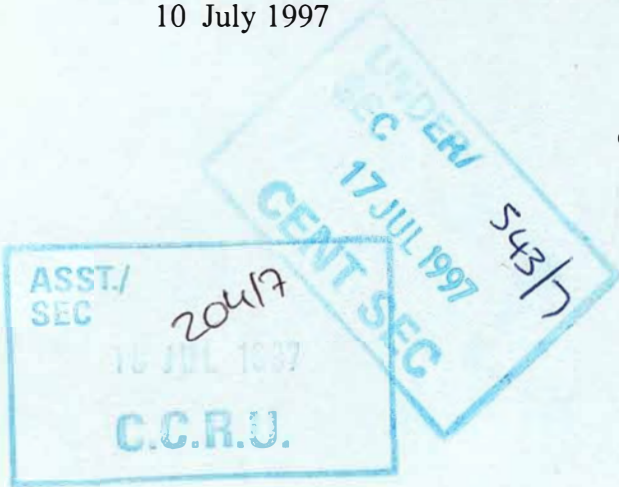
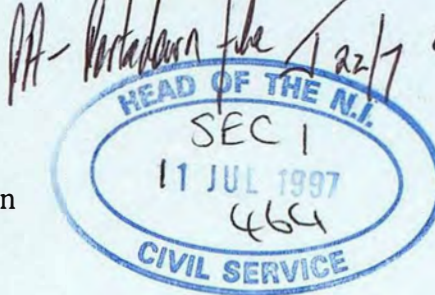


FROM: MUSS R K HUSSAIN
Security Policy and Operations Division
10 July 1997



- cc PS/Mr Ingram (B&L) - O
PS/PUS (B&L) - O
PS/Sir David Fennell - O
Mr Steele - O
Mr Leach - O
Mr Maccabe - O
Mr Perry - O
Mr Margetts - O
Mrs Todd - O
Mr Myles - O

Draw:
Should we not be doing
something public soon
about the CR initiative you are
making one for Portadown. It is
affair already in the public
domain that we see nothing
about something like it
because it was mentioned
in Stephen Leach's memo
of 20 June.

1. Mr Clarke (Amended in light of Orange Order decision last night TC - 11/7)
2. PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - O

MINISTER'S CASE SOS 516/97: CATHOLIC COMMUNITY IN PORTADOWN - ARCHBISHOP SEAN BRADY

The Secretary of State has received a letter from the Archbishop of Armagh in which he reflects the fear felt by the Roman Catholic community in Portadown.

2. The Archbishop portrays a negative image of that community, describing the people as "a poor, economically deprived people" who are seeking "more jobs, better houses, safer streets and a modicum of esteem in their own town". He claims the sectarian murder of Robert Hamill in Portadown "illustrated tragically but powerfully their real situation".
3. Throughout his letter, the Archbishop uses words such as 'fear', 'dread', 'intimidation', 'threats' and 'humiliated' to describe his view of the community's feelings.
4. He acknowledges the fact that work is ongoing constantly to achieve an agreeable solution that respects both sides. He hopes the contents of his letter may be helpful to the Secretary of State in assessing the situation and that the Government will take steps to ensure the safety of the community, of people and property.

5. The attached draft letter for the Secretary of State's consideration assures the Archbishop of the Government's commitment to finding a reasonable solution and states the Government's policy of ensuring equality of opportunity.

(SIGNED)

RAFIA HUSSAIN
SHA Ext 27037

DRAFT

Father Sean Brady
Archbishop of Armagh
Ara Coeli
ARMAGH
BT61 7QY

July 1997

Thank you for your letter of 23 June and your kind words of support.

There are clearly many difficulties to be addressed in Northern Ireland and much that divides the two communities here. I am aware that there are fears and tensions in many areas and note your concerns.

One of the Government's main aims in Northern Ireland is to create the conditions for a just, peaceful and prosperous society. To this end the Government is implementing measures in the political, social and economic fields which will continue to promote economic well-being and stable democratic institutions while seeking to ensure equality of opportunity and equity of treatment for everyone in Northern Ireland.

With regard to the Orange Order's parade along the Garvaghy Road, I recognise the disappointment and anger that many people in the nationalist community will have felt at that decision. As I said at that time, I too was disappointed that such a decision had to be taken. It would have infinitely preferable for the two sides involved to have reached an accommodation between them. I put a considerable effort into brokering a solution ^{which} but would have been acceptable to both sides, but I was unable to achieve this.

I realise the importance of re-building trust and confidence between the Government and the nationalist community. The talks process will, I hope, play a fundamental role in this and the new political arrangements that will emerge from this process, will in particular ensure that the rights, identities and cultures of both traditions will be respected. The decision by the Orange Order to cancel or re-route four of their contentious 12th July parades will help lay the foundations for progress in this area.

May I conclude by assuring you that there are no second class citizens in Northern Ireland and that Government policies are designed to promote equality of opportunity for everyone. We are firmly committed to that process and will not be deflected from that path.