

27 December

166/87

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PS/Dr Mawhinney (PSL) ✓
 PS/Sir K Bloomfield ✓
 Mr Fell ✓
 Mr Parkes) Without
 Mr Gowdy) Annex A
 Mr Kirk)
 Mr Wolstencroft)
 Mr McClarin - DENI)
 Miss Brown)
 MC)

2. Mr. Spence

Mr Walker
JLH

TO: PS/MR NEEDHAM (B&L)
 FROM: R J MINNIS
 [DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT]

FAIR EMPLOYMENT AGENCY - REPORT OF INVESTIGATION INTO THE QUEEN'S
 UNIVERSITY OF BELFAST

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 -2 JAN 1990
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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 As the Minister may be aware, the Fair Employment Agency on 20 December published a report of its investigation under section 12 of the Fair Employment (NI) Act 1976 into the employment practices of Queen's University Belfast (Tab A). The press conference associated with the publication of the report was jointly hosted by the FEA and the University. (Copies of FEA and University press releases are attached -Tab B and C respectively).

1.2 The Queen's University of Belfast was originally established as 'Queens College Belfast' in 1845 and under the 1908 Irish Universities Act it was established as a separate university. It is an entirely autonomous institution established by Royal Charter. As an independent employer therefore it is responsible for its own recruitment and employment practices. The University has 9 faculties comprising 100 separate departments and at the time of the investigation it employed almost 3,000 staff.

1.3 The University's student population during 1987/88 was 6480. Figures from the annual reports of the Catholic Chaplaincy indicate that in the modern University there has been a dramatic



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increase in the Roman Catholic share of the student body. In the early 1950's Catholics represented 19% of students and by 1988 the share had risen to 50.5%.

- 1.4 In 1986 the Agency decided to conduct a formal investigation of the University as part of a broader review of equality of opportunity in the Province's higher education system. A separate report on a formal investigation of the University of Ulster is likely to be published in January.

2. MAIN FINDINGS

- 2.1 A full summary of the Agency's main findings is provided at Tab D.
- 2.2 Statistical analysis in 1987 showed that 77% of the University's staff were assignable to religious groups ("non-assigned" staff being predominantly people who had been born or received their primary education outside Northern Ireland). Of the assigned staff 79% were Protestant and 21% Roman Catholic.
- 2.3 The investigation included a review of the University's recruitment and selection procedures and the report notes particularly the following points:-
- (i) the University's policy to use only The Belfast Telegraph for local advertisements and not The Irish news and News Letter;
 - (ii) the method of recruitment to clerical vacancies in the Secretarial Centre which was by direct approach to Colleges of Further Education and schools rather than by public advertisement;



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(iii) the absence at the beginning of the investigation of a system to monitor the religious composition of employees and applicants.

- 2.4 In a general comment on the substantial degree of under-representation of Roman Catholics in almost all areas of employment the Agency expressed concern that it was only at the time of the investigation that the Province's primary research and educational institution had begun monitoring its own employment patterns and reviewing the effectiveness and impact of its recruitment procedures on the relative employment opportunities of the two communities.
- 2.5 During the course of the investigation the University undertook a number of measures to develop its equal opportunities programme and these are commended in the Report. These measures and other action taken by the University before publication of the Report are summarised at Tab E.
- 2.6 Latest statistical analysis indicates the beginnings of a trend in patterns of employment toward a more representative balance. In overall terms, for example, the proportion of Roman Catholics had risen over a two year period from 21% to 25%, with a matching fall in the proportion of Protestants.
- 2.7 The Agency has undertaken to maintain its role in assisting the University with the development of its Equal Opportunity Programme. The University is to appoint a full-time Administrative Officer with responsibility for equal opportunities. In addition it will implement further equal opportunity measures in respect of selection procedures and in consultation with the Agency will set appropriate goals and timetables.



