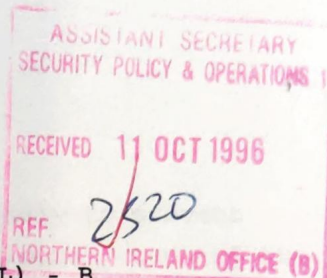


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FROM: D J WATKINS
D/CENT SEC
DATE: 11 OCTOBER 1996



cc PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Sir David Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Daniell - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Smyth - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Beeton - B
Mrs Collins - B
Mr Lavery - B
Mr Hill - B
~~Mr Perry - B~~
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Jagelman - B

51010

c (A)

MR STEELE - B

TALKS POST-DRUMCREE: POLICING POLICY OPTIONS

1. I am grateful to Mrs Collins for copying to me her note of 27 September attaching a draft submission to Ministers outlining options in each of four identifiable "pressure point" areas of policing and seeking Ministers' endorsement to take work forward. I apologise for missing the deadline.
2. I must say I found the annexes to the draft paper very comprehensive and a useful treatment of what are undoubtedly the key pressure points with regard to policing in Northern Ireland. On the general presentation of the submission (which, incidentally, I did not at all points find easy to read) I wonder, notwithstanding the Minister of State's strictures, whether we should not be more up-front in considering the pressure points not in terms of improving the service (which must be a key consideration) but rather in terms of widening the acceptability of the RUC which, when one considers the nature of the points identified, is the real issue here. I suggest therefore that an approach which contemplates compromise between these two considerations might be better, indeed failure to

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achieve widespread acceptability is very likely to prevent achievement of improved service. In other words, some of the changes might be worthy of consideration not because they would demonstrably or directly result in an **improved** police service (and in many of the cases identified this could not be guaranteed) but because they would help make the police more widely acceptable. Wider acceptability is a worthy objective in itself, regardless of whether the change directly results in an improved service. Conversely, any such change clearly could not be contemplated where it might have a directly detrimental effect on the service provided.

3. Many of the potential changes identified in the annexes to the draft would of course count for little or nothing viewed in isolation. I therefore welcomed the reference at paragraph 9 to the consideration of these as a package. It might be worth further highlighting this point, perhaps in the penultimate paragraph of the draft cover note.
4. On more detailed points contained in the annexes, I offer the following observations:-

Annex A

Paragraph 2: Badge It is not quite clear to me what you have in mind by "worked" with the UDR/RIR change. Might this be expanded? Also, I wonder if the possible changes outlined could really be regarded as capable of bringing about "significant movement in the SDLP position on support for the police"? Does this not slightly over-state the case?

Annex B - Organisational Issues

5. I am attracted by the proposals at the bottom of page 2 but wonder if they are quite capable of taking the trick? I agree that unionists would almost certainly have a difficulty with it, but fear that nationalists would **not** be convinced with an

CONFIDENTIAL - POLICY

CONFIDENTIAL - POLICY

arrangement which would be rather too reminiscent of HMSUs etc than they would find comfortable. But well worth canvassing.

Annex C - Compositional Issues

6. On a presentational point, in line with current FE practice we should refer (at tirets 1 and 2) to the "economically active" population rather than simply the "working population".
7. On page 2, first tiret, you might also highlight that a 50-50 recruitment initiative would require a change in the FE legislation. (For possible future reference, I should add that work on radical changes of this nature should be taken forward only in close consultation with DED, and Central Secretariat, especially at the time of the Employment Equality Review.)
8. On "targeted special recruitment exercises", I am unclear as to what effect a "mature recruit" or "come home" campaign would have on composition (except perhaps to raise the average age!). Also, might the interleaving with the Garda suggested in the next tiret usefully be extended to include GB forces?

Annex D - Style Issues

9. On **ethos**, I am not clear about the suggested extension of provisions of the Parliamentary Commissioner Acts/Commissioner of Complaints to bring PANI, the RUC and ICPC within the remit of Section 9 of NICA. Are we sure that the extension would have the latter effect?

[Signed: DJW]

D J WATKINS