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Title: Letter from Seán Ronan, chairman of the Inter-Departmental Unit on the North of Ireland, to NS Ó Nualláin, Secretary of the Department of the Taoiseach, regarding a survey of current contacts between government departments and agencies and their Northern Ireland counterparts.

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ROINN GNÓTHAÍ EACHTRACHA
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
 AONAD IDIR-RÁNNACH UM AN TUAISCEART
 Inter-Departmental Unit on the North of Ireland
 BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 2
 DUBLIN 2

CONFIDENTIAL

24 July 1970

Dear Secretary

Consequent upon the Government's decision (S.9361 U) of 28th May, 1970, the Minister for External Affairs has established an Inter-Departmental Unit comprising representatives of this Department and of the Departments of the Taoiseach and Finance. Part of its task is "to act as a clearing-house for the activities of other Departments in relation to the Six Counties from the point of view of drawing attention to possible conflict with general policy and of encouraging positive action where this is considered desirable".

The IDU has recommended and the Taoiseach has agreed that, unless political complications intervene, the long-standing policy of co-operation between Departments and Northern Ministries and among Departmental offices and semi-State bodies of both areas should be continued and its development encouraged. It is important however that the Government should be well informed on this subject and the IDU would, therefore, be grateful for the co-operation of Government Departments in preparing a survey of the extent, nature and usefulness of current contacts. There is a general awareness that a considerable degree of co-operation exists at this level; it would be useful to have details collected and put on record.

I am, accordingly, to request you to furnish at an early date full information concerning existing relations between your Department, sub-offices and semi-State bodies and Ministries, sub-offices and semi-State bodies in the North. Where Departments feel that obstacles exist or that new areas of co-operation might be developed the IDU would wish to be made aware of these from time to time and generally kept informed of new co-operative activities.

The IDU would welcome any other observation Departments might wish to offer on the question of North/South co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Seán B. Ronan

Cathaoirleach
 Aonad Idir-Rannach um an Tuaisceart

N.S. Ó Nualláin Uas.
 Secretary
 Department of the Taoiseach
 Government Buildings
 Dublin 2.

Mr. MacStóiceigh
Rinnáí Cúnta,

So far as this Department proper is concerned, I can't think of anything apart from the very occasional contact - not more often than once in every couple of years or so - that I have with my opposite number, the Secretary to the Cabinet, at Stormont.

Before replying, we should, of course, consult the Central Statistics Office, the State Paper Office, An Chomhairle Ealaíon & perhaps, the Government Information Bureau.

** If Justice are doing this, per Will Birmingham.*