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3. COMMENT

- 3.1 Critics have quickly seized on the statistical results as evidence of substantial discrimination against Catholics at all levels and are little impressed by the corrective measures taken over the last three years and the evidence of resulting shifts in employment patterns in the direction of a more representative balance. The criticism is well illustrated in the 'Irish News' editorial of 20 December (Tab F).
- 3.2 The Agency has however neither attempted to identify the reasons for the imbalances that have been revealed nor to apportion blame but has chosen instead to focus attention on the steps now taken to rectify the situation and the evidence of improvement that has become available. The initiatives taken by the University are welcomed and particular satisfaction is drawn from the willingness with which it has agreed the Programme of Action.

4. LINE TO TAKE

- 4.1 It is understood that there have been no direct requests to the Department of Education for comment on the Agency's report and that Dr Mawhinney is not planning to make a statement.
- 4.2 In the unlikely event that the Minister is asked to comment it is suggested that he might
- (i) acknowledge that he has seen the report;
 - (ii) express satisfaction with the University's declared commitment to full equality of opportunity amongst its employees; and



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(iii) welcome the measures that have been taken, in co-operation with the Agency, to achieve fair participation between the two communities.

R. J. Minnis

R J MINNIS

22 December 1989



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Fair Employment Agency

PRESS RELEASE TAB B

THE FAIR EMPLOYMENT AGENCY FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
Andras House, 60 Great Victoria Street,
Belfast BT2 7BB, Northern Ireland

Tel: Belfast 240020

CONTACT: Bob Cooper 240020 872071 (after 5.00pm)

EMBARGO: Strict Embargo Until 10.30am Wednesday 20 December 1989

OUB REPORT PUBLICATION - PRESS RELEASE

The Fair Employment Agency today published the report of its investigation into Queen's University Belfast.

The investigation concluded that there were major areas of under-representation of Roman Catholics of Northern Ireland origin relative to Protestants of Northern Ireland origin. At the time of the investigation in January 1987, the University had approximately 3,000 employees. Of these 61% were Protestant, 16% Roman Catholic and 4% were not assigned to a religious group. A further 19% were born or received primary education outside Northern Ireland.

However during the course of the investigation, the University undertook a number of measures to develop its equal opportunities programme both through the establishment of its Equal Opportunities Unit and through its involvement with the Department of Economic Development's Fair Employment Support Scheme.

Further, in consultation with the Agency the University has agreed a Programme of Action designed to put the University's commitment to equal opportunities into more effective and visible practice.

M.T.F.

Commenting on the report, the Chairman of the Fair Employment Agency, Bob Cooper, said

"The Agency welcomes the initiatives taken by the University during the course of the investigation and is particularly pleased with the Programme of Action which it will undertake in the future. By agreeing these measures the University has shown that it is anxious and willing to "widen the net" to attract a greater pool of Roman Catholic applicants for posts in which they are currently under-represented.

The commitment and co-operation of Queen's and its decision to appoint a full-time Administrative Officer with responsibility for equal opportunities represent a clear recognition on the part of the University of the importance of the issue. The University's Officer will join others appointed in the public and private sectors who are engaged in the development of measures to make equality of opportunity in employment a reality. With the advent of the new legislation in January 1990 the Fair Employment Commission looks forward to working with such Officers in the challenge ahead."

Professor John F Fulton, Senior Pro-Vice-Chancellor at Queen's University, said:

"The University welcomes the report of the Fair Employment Agency and appreciates the professionalism with which the investigation was completed. The findings represent a snapshot, taken in 1986-87, of the changing patterns of employment at Queen's. Over the last three years, the University has initiated a number of measures, which are detailed and commended in the Report. The statistics provided by the investigation constitute a base by which the effectiveness of these measures can be assessed. The results show that the trends in the patterns of employment are shifting in the direction of a more representative balance.

M.T.F.

Queen's University has always been, and continues to be, conscious not only of its national and international status and obligations but also of its responsibility to serve the whole community in Northern Ireland."

