

25/6/75

POL 35/92 (1)

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF MR. C

VOLUME TWO

25 JUNE 75

Paisley has probably been responsible for about 200 lives. Why doesn't the Secretary of State ask him to confirm that he has never been involved in or associated with violence?

The gap between the NIO and the NIO representatives still seems wide. There is no apparent realisation of the Irishness of the problem.

The visit of Mr. Rees to the UDR, just after Magherafelt is crazy. Anyone knowing the UDR, such as Catholics living in the Magherafelt area, know they are total supporters of the Loyalist cause.

(speaking of the Convention)

Britain has spent about £1 million in convincing the man in the street that the terrorists were terrible persons. What I have been trying to do is to get the terrorists to think of themselves like that, but one can't do it by kicking them in the balls. They can't run things, but to tell them so merely makes them mad.

When the British go through the motions of, for example, praising Paisley, saying the Convention may not succeed, but..... well...

If the British get peace with the Provos, what can the SDLP do? If the British get peace with the SDLP, will the Provos simply go away?

They are frightened of the development of an establishment. The PIRA did not have the understanding of British political sophistication. The stress on "goodies" was to enable the PAC to go on living to learn. The PAC now see that even if the British do go, leaving a new establishment in charge, that new establishment cannot be of their own making. They want to discover this by accident, but it is being built in front of their eyes. The British are providing the flow. For example, if some form of agreement came from the Loyalist-SDLP combination, the basis of it is likely to be the hammering of the Republicans. Maybe some prod extremists will be hammered as well; the prods can live with this because they have a toehold in the Loyalist camp, but the Republicans cannot live with it. The SDLP is irrelevant, because they only have the votes. What have the SDLP done to stop the violence? They have tried to see O'Connell and co. and have been turned down flat, because on previous occasions they have been too clever by half.

The Press is building the Convention into a sort of parliament.

British and Provisional aims are the same: a peaceful country, north and south, with developing institutions and a cooperative and peaceful commerce with England. The tragedy is that the Provos are on their way back to war to achieve what they can get more quickly by peace.

McCallion agrees that the tail is now wagging the dog. But make no mistake, the leadership is still strong enough to maintain control. The problem is that they have lost faith in the talks. They are so used to war, they don't understand the peace.

The Provisional Sinn Fein is out of the limelight. Much capital, but no publicity was made out of the return of the Price sisters. In the last few weeks you have taken it all away.

The greatest thing is that HMG should show generosity towards the PIRA - some sort of recognition. The Loyalists have recognised the PIRA enough to talk to them, Craig has sent messages and so have the UDA. So have the SDLP. So why not HMG? What is there against it? The biggest step forward would be the courage of recognition that the PIRA actually exist. In every type of British attitude towards ~~the~~ the N.I. situation is the implication that the "bad terrorists" will go away or stop being "bad terrorists". There is no reference to the good work being done by the PAC.

(The point was made that too much praise of the Provisionals by the British would sign the leadership's death warrants).

If the British praise the PAC without providing "goodies" it would destroy the PAC. But for example, the closure of Long Kesh could be ascribed to the Provisional IRA's discipline. The PAC and PSF must get some credit for the progress that has been made.

The tragedy is that certain leading Provos are wholly convinced that they have to go back to war because they are being "drained" and weaned away from violence. Yet they want to be "drained and weaned away - but not 'in front of the children'". The worst case for the Provisionals would be if meetings continued throughout July with the British. There would be a long series of minor concessions - say four

lots of 15 out of Long Kesh, 2 back from UK and the usual small-minded things with the RUC and UDR. Into an August situation where, say, 50 detainees were let out followed by an understandable slowing down, because of the last 100 or so. Then another two back from England. Meanwhile, more and more news coverage of the possibility of an agreed solution in the North. And this running parallel to British utterances that HMG would welcome any form of peaceful outcome. In September a major heave on detention. Denunciations of sectarian murders by the protestants. The Catholic bishops say "we must not go back to killings". The lead up to the SDLP settling for some sort of power, reestablishing the RUC and then HMG delaying on certain sections of the report till about Christmas. All that time it has been daily more difficult to keep the Provo militarists under control, with no real sign of a "new Ireland". The minority population would be saying, "It's the old Stormont, but at least it's better than bombs". The Provos would then feel that they had to reactivate the war, but would be haunted by the fiasco of 1956.

