

FEB 19 98.

**LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE ON CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES**

**A FURTHER SUBMISSION FROM THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ON  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

1. The British Government welcomed the wide-ranging discussion which parties had on economic and social issues at the Liaison Sub-Committee meeting dealing with Confidence Building Measures on Wednesday, 4 February.
  
2. At its conclusion the Secretary of State on behalf of the Government acknowledged that there were a number of matters raised by parties around the table that had not been sufficiently explored or addressed and she suggested that it might help focus and guide further discussion on these matters if they were grouped together in a brief annotated agenda for the next meeting. Noting that participants would be reviewing their own contribution to the debate, she offered to provide an appropriate list for participants to consider.
  
3. On behalf of the British Government the Secretary of State wishes to suggest the following areas as a focus for further discussion, at least initially:

**the elimination of discrimination**

- ✓ - promotion of equality in the employment market
- implementation of a rights agenda

**the reduction of divisions in society**

- ✓ - support for integrated education
- provision of pre- and after-school care
- promotion of a non-sectarian public environment

### **the treatment of culture and heritage**

- recognition of the heritage of both major traditions
  - encouraging full participation of all religious, cultural and ethnic groups.
4. In offering the list, the Government would wish to stress that it does not seek to preclude discussion on other economic and social matters which parties may wish to raise, in addition to those they tabled at the last meeting; nor does it wish to prevent participants from revisiting subjects that were discussed on previous occasions. The agenda has been drawn up and is offered simply to provide a starting point for parties to take forward further discussion.
  5. The Government would also wish to stress that it recognises that these issues represent areas of great importance and significance to participants and that it is keen to hear the full range of argument and opinion. In doing so, the Government very much shares the view of others about the importance of distinguishing between those issues which constitute a broad party political agenda and those which are genuine confidence building measures that might be pursued by Government under direct rule or under whatever institutional arrangements emerge from the current Talks process. It would urge participants to keep this distinction in mind.
  6. The Government hopes that participants will find the agenda useful and that it will help facilitate a continuing, positive exchange of views.

British Government

9 February 1998

## NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S COALITION

### 1. Prisoner Paper

Government has produced a paper to which the parties are due to respond - I don't think a date was given for this - should we pursue that? ✓

Involve CAJ/NIACRO in formulating a detailed paper (make it look like a policy!)

### 2. Social, economic & cultural issues:-

Dermot Nesbitt's argument - do we want to respond?

a) New European thinking on constitutions and nation states is moving away from 'simplistic' past.

b) We could look at N. Ireland in a post-colonial context and find many parallels (the Continent of Africa for a start!)

c) Dermot's 'minority' is the same percentage of UK public to elect practically every post World War II Government.

Mo Mowlam's position re. consultation and policy to adapt according to consensus formed in room.

1. Sufficiency of consensus will not work on social and economic matters given the UU is broadly Tory, so how do we proceed on that matter?

2. Consultation on aspects of policy touched on by a number of parties:-  
- PUP suggestion 'left of centre (or Clause 4!) Caucus';  
- Our suggestion - hear from 'outside' experts and community representatives (Mo Mowlam has flagged this up also) - perhaps using Interpoint;  
- Jane Wilde to pursue this and perhaps merge it with PUP - get others on board and present it as CBM as a concrete proposal.

3. Preliminary discussion on Paramilitary Activities (Paramilitaries are another group we would like to see retired!)

a) Return to one point that confidence of the wider community comes from believing that this process (include the sub-committee) will address issues/problems and actually work through them, rather than avoiding them or using them to 'beat' someone else with.

b) Paramilitary policing is a separate issue to that of paramilitary activities in relation to the conflict. It relates to 'policing' and the failure of RUC policing (its relationship with communities across N. Ireland - not just nationalist and republican communities but also loyalist and working class communities in general). It also relates to the alienation of young people from the RUC (see CAJ report). It also relates to the social and economic conditions which encourage young people into 'anti-social' activities in the first place this point builds on the PUP position stated during the soc/econ. debate last week)

This aspect of paramilitary activities needs to be addressed with policing.

Other types of paramilitary activities - attacks, targeting etc. There are several questions which it would be helpful for the sub-committee to agree.

Paramilitaries 'delivered' on their principle responsibility to call cease-fires. The responsibility of everyone else (and those linked to paramilitaries) is to help to maintain and stabilize the existing cease-fires. Establish the relationship between those organisations on cease-fire and those not. To examine the position of the various communities in relation to the threat to them from organisations not on cease-fire and take their views/fears seriously).

The primary responsibilities of 'politicians' is to fill the vacuum caused by the cease-fires with 'politics' designed to 'manage' the situation as it is. \*

Be realistic - if people round the table actually want the paramilitaries to go away then they need to be realistic and help to 'manage' them into 'irrelevancy' (if such a word exists!) This includes dividing 'policing' from cease-fires - addressing them as tho' they are the same issue will make it go away.

These are a few early thoughts - its important to note that what other parties say re.paramilitaries - so lots of notes please!