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cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L)
PS/Mr Murphy (B&L)
PS/PUS (B&L)
Mr Thomas (B&L)
Mr Bell
Mr Leach
Mr Stephens
Mr Watkins
Mr Woods (B&L)
Mr Beeton
Mr Brooker
Mr Ferguson
Mr Hill (B&L)
Mr Maccabe
Mr Perry
Mr Priestly
Miss Bharucha
Mrs Mapstone
Ms Salters
Mr Warner
Mr Whysall (B&L)
Mr Travis (B&L)
HMA Dublin
Mr Fergusson RID, FCO
Mr Sanderson, Cab Off
Mr Hallett, FCO

VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE : UUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. I attach a copy of a submission from the UUP given to Mr Murphy earlier today.
2. The submission concerns the Terms of Reference for a proposed Commission to consider a memorial for the victims of violence.

(Signed)

Robert Travis

ULSTER UNIONIST PARTY (UUP)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Commission will examine appropriate ways in which the innocent victims of terrorist violence in Northern Ireland can be commemorated, including the provision of a suitable permanent memorial(s). This will include a review of the position regarding the commemoration of those who have died in the service of the Crown in Northern Ireland.

The Commission will also examine the provision of welfare for the families of such victims and those injured as a result of terrorist violence, including those who were injured whilst in the service of the Crown in Northern Ireland.

The Commission will consult widely in the course of their examination of these matters and will report back to the Secretary of State on this and any other relevant matter which appears to be appropriate to the Commission.

FROM: JENNIE MURPHY
REL DIVISION
21 OCTOBER 1997



1. Mr Beeton(ACB 21/10)
- 2 PS/ Secretary of State(L&B)

cc PS/ Mr Murphy(L&B)
PS/PUS(L&B)
Mr Semple
Mr Thomas
Mr Spence
Mr Watkins
Mr Stephens
Mr Daniell
Mr Bell
Mr Blackwell
Mr Canavan
Mr Maccabe
Mr Woods
Miss Madden
Mr Fergusson
Miss Jude
Mr Warner
Ms Healy

MEMORIAL FOR VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

This submission examines some of the options and difficulties in taking forward the issues of a memorial to the victims of violence. Interest in this has been developing over the past few weeks culminating in discussions between the Secretary of State, Minister of State, Mr Trimble and Mr Donaldson.

History

2. This subject in various forms has been raised by a number of groups. In 1995, following some correspondence between the Prime Minister and a Mr Bethell, a series of meetings were held to discuss the difficulties of this issue. Both NI and Whitehall departments took part. The NIO were asked by the Prime Minister to look into the possibility of a proposed memorial on a contingency basis, since it was agreed that the time was not yet right to take the subject to any final conclusion. Mr Trimble has also raised the subject in the past in relation to names being added to War Memorials. Most recently it has appeared on a list of 'confidence building measures' given to the Prime Minister by the UUP.

3. The conclusions of the inter-departmental meetings in 1995 were that a national memorial in the short to medium term was not advisable and that it would be more appropriate when a political settlement was much nearer conclusion and that if the Government were to give support to any memorial it would have to be one for all those killed as a result of the troubles in Northern Ireland but not restricted to those killed in Northern Ireland. A specific memorial for members of the security forces would only duplicate those at RUC stations and Regimental Headquarters.

Current Suggestions

4. Mr Trimble and the UUP have produced a list of confidence building measures designed to reassure the 'pro-union community'. One of those is a request to 'look urgently at how to best mark the sacrifices made by the victims of violence and help those left behind.' This request was taken up by the Prime Minister in his article in the Newsletter on 13 September and he made reference to this during his visit to Northern Ireland last week.

5. Following the most recent discussions Mr Trimble now feels that he has a commitment from Government that something will be done along the lines of appointing a Commissioner to consult and make recommendations. Some names of Commissioners have been put forward. These include Lord Fitt, Lord Molyneux and Sir Kenneth Bloomfield. Although we understand that Mr Trimble has been given the Sir Kenneth's name and it appears that he has accepted it.

The way forward

6. The Secretary of State wants to announce the appointment of a Commissioner later this week. Because of the wider dimensions to this issue it will be necessary to inform MOD, HO and the Culture Media and Sports Department.

The Commissioners Terms of Reference

7. Should a Commissioner be appointed the terms of reference should be sufficiently general to ensure that there is widespread support for whatever he cares to recommend. We suggest the following:-

“to study the feasibility of additional recognition for the victims of violence arising from the conflict in Northern Ireland. By consulting widely including with Community Groups, Churches and Political Parties and to make recommendations.”

Costs

8. Following previous examples it will be necessary to pay a Commissioner, the going rate is between £500 and £600 per day plus travel and subsistence. It will also be necessary to offer some support staff, there is no existing resource cover for this. Additional provision will need to be made to cover this cost. Further advice will follow.

9. The Secretary of State is asked to agree that Sir Kenneth be approached formally and invited to take up the post of Commissioner and approve the attached draft Press Notice. She is also asked to agree that resources be found from the Block to cover this.

Signed Jennie Murphy

J C MURPHY
REL DIVISION

Draft Press Release

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland today announced the setting up of a Commission to look at possible ways to recognise the pain and suffering felt by the victims of violence over the last three decades. In setting up this commission she hopes that all those who have suffered a loss and who feel that some form of commemoration would be appropriate should take part.

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield has been asked to lead the Commission and will have the following terms of reference:-

“To study the feasibility of additional recognition for the victims of violence arising from the conflict in Northern Ireland. By consulting widely including with Community Groups, Churches and Political Parties and to make recommendations.”

The Secretary of State has asked Sir Kenneth to consult very widely and ensure that his considerations include those victims in Britain and Europe as well as Northern Ireland. A preliminary report should be with the Secretary of State as soon as possible.