

~~SECRET~~

Cyb

- PS/CAS
- PS/Minister
- PS/USAS (Am)
- CGS
- JG1
- KUS(95)
- OPR
- OPR (Am)
- Sec/HOC

~~S/S~~ to note -
 this now looks well under control.
 AWS
 3/11
 19/3/4

PRIME MINISTER

Northern Ireland

The liaison group, consisting of representatives of No. 10, the Home Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, met under my Chairmanship with Clifford Hill this morning. We agreed on Hill's tasks and objectives. These are set out in the attached brief.

Parallel with this Committee Sir Dick White, Norman Reddaway and I have decided on the machinery for placing anti I.R.A. propaganda in the British Press and media. This machinery is already in operation. Its first major task will be to produce articles which will counteract the effect of the Compton Report.

David Mackenzie

4 November 1971

1. Clifford Hill will have three main tasks:

- (a) to ensure that all the information agencies in Northern Ireland speak with one voice;
- (b) to ensure that these information agencies react immediately to events or, when this is not possible, ensure that the presentational aspects are carefully considered when, e.g. following a detailed investigation, we are in a position to react. Clifford Hill should ensure that London is informed of the proposed reaction.

- (c) to report to London from time to time on the current thinking of journalists in Northern Ireland so that these can be taken into account in both the making and presentation of policy; and on the line taken with the press by the I.R.A. and other opponents of H.M.G.'s policy.

2. The objectives of the information agencies in Northern Ireland should be:

- (a) to emphasise at all times H.M. Government's twin purposes, viz to root out terrorism and to bring about those conditions which will give each community a permanent and guaranteed share in public life, as set out in the Home Secretary's statement of 7 September;
- (b) to give maximum publicity to the successes of the security forces against the I.R.A. The killing or capture of terrorists should be fully reported, pictorially if possible. At the same time the security forces must be immediately and vigorously

(b) to give maximum publicity to the successes of the security forces against the I.R.A. The killing or capture of terrorists should be fully reported, pictorially if possible. At the same time the security forces must be immediately and vigorously defended against allegations of brutality or misconduct.

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- (c) to commend the restraint of the mass of the population and the courage of individual moderates in face of barely tolerable provocation;
- (d) to blacken the reputation of the IRA by highlighting their brutality towards individuals (including their own members), the cowardly character of their tactics and their callous disregard for the lives of innocent bystanders. The IRA's connections with other urban guerrilla organisations should be emphasised in order to show that the hard core Provisionals have ambitions quite unconnected with the status of the Catholic minority in Northern Ireland or indeed with partition.