

CONFIDENTIAL

EXMIN 74/30

Copy No:

MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 24 MAY 1974 AT 7 00 PM IN
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, STORMONT

PRESENT:

Mr Faulkner (Chief Minister)
Mr Napier (Law Reform)
Mr Baxter (Information)
Mr Bradford (Environment)
Mr Currie (Housing, Local Government and Planning)
Mr Devlin (Health and Social Services)
Mr Hume (Commerce)
Mr Kirk (Finance)
Mr McIvor (Education)
Mr Morrell (Agriculture)
Mr I Cooper (Community Relations)
Mr R Cooper (Manpower Services)
Major Hall-Thompson (Chief Whip)
Mr McGrady (Executive Planning and Co-ordination)

Mr K P Bloomfield)
Mr P A Sythes) Secretariat

Mr T M Roberts - Head of Press Services

A G E N D A

1. Meeting at Chequers

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1. MEETING AT CHEQUERS

The Chief Minister reported to his colleagues on the talks which he, the Deputy Chief Minister and the Minister of Law Reform, had had with the Prime Minister that morning and afternoon. They had clearly stated the Executive's position, their anxiety to continue to govern and their inability to do so unless full backing could be assured from the British Government. They had been well received and from the general tone of the meeting they had gained the clear impression that Mr Wilson was firm in his desire to do whatever was necessary, and within his capability, to stand by the Executive. The Prime Minister had assessed the possible consequential and at that moment a meeting of the senior members of the Cabinet was taking place in order to arrive at a decision. The Prime Minister intended to make a statement on television the following evening (Saturday, 25 May).

The Chief Minister then asked the Secretary to give a detailed account of the talks.

Ministers discussed further the possibility of making some move towards opening a channel of communication with the Ulster Workers' Council preferably through intermediaries. There was no objection on grounds of constitutional protocol to having talks with elected representatives, but there did not seem to be any advantage in doing so since the views of elected representatives were well-known.

Ministers decided that they must assume that Mr Wilson and his colleagues were fully aware of the implications in a decision to implement the oil plan. If he did so the general feeling was that the Executive should support the decision and defer any move to initiate talks until action on the oil plan had taken place. Some Ministers however were of the opinion that the Chief Minister should talk to the Northern Ireland people.

It was agreed that once the Cabinet decision was known arrangements should be made for the Chief Minister to make a broadcast as soon as possible after the Prime Minister's statement.

Office of the Executive
Stormont

30 May 1974

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