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ELLIOTT'S, ANN STREET

Belfast 652455 Confidential Telephone

Viewpoint

Monday, July 22, 1974

Human rights

THE European Human Rights Commission has been hearing evidence about alleged ill-treatment of prisoners for almost two years. The only thing one can say with certainty is that, whatever the outcome, neither of the two parties involved, the British Government nor the Irish, is likely to gain much from the exercise.

It is right that internees who feel they have a complaint against the authorities should be able to seek legal remedies. Some have already won substantial damages in the Northern Ireland courts and 50 are laying individual complaints before the European Commission.

But when one Government brings a case against another, as is happening at Strasbourg, the affair becomes political as well as legal. What the Irish Government does not seem to realise is that its pursuit of this case for as long as it will only political disadvantages.

The two Governments are supposed to be seeking a common solution to the Northern Ireland problem which will be acceptable to all parties. Relations have certainly been closer in the past few years than at any time since partition.

If the Irish Government wins its case, which presumably it does, old wounds will be reopened. Britain's reputation could be damaged to an extent which will make co-operation harder to negotiate and lead to the extra-territorial courts more difficult to get through.

Extreme Republicans have been given a stick with which to beat the Coalition, a stick kindly manufactured for them by the Coalition. It is harder for Dublin to get out of the case now than it was earlier, but it is still not too late to seek a formula which would save the Irish honour while avoiding future embarrassment.

Insecure talks

THE security conference proposed by the Alliance party and supported by the Faulkner Unionists seems logical enough at first glance, that is, their argument would be that since violence continues and political life here is in somewhat of a vacuum, it is time something was done.

But when one begins to consider what if anything could be done, the conference idea throws up problems. Many people, including the Alliance party, have long argued that no military solution could be effective without a corresponding political one. This still remains so.

If one takes that point—and many Unionists would hardly seem to—seems that the conference is left with little to talk about or agree upon. The question is: can security be discussed without reference to the political basis of administering the province.

That is not to say that such a conference should not be tried, but rather to warn that people should not be over optimistic about the outcome. There is considerable merit in trying some form of dialogue in motion. Few political voices seem to have paid much heed to the first priority of the recent White Paper, namely inter-party discussion. Too many politicians have taken to the old Ulster custom of claring up to one another, instead of talking to one another.

CYPRUS CLEAR AIR



British civilians aboard a convoy from Episkopi to Akrotiri keep their heads down at the sound of gunfire. The road is controlled by the Greeks.

Kissinger steps in

By Reuter Correspondents.

THE THREAT of a fully fledged Greek-Turkish war over Cyprus receded today after U.S. Secretary of State Dr. Henry Kissinger personally intervened to get both countries to agree to a ceasefire beginning at 3 p.m.

Announcing acceptance to Ankara, Turkish Prime Minister Turgut Inönü said the victorious Turkey had won since invading the island at dawn on Saturday would be strengthened by the ceasefire being enforced.

Later the Athens Government which ordered a general mobilisation of its forces after the invasion

also officially said the truce was being accepted.

LONDON. The Foreign Secretary Mr. James Callaghan told the Cabinet of plans for a European summit meeting with Athens, Turkey and Greece over Cyprus at a secret rendezvous—probably Vienna.

This afternoon Mr. Callaghan was making arrangements to fly out after facing criticism in the Commons over the Government's role in the evacuation of British nationals from the island.

Meanwhile on the battle front island itself, fresh Turkish troops were reported being sent to the north coast.

Despite the clamour, the Turkish Premier of great victories, a pooled report from reporters said the original Turkish invasion

forces were still bogged down.

It said the Turks had made virtually no progress towards capturing the northern coastal town of Kyrenia.

There was not a Turkish invader to be seen today three miles along the coastal road from Kyrenia.

A Greek Cypriot officer said the tanks the Turks had brought had been knocked out by Greek Cypriot positions.

But Turkish ships were reported to be shelling positions near Kyrenia.

The port was deserted except for stranded British residents and foreign tourists, and today's shelling forced British authorities to cancel a planned evacuation of the foreigners by brigade.

The Washington State Department said Dr. Kissinger, whose top aide Joseph Sisco has been shuttling between Ankara and Athens, has put the ceasefire proposal to both countries last night.

An Israel Radio correspondent, reporting by telephone from the Hilton Hotel in Moscow, said people rushed into the streets of the battered capital following foreign announcements of the ceasefire.

STATE TO MOVE IN ON H&W

By DESMOND MCCARTAN.

THE GOVERNMENT was announcing in the Commons this afternoon plans to take a substantial controlling interest in Harland and Wolff shipyard, to overcome the company's financial problems.

But Minister of State Mr. Stanley Orme was also expected to indicate that the Government will have to look carefully at other forms of capital investment in future capital expenditure projects in the province.

The Government is not yet clear how the Government intends to raise the money for this operation. It could result in some cut-back in other public services.

However, it is also likely to increase its 48 per cent share of the firm's equity by a substantial amount.

Mr. Orme will probably not say to what extent this will be done, but it is understood that the new share could be as high as 90 per cent, stopping just short of full nationalisation.

It is the second rescue act by the Government within four days.

On Friday it was announced that it had offered financial aid to the Hughes-Kennedy bakers in West Belfast, where it is understood urgent State aid was needed to avoid redundancies.

The cost of the takeover of the shipyard, which has been the subject of delicate negotiations between the company and Government Ministers for several weeks, could be about £12m.

Harland and Wolff received about £68m in State aid and grants since 1966. It is known that the company suffered a loss of £2m in the first half of last year, and this year's balance sheet was expected to indicate a further loss.