In the faculties of the University 27% of employees were born or received primary education outside Northern Ireland. Over 70% of all faculty employees were in Medicine, Engineering and Science. In these three faculties the religious composition of those assigned to a religious group was largely similar at 80% Protestant and 20% Roman Catholic. In the remaining faculties which employed smaller numbers of staff, the Roman Catholic share varied from 14% in Economics and Social Science to 30% in Education.

In the other employment divisions there was a greater variation in the religious composition. In the Students' Union, Libraries and Computer Centre it was largely similar, at two-thirds Protestant and one third Roman Catholic. However, in the two largest divisions Administration and Other Staff Roman Catholic representation was less than 15%.

There was significant variation in religious composition across the employment categories (which were constructed from groups of grades). Roman Catholic representation was less than one fifth of those assigned to a religious group in the Academic, Clerical and Administrative categories. It was lowest at 11% in the Administrative category and highest - more than one third - in the Computer category.

Among the Academic staff, the proportion of persons who were born or received primary education outside Northern Ireland was high (46%). Roman Catholic representation among clinical staff was very low (5%) and significantly lower than it was among non-clinical staff (21%).

Roman Catholic representation was low (11%) among Administrative employees. A very low number of male employees in this category were Roman Catholic. This was also true of those in the most senior posts. However, there was some evidence of change in recent years; three

M.T.F.

quarters of all Roman Catholic Administrative employees had less than six years service.

Among the Miscellaneous staff, which included all ancillary employees and those on analogous grades, Protestant representation was over 80% in all employment groups with the exception of catering, shop and bar staff, among whom Roman Catholic representation was 42%. Only 3% of those assigned to a religious group among boilermen, maintenance staff and tradesmen were Roman Catholic.

The Agency found that although the University was one of the first signatories of the Declaration of Principle and Intent in 1976, at the time of the initiation of the investigation, it had not monitored its own employment patterns.

In consultation with the Agency the University has agreed the following programme of action.

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The University will put its commitment to equal opportunities into more effective and visible practice. The following measures will be incorporated into an updated Equality of Opportunity Policy Statement. This will be agreed with the recognised Trade Unions and published widely within the University and externally. The Policy Statement will make it clear that breaches of policy and practice will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.

The University will:

- (i) Appoint a full-time Administrative Officer with day-to-day responsibility for Equality of Opportunity. The Officer will be given adequate resources and support staff to develop, co-ordinate and monitor the effectiveness of the University's equal opportunities policy.

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- (ii) Review its recruitment practice, particularly its advertising practice to ensure
- that vacancies are advertised publicly in such a manner as to ensure that they reach all potential candidates,
 - that candidates from any under-represented community recognise that the vacancies apply to them,
 - that consideration is given to the inclusion, where appropriate, of a statement in advertisements to the effect that applications are particularly welcome from Roman Catholics.
- (iii) Review the equal opportunities implications of its internal promotion procedures and if need be, open up senior vacancies to outside competition in order to widen the pool of applicants.
- (iv) Contact all local schools, with a view to drawing up a programme to inform school leavers of the type of employment opportunities which may arise within the University.
- (v) Conduct a detailed analysis of recent monitoring of current employees and of applicants for posts. The analysis will identify any job category or occupational level in which there is an under-representation of employees or applicants of either community background. Where appropriate affirmative action measures will be identified and goals and timetables will be set. These will be developed in consultation with the Agency.



The Queen's University of Belfast

NOTE TO EDITORS - ACTION TAKEN BY QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY PRIOR TO THE FEA REPORT

1. In May 1986 the University's Personnel Officer was designated as its Equal Opportunities Officer. In September 1986 the University Senate reiterated its commitment to fair employment and agreed to set up an Equal Opportunities Group comprising two Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Honorary Treasurer and the Personnel Officer as Equal Opportunities Officer.
2. In June 1988 a member of academic staff, who was seconded part-time to supervise the setting-up of a monitoring procedure, joined the Equal Opportunities Group. In September 1988 an Equal Opportunities Unit was set up and a clerical officer was appointed.
3. By the end of January 1989, following consultation with the recognised trade unions, the monitoring of staff in post was completed. Since 16 January 1989 all applicants for jobs have been monitored.
4. The University has participated in the DED Fair Employment Support Scheme. Through this Scheme an Action Plan, which the University is currently implementing, has been agreed. Among the actions taken are the following:
 - the University's Equal Opportunity Policy Statement has been revised;
 - a review of selection procedures for all employee groupings has been carried out;
 - a system has been established to monitor recruitment, promotion, training, re-deployment and terminations of employment.

