

7.50 AM BBC NEWS FRIDAY 7 DECEMBER 1973

THE TRI-PARTITE CONFERENCE RESUMES AT SUNNINGDALE IN BERKSHIRE AT 11 O'CLOCK THIS MORNING. INFORMED SOURCES SPOKE OF STEADY PROGRESS THROUGHOUT THE FIRST SIX HOURS OF NEGOTIATIONS YESTERDAY AND LAST NIGHT A STATEMENT ISSUED FROM THE CONFERENCE SAID THAT DETAILED DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN HELD ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A COUNCIL OF IRELAND ON LAW AND ORDER AND ON THE STATUS OF NORTHERN IRELAND. FROM THE CONFERENCE H BRIAN WALKER SENDS THIS REPORT: "LAST NIGHT'S STATEMENT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE TALKS GAVE NOTHING AWAY. THE PARTICIPANTS SAID SIMPLY THAT THEY HAD DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ON THE POSSIBILITY OF A COUNCIL OF IRELAND ON LAW AND ORDER AND ON THE STATUS OF NI. BUT THE CLAIM FROM THE SOURCES THAT PART OF THE STRUCTURE OF A COUNCIL OF IRELAND HAD BEEN AGREED WITH FIVE MINISTERS EACH FROM THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH WAS DENIED BY BRITISH GOVERNMENT SOURCES AND THE IRISH LATER AGREED THAT ANY MEASURE OF AGREEMENT ON THE COUNCIL HADN'T BEEN FINALISED LAST NIGHT. BUT THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT AND THE SDLP GO INTO TODAY'S TALKS WELL PLEASED WITH PROGRESS SO FAR. THE OFFICIAL LINE FROM ALL PARTIES IS THAT THERE CAN BE NO AGREEMENT ON ONE MATTER UNTIL FINAL AGREEMENT ON EVERYTHING IS REACHED. MR FAULKNER WILL HAVE EMPHASISED HIS EMOTIONAL STATEMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CONFERENCE THAT THE UNIONIST PEOPLE HAVE NO ROOM FOR CHANGE AFTER FIVE YEARS OF THE TROUBLES SO IN MR HEATH'S PHRASE A PACKAGE DEAL IS BEING SOUGHT AND WHATEVER GAINS THE IRISH MAY MAKE WITH REGARD TO THE COUNCIL OF IRELAND IT IS CLEAR FROM THE STATEMENTS BOTH OF MR HEATH AND MR COSGRAVE THAT THAT PACKAGE WILL HAVE TO INCLUDE MEASURES FOR GREATER CO-OPERATION IN LAW AND ORDER MATTERS AND A MOVE FROM THE SOUTH TO ACCOMMODATE NORTHERN SUSPICIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OVER THE TERRITORIAL STATUS OF THE PROVINCE. IT IS LIKELY THAT THESE MATTERS WERE FOLLOWED UP MORE INFORMALLY AT THE DINNER AT 10 DOWNING STREET LAST NIGHT WHEN MEMBERS OF ALL OF THE DELEGATIONS WERE THE GUESTS OF THE PRIME MINISTER. THEY WERE JOINED BY THE MAN WHO WAS THE ARCHITECT OF THE EXECUTIVE MR WILLIAM WHITELAW."

SEVEN LOYALIST ORGANISATIONS AND POLITICAL PARTIES AGREE AT A MEETING IN THE ULSTER HALL LAST NIGHT TO SET UP AN ORGANISATION TO BE KNOWN AS THE UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COUNCIL. ITS AIM WILL BE TO DESTROY THE ASSEMBLY EXECUTIVE AND POWER SHARING AND OBSTRUCT A COUNCIL OF IRELAND.

DAVID CAPPER REPORTS

"THERE WERE ABOUT 600 DELEGATES IN THE HALL REPRESENTING THE BLACK, ORANGE AND INDEPENDENT ORANGE ORDERS, THE APPRENTICE BOYS, THE ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY, THE ULSTER DEMOCRATIC UNIONIST PARTY AND THE ULSTER VANGUARD UNIONIST PARTY. REPORTERS WERE NOT ALLOWED IN BUT WERE TOLD THAT THREE RESOLUTIONS HAD BEEN PASSED, THE FIRST DECLARING THAT IT WAS IMPERATIVE THAT ALL UNIONISTS AND LOYALISTS SHOULD ACT TOGETHER TO REJECT THE NEW FORM OF ADMINISTRATION, AGREE TO SET UP A STEERING COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF EACH OF THE SEVEN ORGANISATIONS AND IT WILL PREPARE A CONSTITUTION.