The extensive modernisation programme though not complete, has enabled the shipyard to obtain valuable orders, but the nature of its present difficulties are believed to centre round its liquidity.

Secretary of State Mr. Merlyn Rees and Mr. Orme, who has special ministerial responsibility for the yard, have been engaged in a careful scrutiny of the company's books, since taking office in March.

The Prime Minister, Mr. Wilson, indicated recently that he had authorised on taking office a payment of £10m agreed under the Tory Government to go through the light of what happened during the Ulster Workers' Council strike.

The effect of the UWC action and other industrial disputes within the shipyard during the past 12 months has been a contributory factor to Government thinking.

At Westminster, and particularly the section of the Labour Party that advocates disengagement from Ulster, can be expected to pay close scrutiny to the latest financial help is given.

Healey aims to ease

Mr. Healey's high budget. A HIGH speed budget was being introduced in the House of Commons this afternoon by Mr. Denis Healey operating under a time limit of 15 minutes.

Mr. Wilson.

Help to ease the rates burden, cheer for the man in the street through tax and price cuts, and a boost for big business—this was the sunshine success recipe chosen by the Chancellor.

His July budget measures are aimed at stopping the slide in Labour popularity and putting the party on course for a thumping General Election win in October.

And in case his strategy goes wildly awry, the Chancellor is ready to introduce another budget—his third this year—in November.

Main aim of this afternoon's measures is to ward off rising unemployment—there are already ominous signs of a big increase in the winter—cut prices in the food and booze.

He has the power at the stroke of his pen to increase or lower VAT by two and a half per cent.

The Chancellor is also known to have looked at the cost of petrol, alcohol and drinks—all of which he can reduce at a stroke through his economic regulator. A cut in the petrol duty would prove highly popular and help cut industry's costs.

More help is likely for industry through an easing of restrictions on dividends and profits. But the biggest boost is likely to come through the scrapping of controls on hire purchase—never better buying.

To ease the rates burden, Mr. Healey is likely to announce a multi-million pound subsidy for town hall chiefs whose budgets have been undermined by the inflation rash. But the aid is unlikely to mean that rate bills for the ordinary family will go down instead it is likely to prevent them going up still further.

Labour politicians are looking especially for tax cuts and help for big cities to ease the rates burden to yield a bumper harvest of votes. Measures to curb unemployment are likely to be directed firmly towards the development regions—there has been speculation that the regional employment premium will go up.

For the man in the street the Chancellor is known to have extended the invitation to new leavers to a standard rate of ten per cent and whether there should be a lower rate for household essentials and a higher rate for luxury.

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Firemen start work-to-rule

ULSTER firemen began a week-long work-to-rule today.

They will deal with emergency calls only until next Sunday, but their action matters would be the public at risk, said Mr. Ken Kenyon, Northern Ireland executive member of the Fire Brigades Union.

He said "we are continuing to respond to all emergency calls. Our action simply means that members will not deal with administrative telephone calls or some cleaning work which is normally undertaken by them."

All work considered by the union as non-essential will not be carried out.

Their action is in protest over what they call "lack of negotiating machinery."

The Authority, who are continuing to interfere with the emergency services such as fire, road accidents, bombs. Everything involving such as a property was still covered.

About 1,000 firemen are affected.

A spokesman for the Northern Ireland Fire Authority said the dispute, which was an administrative matter, would be considered tomorrow.

The Authority, he explained, had agreed on a grievance procedure at the request of the union, but "now they apparently want something more than that."

How the Proves tapped the Army

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CHEER FOR PENSIONERS

ULSTER'S pensioners will receive an increase of 2.5 per cent in their pensions in time, after all the Dept. of Health and Social Services confirmed today. And so will others who receive benefits for the sick, handicapped and unemployed.

The increase, from today, means that retirement and widows' pensioners will receive an increase of 2.25 per cent, bringing the weekly first rate pension up to £13.16 from £12.81. And married couples will receive £16 per week an increase of £2.50.

Affected by the increase are 180,000 pensioners, 45,000 sick and disabled, over

UDA may hold talks with Catholics

BY JOHN WALLACE, Our Political Editor.

THE ULSTER DEFENCE Association is ready to hold talks about Northern Ireland's future with representatives of the Catholic community.

This was confirmed following a meeting of its council in Belfast today.

It could be one of the most significant political developments since the collapse of the Executive, ruling out talks of this kind before elections to the constitutional convention.

Following the UDA's withdrawal from the co-ordinating committee of paramilitary groups and the Ulster Workers' Council, UDA chairman Mr. Andy Tyrie is reported to have extended the invitation to Catholic groups to make contact with the association with a view to talks.

The Provisional IRA has been excluded from the invitation, but this may not rule out written exchange of views between the UDA and Provisionals.

The move is likely to be welcomed by the SDLP.

At the week-end SDLP Assembly members Mr. Hugh Logue, Ewan Lloyd, and Mr. Gerry Kelly, UDA's, to start talks immediately with the Provisionals, whose consent would be essential to any new system of government.

In its recent White Paper the development of working-class political activity by both Protestants and Catholics, and called for a process of discussion and consultation, emergency benefit being made on the department."

Youth on air pistol charge

AN 18-year-old youth appeared at Belfast magistrates' court today accused of having an air pistol and more than 1,000 pellets at Castle Junction, Belfast, on Saturday.

He is Paul Derrick Kennedy, from Darling Avenue, Lurgan, and the court heard the Gun charges replied, "Not guilty."

He was remanded in custody until July 30.

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