th August 1969. In the course of carrying out a particularly strenuous programme Mr. Callaghan, and Lord Stonham who accompanied him, met a great many people and heard a wide range of views. The observation with which the Home Secretary opened his concluding conference with the press, radio and television may be usefully and properly quoted:

"Let me first of all say a word about the background. I think the world should know that 95 per cent of Northern Ireland is living in peace and that the affairs of the country are being conducted normally".

The Northern Ireland Government wish to pay a most sincere tribute to the work and the achievements of the Home Secretary and Lord Stonham and look forward to a further visit or visits. They believe that much good has already resulted from the Home Secretary's endeavours and they readily acknowledge the value of the help and support which he - and the British Government - has given them.

60. A communique was issued by the Government of Northern Ireland on the evening of 29th August 1969 in the following terms:

- "1. During his visit to Belfast, the Home Secretary, Mr. James Callaghan was invited to attend two meetings with the Northern Ireland Cabinet, on 27th and 29th August; at the second meeting the Home Secretary was accompanied by the Minister of State, Home Office, Lord Stonham.
2. Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have re-affirmed the pledges previously given that Northern Ireland will remain a part of the United Kingdom as long as its Parliament and people so wish, and have assured the Northern Ireland Government that this position is unaffected by recent events.
3. The Home Secretary noted two measures already taken as being of particular importance in the restoration of confidence: the establishment in pursuance of Resolutions by the Northern Ireland Parliament of a tribunal of inquiry under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Scarman to inquire into the recent grave disorders; and by the Northern Ireland Government of an Advisory Board, under the chairmanship of Lord Hunt, to examine the recruitment, organisation, structure and composition of the R.U.C. and U.S.C. and their respective functions; and to recommend, as necessary, what changes are required to provide for the efficient enforcement of law and order in Northern Ireland. The necessity for an early report was emphasised on both sides.
4. The Northern Ireland Ministers reported to the Home Secretary on the progress being made with the reforms already announced. They informed him that in addition to legislation already passed to establish a Parliamentary Commissioner in Northern Ireland, they intend to introduce legislation to establish machinery for the investigation of citizens' grievances against local authorities or other public authorities. This legislation would embody, as an ultimate sanction,

provision for remedies in the courts. They explained that the points scheme for the allocation of local authority houses was now in operation in all local authority areas pending consideration by the Minister of Development of the comments of particular authorities on the application of such schemes in their areas. Thereafter the Minister would approve permanent schemes only if they were based on this principle.

Attention was drawn to the Northern Ireland Government's White Paper on Re-Shaping of Local Government published in July which embodied firm proposals for the designation by an independent body of the electoral divisions within the new local government areas. The latter proposal will be implemented by legislation this Session.

The Home Secretary also noted the Northern Ireland Government's decision to introduce legislation to set up a Community Relations Board to promote good relations between all sections of the community. Half the members of the Board would be Protestant and half Roman Catholic.

5. Recognising as they do the need to maintain the momentum of reform, Northern Ireland Ministers intend to consider the accelerated recall of Parliament to press on with measures which are now being prepared, with a view to their early enactment.

6. The Northern Ireland Ministers informed the Home Secretary that apart from four persons who were being charged with criminal offences all detainees had been released.

The Home Secretary informed the Northern Ireland Cabinet that the United Kingdom Government had agreed to make a grant of £250,000 in order to relieve the present distress in Northern Ireland. It will be used:

- (a) to relieve the immediate distress of individuals by providing clothing, food, medical care and essential furniture (e.g. beds, bedding and cooking utensils);
- (b) to spread the money as far as possible to satisfy the most urgent needs; and
- (c) to provide a small cash grant where provision in kind is not appropriate.

The grant will take the form of a contribution to the Ulster Innocent Victims Appeal Fund.

7. In their discussions Ministers had very much in mind the affirmation in paragraph 6 of the joint Declaration made at Downing Street on 19th August, of the entitlement of every citizen of Northern Ireland to the same equality of treatment and freedom from discrimination as obtains in the rest of the United Kingdom, irrespective of political views or religion.

8. It has been agreed that effective action in the following fields is fundamental to the creation of confidence:-

- (i) Equality of opportunity for all in public employment, without regard to religious or political considerations.

- (ii) Protection against the incitement of hatred against any citizen on the grounds of religious belief.
- (iii) Guaranteed fairness in the allocation of public authority housing, with need, assessed by objective criteria, as the only relevant yardstick.
- (iv) Effective means not only for the investigation of grievances against public bodies, but for their ultimate redress if conciliation and other procedures are ineffective.
- (v) Proper representation of minorities, to be assured at the elected levels of government by completely fair electoral laws, practices and boundaries, and at nominated or appointed levels by a recognition that such minorities have a right to an effective voice in affairs.

