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CONFIDENTIAL - POLICY

MM'era → (77)

FROM: D J WATKINS
D/CENT SEC
28 MARCH 1997

cc Mr Gibson - DED
Mr Beeton
Mr Canavan
Mr Maye

Can we discuss?

Watt 3/14

Will be doing a note to D Gibson
5m 4/14

Mr Stephens - B

ELECTION: CONTINGENCY PLANNING

1. David Fell has shown me a letter of 21 March (received 28 March) from Mo Mowlam to PUS. I am sending copies of this to David Gibson and Tony Canavan with this note.
2. In her references to the ECHR, Dr Mowlam suggests that it would be useful to have briefs prepared on, inter alia under this heading, the background on the existing rights monitoring organisations covering budgets, staffing levels etc.
3. I imagine that much of this material will not be instantly available to REL and that it would need to be brought together on the basis of information from DED and possibly CCRU.
4. I suggest that this is a matter which we might discuss at our meeting (which my secretary will arrange after Easter). We might indeed usefully take that section of Dr Mowlam's letter as at least part of our agenda at that discussion.

[Signed: DJW]

D J WATKINS
SC 28151

DL/LM/3241

CONFIDENTIAL - POLICY

cc. Mr Brian
Mr McLane
Free
- to see for info. We
in CMB had not seen
this. It has implications
for DED in respect of
analysis of anti-discrimination
buses. Mr Gissai's side
has responded (I am to get
a copy). Mr Gissai has picked
it up and it
is included in our response to
Mr Mather's query. ABA: 14-4-97.

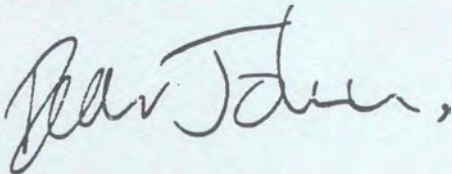
Dr Marjorie Mowlam MP
Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA
Tel. 0171 219 5066
Fax. 0171 219 2466

Sir John Chilcott
Permanent Under Secretary of State
Northern Ireland Office
Whitehall
London SW1A 2AZ

cc: Sir David Fell

21 March 1997



cc Mr Watkins
You will clearly need
to incorporate input into
the brief on ECJR etc.

Jell
28/3

Following our earlier paper for the Northern Ireland Board, I am writing to highlight those areas in Labour policy where it would be very useful to have some preparation work completed by the date of the general election.

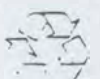
Then, in the event of Labour Government we could act swiftly in these key areas as we intend. This paper does not address issues surrounding the talks process. The focus rather is on the confidence building measures we are committed to.

Naturally, I would not expect you to answer any of these points specifically before the result of the general election is known. However, I thought it would be useful for you to know some of the questions we have in our minds and the priority areas on which we would most like briefing prepared.

POLICING REFORM

We would like preparation to begin for a consultation paper on policing reform. This will be based upon Labour's 1996 paper (enclosed) and our commitment to implement the recommendations of the report by Maurice Hayes.

We will need a full assessment of how the recommendations contained in the RUC fundamental review and those in the HMIC Report can be worked alongside the Labour and Hayes proposals.



INCORPORATION OF THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

It would be very useful to have briefs prepared on:

- the implications of incorporation of the E.C.H.R for the existing body of Northern Ireland law and where you see any particular problems
- the background on the existing rights monitoring organisations (SACHR, EOC etc.) covering, for example, budgets, staffing levels, when they were established and what is their specific remit. X
- We are committed to a review of these organisations and to examining the possibilities for amalgamating bodies into single Northern Ireland Rights Commission. We would welcome any suggestions on the nature of the review and how outside expertise could be best involved.

ANTI TERRORIST LEGISLATION

Following the Lloyd Report we are proposing to begin work on a joint Home Office/NIO consultation paper on new UK-wide anti-terrorist legislation.

In the meantime, Labour is specifically committed to the removal of the internment power (Section 36 and Schedule 3) from Emergency Provisions Act 1996 and to switching the emphasis from the 'certifying in to certifying out' of scheduled offences and to introducing audio recording in holding centres. We would look to make these changes at the earliest opportunity for primary legislation.

It would be very useful to have briefing prepared on any problems or difficulties with our proposals and what you think could be the likely timescale of the changes we are proposing.

PARADES LEGISLATION

Labour is committed to implementing in full the recommendations of the North report.

We will therefore need briefing prepared on what has been implemented already by the time of the election, what timescale we could work to on the steps we want to take and what, in your view could be the implications of our position for the situation in 1997.





PRISONS ISSUES

We will require a report on options for change in Prisons practice including, inter alia, assessment of home and compassionate leave procedures; outworking arrangements; and case by case reviews by the Life Sentence Review Board.

I would also like a brief on all current cases in Northern Ireland where there is pressure for the case to be re-opened or judicially reviewed or where miscarriage of justice is alleged.

BLOODY SUNDAY

Labour is committed to look afresh at any new evidence produced in relation to Bloody Sunday.

It would be very useful to have the materials - both new and old - ready for examination and to have detailed analysis of the materials from the civil servants who are currently looking at them.

I would like a paper on the possible options for a re-examination of this evidence. I am not looking to mount a new inquiry and would like to avoid any further litigation, but I would like to see what the options are for re-examination of the evidence short of this. Could we, for example, use an independent person working to a very tight remit? Not to establish guilt or innocence of any persons, but to say whether or not the Widgery inquiry was properly conducted - taking into account all the relevant evidence, following the right procedures etc.

Thank you very much for your help. I look forward to seeing you again soon.