THE NEW COUNCIL ACCORDING TO ANOTHER RESOLUTION IS DEDICATED TO MAINTAINING THE UNION WITH GREAT BRITAIN TO MAKE THE EXECUTIVE UNWORKABLE AND END POWER SHARING AND TO OPPOSE AND OBSTRUCT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COUNCIL OF IRELAND. THE STEERING COMMITTEE IS TO LAUNCH A CAMPAIGN, SAYS A THIRD RESOLUTION, TO SAVE ULSTER. ACCORDING TO A SPOKESMAN, THE REV IAN PAISLEY TOLD THE MEETING THAT THE BATTLE OF ULSTER WOULD BE FOUGHT PERHAPS IN THE STREETS THE HAMLETS AND THE LANES OF ULSTER IN THE LAST ANALYSIS, HE SAID NO EXECUTIVE WOULD EVER WORK AND NO MEMBER OF IT WOULD EVER GET TO THE DISPATCH BOX TO MOVE ANY RESOLUTION. MR PAISLEY ADDED THAT HE HOPED A NEW ULSTER PARTY WOULD BE FORMED IN THE NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE, SO IN THE MEANTIME THE VARIOUS LOYALIST PARTIES WILL MAINTAIN THEIR SEPARATE IDENTITIES ALTHOUGH LINKED THROUGH THE NEW UNITED ULSTER UNIONIST COUNCIL.

AFTER THE MEETING THE LEADER OF THE UNPLEDGED UNIONISTS, MR HARRY WEST, SAID THAT IF MR FAULKNER DID NOT STAND BY HIS PLEDGED TO UNIONISTS AT THE TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE HE WILL BE OUSTED AS LEADER EARLY IN JANUARY. UNIONISTS WOULD BE WATCHING HIS STAND PARTICULARLY ON ANY CHANGE IN THE STRUCTURE OF THE RUC AND IF MR FAULKNER GAVE AWAY A MEETING OF THE UNIONIST COUNCIL WILL BE CALLED EARLY IN JANUARY. IT NEEDS ONLY THIRTY SIGNATURES AND WE CAN GET 300 SAID MR WEST.

LAST NIGHT'S MASSIVE ROAD BLOCKING OPERATION, USING STOLEN VEHICLES CAUSED SERIOUS DISRUPTION TO TRAFFIC FOR SEVERAL HOURS AND IN THE MAIN THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE SUSPECT VEHICLES.

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HERE DAVID CAPPER AGAIN

THE ONLY REALY EXPLOSION CAME IN MID AFTERNOON WHEN A CAR BOMB WENT OFF WITHOUT WARNING IN A STREET OFF YORK STREET. THE AREA HAD BEEN CLEARED AND NO-ONE WAS HURT. SOON AFTERWARDS ANOTHER BOMB WAS FOUND IN A CAR IN UPPERLIBRARY STREET AND IN A CONTROLLED EXPLOSION ONLY PART OF THE CHARGE WENT OFF. THAT IN FACT PROVED TO BE THE LAST OF THE REAL BOMBS BUT WHEN REPORTS CAME IN OF ANOTHER TWENTY OR SO SUSPECT PARCELS AND CARS SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE CITY AND ON THE M1 THE SECURITY FORCES HAD NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO TREAT THEM ALL AS HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS. TRAFFIC GROUND TO A HALT IN MANY AREAS AS WHOLE DISTRICTS WERE CLEARED AND A SPOKESMAN FOR ONE OF THE MOTORING ORGANISATIONS DESCRIBED THE DISRUPTIONS AS TERRIBLE AND CHAOTIC. ONE VAN TOOK TWO HOURS TO TRAVEL FROM LISBURN TO BALMORAL.

AT BELFAST AIRPORT WARNING WAS TELEPHONED THAT THERE WERE THREE BOMBS IN THE CAR PARK. TO TOO WAS A HOAX BUT IT CAUSE A LOT OF DELAY TO PEOPLE TRYING TO GET TO AND FROM THE AIRPORT. POLICE AND ARMY ARE NOT SURE WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE BUT THEY SAY IT HAD ALL THE HALLMARKS OF AN IRA OPERATION.

OF THE TWENTY THREE OBSTRUCTIONS REPORTED IN AND ABOUT BELFAST ONLY ONE REMAINS TO BE CLEARED. THE RAILWAY LINE BETWEEN BELFAST AND DUBLIN IS STILL CLOSED BECAUSE OF A SUSPICIOUS OBJECT ON THE LINE.

A MAN IS IN HOSPITAL IN BELFAST WITH A BULLET WOUND IN EACH THIGH. THE INCIDENT HAPPENED IN THE SHORE ROAD DISTRICT AND SECURITY FORCES SAY THEY WERE NOT INVOLVED.

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7.12.73

CORRECTIONS

1ST PARA, 14TH LINE, OMIT 2ND WORD 'THE' ADD 'IRISH'

35TH LINE, 4TH WORD - 'MORE'

8PARA, 2ND LINE, 8TH WORD - 'IT'

10.15

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The Alliance Party is deeply saddened at the break down in the tripartite talks which is such a contrast to the results of the executive talks in Northern Ireland. In those talks just as deep divisive issues were discussed & resolved.

The major distinction between these talks and the however were that in the former all the parties approached the talks deeply conscious of the heavy responsibility for the lives of their fellow citizens which lay on their shoulders. All parties approached the talks in a spirit of generosity & a desire to help one another which is the only way in which such talks could be helpful.

What a contrast that was to the present talks where the real underlying issue may have been the police but the fundamental reason for the breakdown of the Govt. of the Republic led a 45 man delegation to the talks determined to concede nothing except a few empty words and equally determined to gain major political heads.

It became clear at an early stage that this delegation in the end was simply a pawn in the political game in the S. I. The deaths destruction & tragedies of the last few years