9. The Government of Northern Ireland have accordingly sought the co-operation of the Home Secretary in setting up Joint Working Parties of officials of the two Governments to examine the extent to which the Government of Northern Ireland's present practice or pledged commitments adequately ensure

- (i) the fair allocation of houses by public authorities;
- (ii) the avoidance of any discrimination in any form of public employment; and
- (iii) the promotion of good community relations by methods including the prohibition of incitement to religious hatred

and to report to the Government of Northern Ireland within a matter of weeks.

10. To mark the great importance he attaches to the promotion of good community relations the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland has intimated his intention to designate a Minister with special responsibility for that subject.

11. At the request of the Northern Ireland Government a mission of representatives from United Kingdom Departments concerned with economic and social affairs (including the Ministry of Technology, the Board of Trade and the Department of Economic Affairs) will visit Northern Ireland at a very early date to assess the economic and industrial prospects in the light of recent events.

12. The Home Secretary assured Northern Ireland Ministers of the readiness of himself and his colleagues to help in any way possible in any steps that would lead to a better life for the whole community in Northern Ireland, and to an elimination of the root causes of many of the grievances which have been expressed.

13. The Home Secretary joined with the Northern Ireland Cabinet in appealing to all citizens of Northern Ireland to use their influence to restore harmony between all sections of the community in the interests of

the well-being and prosperity of the Province. The Home Secretary said that speedy implementation of the reforms already announced and action following the future studies would go far to reduce tension and restore confidence and deserved a co-operative response from all sections of the community in Northern Ireland.

14. The Home Secretary readily accepted the invitation of the Northern Ireland Cabinet to pay another visit to Belfast in mid-October for discussion of the conclusions reached by the Working Parties and of the action to be taken as a result of the report of the Advisory Board on the police."

Working Parties

61. In accordance with the decision recorded in that communique, Working Parties consisting of officials of both Governments have already been set up and are at work.

Visit of United Kingdom Officials

62. Arrangements are in hand for a visit or visits by officials of the Ministry of Technology, the Board of Trade and the Department of Economic Affairs to assess economic and industrial prospects in the light of recent events.

Community Relations

63. On 18th August 1969 the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland called a large body of people in various aspects of public life to a Peace Conference at Stormont Castle. As a result a Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Stephen McGonagle, a leading Trade Unionist, was set up and is meeting frequently.

64. The Prime Minister intends to designate a Minister for Community Relations. The precise nature and scope of his responsibilities will be announced to Parliament when it sits again.

65. The Government look forward to a steady improvement in community relations. This cannot be achieved by Government action alone; the many measures summarised in this Paper need to be complemented by the wise, courageous and persistent efforts of all responsible persons of every religious faith. As opportunity offers, representation for minorities on statutory boards and advisory bodies will be increased, but appointments will continue to be on a basis of merit, experience and suitability, not primarily on a basis of religion.

The Baillie Report

66. The references at paragraphs 177 and 230 of the Cameron Report to a Report by County Inspector Baillie are references to an internal report within the Royal Ulster Constabulary. This was made available in full to the Cameron Commission; and County Inspector Baillie himself appeared as a witness. On 3rd September 1969, the Inspector-General announced that he had preferred disciplinary charges against sixteen members of the Force. County Inspector Baillie had recommended criminal proceedings against two policemen but the Attorney-General decided not to authorize such proceedings because of the general amnesty which had been granted at the time in question. The Government

regard this aspect of the matter is now closed so far as public action is concerned.

Parliament

67. Parliament was recalled from Summer Recess on Thursday, 14th August 1969, and again on Wednesday, 27th August 1969. Although Parliament stands adjourned until Mid-October, the Government intend to recommend to the Speakers that both Houses be recalled on 30th September 1969, in order to debate the Cameron Report together with this Commentary; and to pursue expeditiously their continuing programme of reform including measures dealing with electoral law, ward boundaries and machinery for examining and redressing citizens' grievances.

68. The Government of Northern Ireland have summarized in this Paper the measures they have already taken to meet legitimate demands and indicated some further lines of action. They have submitted their own actions and those of the Police Forces to the fullest and most independent scrutiny. They have sought, obtained and welcomed assistance from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. They have adopted a time-table that has been recognized in the Parliaments of Westminster and Stormont to be reasonable; and they have given every evidence of their determination to maintain the momentum of reform.

69. They now ask for the active support and co-operation of every member of the community and for the rejection by every responsible body and every responsible person of the hostile, revolutionary and subversive elements which have been seeking to destroy the constitutional structure of the State - as has now been amply demonstrated by the Cameron Report.