University statistics

The 1986/87 FEA statistics for Queen's showed that 61 per cent staff were designated as Protestant, 16 per cent as Roman Catholic, and 19 per cent from outside Northern Ireland (including Great Britain, the Republic of Ireland and the rest of the world). When only Northern Ireland persons were considered, the results were 79 per cent Protestant, 21 per cent Roman Catholic.

In 1989 the results were as follows - Protestant 61 per cent, Roman Catholic 20 per cent, and 19 per cent from outside Northern Ireland. When only Northern Ireland persons were considered, the results showed that 75 per cent were viewed as Protestant, and 25 per cent as Roman Catholic, showing a marked change over a short

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

1. At the time of the investigation in January 1987, the University had 2,991 staff. Of these 61% were Protestant, 16% were Roman Catholic, 19% were non Northern Ireland persons and 4% were not assigned to a religious group.
2. Some 77% of the University's total staff were assigned to a religious group. The religious composition of those assigned (2304 persons) was assessed as 79% Protestant and 21% Roman Catholic.
3. Over 70% of the employees of the faculties were employed in Medicine, Engineering and Science. The proportion of the two religious groups in these 3 faculties was largely similar at 80% Protestant and 20% Roman Catholic. In the remaining 5 faculties the religious composition ranged from 86% Protestant and 14% Roman Catholic in Economics and Social Science to 70% Protestant and 30% Roman Catholic in Education.
4. Roman Catholic representation was less than one fifth of those assigned to a religious group in the Academic, Clerical and Administrative categories of employment. Among Administrative employees Roman Catholic representation was lowest at 11%.
5. Among Technical staff the religious composition of those assigned to a religious group was 79% Protestant and 21% Roman Catholic. There was however some evidence of change in the proportions of Protestant and Roman Catholic Technical employees with length of service - Roman Catholic representation was greatest among those with shorter service.
6. Roman Catholics represented 19.4% of Clerical employees who were assigned to a religious group.
7. The Computer category of employment showed the highest representation of Roman Catholics at 35.5%.
8. Of employees under the category of Miscellaneous, which includes all ancillary staff and those on analogous grades, 80% were designated as Protestant and 20% as Roman Catholic. Among Boilermen, Maintenance staff and Tradesmen only 3% of those assigned to a religious group were Roman Catholic.

9. The religious composition of Research staff overall was assessed at 74% Protestant and 26% Roman Catholic. Of permanent Research employees however, the Roman Catholic representation (14%) was much lower.
10. Some 73% of those assigned to a religious group among Library employees were Protestant. Roman Catholic representation was lower in the senior grades than it was in the junior grades but not significantly so.
11. The proportion of Roman Catholics in the lower salary categories was found to be significantly higher than it was in the highest salary category.

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE UNIVERSITY

1. During the course of the investigation the University undertook a number of measures to develop its equal opportunities programme and these are commended in the Report.
2. In May 1986 the University's Personnel Officer was designated as its Equal Opportunities Officer. In September 1986 the University Senate reiterated its commitment to fair employment and agreed to set up an Equal Opportunities Group comprising two Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Honorary Treasurer and the Personnel Officer as Equal Opportunities Officer.
3. In June 1988 a member of academic staff, who was seconded part-time to supervise the setting-up of a monitoring procedure, joined the Equal Opportunities Group. In September 1988 an Equal Opportunities Unit was set up and a clerical officer was appointed.
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