If the British give the Provos what they want, they'll have to go through some of that anyway.

If the Provos get the glory, they know they can't run the country.

There are major gaps in Provo thinking about the end of the road. They thought that the real answer for Ireland was British disengagement. Their policy was directed initially to the military defeat of the English, but it became immediately apparent that this was impossible. More slowly it became apparent that the British Army couldn't militarily defeat the Provos. From the time that they accepted that, Provo violence was aimed at producing a negotiating situation. Then came Feakle. ~~AT SOME STAGE~~ At some stage, they realised, fighting must stop and after Feakle was as good a time as any. They then set about trying to tie down the truce situation, not based on what might happen, but on what had happened in the past. There was total stress on freedom of movement.

The next new point is that you don't get to run a country overnight. This was a victory I achieved 18 months ago after 1½ years' hard work.

The Provos hoped for a continuing dialogue in a peaceful atmosphere, which would have enabled HMG to cut the ties with N.I. smoothly. HMG refused to accept the

PSF as people they could really negotiate with. The Provos wanted recognition as the only legitimate opponents of British rule; ^{that} There was a situation where it was obvious the British were going because of a qualified nationalism, that is Republicanism. The Loyalists would have exploded. Agreed. An open declaration could have caused serious trouble. But HMG went to the other extreme and this has caused serious trouble. We are talking about a question of degree.

I would not be a party to creating Provo rule in Northern Ireland. It's not on. It can't happen and it won't happen.

There are daily opportunities for praise of the PSF. It is not taking anything from anyone else to use the opportunities.

The ideal would be a new constitution that accepts British withdrawal and gives the PSF 4-5 seats out of about 19 Catholic seats in a new assembly.

Is it not in British interests to satisfy the Provos? There is plenty in the kitty to satisfy the Provos without harming the Loyalists or the SDLP.

All we can do is to get it back on the rails, but the British must then change their attitude. I want to see the Provisionals ashamed to talk of violence. Ultimately a small section will break away.

(on the question of talks)

The rein has been left slack. McCallion and O'Brady are against the suspension. Drumm, McAirt, Maire Drumm and McKee don't want it either. They want to be the deliverers of Ireland. Why don't you say to them "All right. What do you want delivered?" Dangerous, but after two sentences, they would get stuck.

The analysis of the Convention is impressive, but I can't use it without big movement. Unless I have that, I can't even get their attention, or keep it.

A possible thing would be a combination of personal praise at the talks and a promise of the closure of Long Kesh by about September. Tell it to them in the closest confidence; they like it that way and can work with it better. Later on a public hint could confirm it and so give them a boost too. The sort of things to say are; "There is no doubt that the IRA campaign was horrific; there is equally no doubt that since the cease-fire, the cessation of violence has been genuine and sustained..." or "Often the ability to turn violence into peaceful progress is not recognised as it is happening...."

There are lots of opportunities around for this sort of thing if the right attitude is there. Like looking for grass. There's lots of it around. After the initial cease-fire, when it seemed to you that you had given the whole world away, was it easier or more difficult?

If we get through this, there will be another serious crisis in the autumn. At all times, there is a lobby whose sole task is to keep the British involved and paying. They'll be at peak in September - October, when some form of clarity begins to emerge from the NI situation. It is essential for HMG to have built enough confidence into the system, prior to that to get us over that hump.

If there is no movement, there will be no resumption of talks and that will mean war. If there is a war, there will be a gradual build-up to make it appear to be the fault of the British. There is no point in doing this when Craig is on holiday, but the weapon build-up has to start now.

The Provos don't talk about detainees, not because they're not interested, but because they don't want to be accused of bargaining with detainees.