



F A ELLIOTT CB
Permanent Secretary

FROM: F A ELLIOTT
DATE: 25 August 1995

*Molly
To File
& 3/8/95*

*478/94
cc MR...
C...*

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cc PS/PUS
PS/Sir David Fell
NI Permanent Secretaries
Mr Legge
Mr Thomas
Mr Watkins
Dr Harbison
Mr Hunter
Mr Small
Mr Wylie
Mr Devlin
Dr Campbell
Dr McCoy

*1. cc to Jagdish
2. cc to Harbison
29.8
19 AUG 1995 758/8
Mr Legge
30/8
CONF SEC*

Mr Spence
DOE

**STRUCTURES FOR BELFAST
BUILDING A MORE STABLE AND PEACEFUL SOCIETY**

1. I said in my initial reply to your minutes of 4 August to Sir David Fell that I would aim to let you have further comments later in the month.

BELFAST

2. You will not expect me to come up with a magic solution for the problem of securing better coordination between the many agencies and interests involved in developing Belfast. I think you are right, however, to press on with working up a strategic vision for the city and setting up a city partnership board to oversee its implementation. While it seems attractive to have a single partnership, there are inevitably going to be others - partnerships are all the rage - which we must aim to dovetail with the work of the overall board. For example, a specific partnership to handle a component of the EU peace and reconciliation package will be needed, geared to the objectives of the package and with a

limited life. There should also be partnerships at local ward level involving local groups.

3. Two more thoughts on Belfast. I have referred to the value of including a health and social services dimension in new structures for Belfast. You and the Council's Chief Executive are involved with me in the revival of Belfast as a WHO Healthy City. Our two Community HSS Trusts are working imaginatively with voluntary and community groups at local level to develop social provision in deprived areas. They are an essential element of the future for Belfast.
4. Secondly, a senior colleague who describes herself in her other life as an adopted member of the Shankill community offers the comment:

"We continue to say that Government strategy should be based on the twin-track approach, top-down and bottom-up. There is no difficulty in finding the top, from which to work down, but I believe that we have failed to dig deep enough to hit the bottom from which we should work up. There are many people in the Shankill who feel totally disenfranchised and who never feel that they have an opportunity to voice an opinion which will be heard. We have to find a way of involving people such as these who might not necessarily see the church or the voluntary sector as their representatives."

BUILDING A MORE STABLE AND PEACEFUL SOCIETY

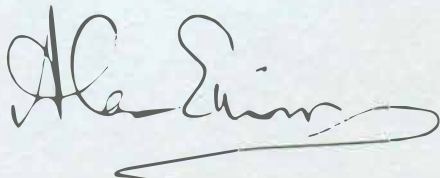
5. From DHSS we strongly support your analysis of the nature of our society's special problem, and the combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches to solving it. It will be a long haul. While as you say achieving a political

accommodation may take 5 years, healing the divisions in our society will in my view take more like a generation, and can only be achieved by a sustained commitment to working with local communities in helping them in building understanding and acceptance of the different perceptions and traditions, in articulating the issues that unite the communities as well as those that divide them, and in promoting mutual compromise.

6. Much is being done and we need to do more. We need to operate the TSN principle more vigorously, aligning resources within programmes more towards the areas of greatest need. In this connection, recent DED and IDB strategies have been encouraging in recognising and promoting TSN.
7. My only disagreement is with the thought that we should be willing to give spending priority to initiatives in this field at the expense of mainstream programmes. I find myself in unwonted accord with the DFP view on this score. The mainstream programmes are essential to building the peace. We need to invest more in our capital infrastructure, not less as the outcome of the Survey threatens. Government would not be thanked for announcing some new spending initiatives while cutting social services for the most deprived people.
8. But we have an unprecedented combination of new sources of money - modest but significant - to invest in building peace. The unique EU peace package is explicitly geared to this objective, including such measures as social inclusion and urban and rural regeneration. The IFI Communities in Action programme is geared to the needs of mothers and children in needy areas. The National Lottery Charities Board, slow to

get going, is now up and running, its first priority being tackling poverty. I recognise that these can be represented as "small beer" by comparison with mainstream spending, and there are concerns about their short-term nature which will need addressed, but I suggest that the twin-track approach involves further skewing of mainline programmes towards need and steering the new sources of funds towards bottom-up initiatives to build a confident and stable society.

9. I look forward with interest to other views.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'F A Elliott', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

F A ELLIOTT