



QUEEN ANNE'S GATE LONDON SW1H 9AT

2 FEB 1998

The Rt Hon Dr Mo Mowlam MP  
Northern Ireland Office  
11 Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4QE

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*Dear Mo,*

Thank you for copying me your letter of 21 January to the Prime Minister about the consultation paper on police/community links in Northern Ireland.

I am content for the consultation paper to be published. I welcome the steps you are taking to make the police authority more representative of the whole community in Northern Ireland. I also welcome your paper's encouragement of community partnerships against crime which, as you say, is very much in line with the approach we are taking in England and Wales.

I have just a couple of specific comments on your proposals. With regard to Option 1, although I recognise that there may be particular reasons in Northern Ireland for ensuring a good geographical spread of representation on the police authority, this approach is not of course necessarily the best one in fostering a strategic approach to policing. It can run the risk of allowing the business of the authority to be dominated by parochial concerns and this is something which you may wish to bear in mind in considering this option.

With regard to Option 3, on a small point of detail I would be grateful if you could make it clear in paragraph 1.33 of the paper, perhaps in a footnote, that I do not appoint independent members of police authorities in England and Wales. The process of appointing independent members to those authorities, established by our predecessors, is a complicated one. However, in essence it involves my shortlisting candidates from a longer list compiled by an independent selection panel in the police authority area and then the councillor and magistrate members of the police authority itself make the appointment.

I am copying this letter to members of IN, the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and to Sir Richard Wilson.

*Yours etc,*

*Jack*

JACK STRAW