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**MEETING HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS ACTION TO COUNTER  
INTIMIDATION OF CIVILIAN STAFF**

Present: Secretary of State  
Mr Scott  
Mr Bloomfield  
Mr Stephens  
Mr Gilliland  
Mr Ferneyhough  
Mr Innes  
Mr Shannon  
Mr Sonnenberg  
Mr Radcliffe (Police Authority)  
Mr Collins (PSA)  
Colonel Norman-Bailey (HQNI)  
Mr Forde (DOE-NI)  
Mr Brennan (DOE-NI)  
Mr Hodges (DFP)  
Mr Thompson (IDB)  
Mr McCormick (RUC)  
Mr Cushley (RUC)

1. This note summarises the meeting's review of the present situation and records the agreed action. It up-dates the note of the previous meeting held on 11 August.

**ASSESSMENT OF PRESENT SITUATION**

2. Police buildings - work is continuing almost normally on 15 out of 22 minor projects, with some instances of intimidation. Work has ceased on 2 major projects, at Enniskillen (80% completed) and Omagh (90% completed). Here efforts are being made to find new contractors. Although the situation is essentially stable, there could be difficulties ahead on the new buildings programme (in 3-4 months at Strabane and in the Spring at Waterside).

3. Army buildings - PSA report growing difficulties with major contractors. In 2 recent instances (one at Holywood) contractors have left the work for a "cooling-off period". Experience shows that the contract can then "freeze". Accordingly, departmental legal advice has been sought. The meeting agreed that there was a distinction to be made between a generalised threat (possibly the

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case in these 2 instances) and a targetted threat. On maintenance and minor new works it is still just possible to cope in the face of some withdrawals of measured term contractors by using small family firms.

4. Supplies - PSA and Police Authority report continuing, but still containable, difficulties over the supply of petrol and heating oil (where there is stand-by capacity), refuse collection (where private firms are substituting for District Councils) and catering (where (eg) dairymen are in competition for business). HQNI are just coping with refuse collection, using (eg) skip hire, and have forward plans to deal with (eg) bread shortages.

5. Building materials - PSA reported that arrangements were in hand to purchase a concrete batching plant for Shackleton, Ballykelly and that regional HQ, Manchester were considering materials supplies arrangements more generally. HQNI had committed about 60 men to the delivery, or the protection of vehicles delivering, building materials.

6. Staff - Police Authority reported that there had been 50 staff transfer requests (out of 3,000 staff) and half of these had been accommodated. There could be difficulties, particularly in the West of the Province, if the intimidation of catering staff were to escalate. PSA reported that there had been one resignation, and that morale was exceptionally low. A number of staff went unaccompanied and without escorts into border areas in the normal course of their duties but there had been no mishaps. Some staff had not turned up for work following the Bell murder in Londonderry (in 2 instances, there was stress related illness). Recruitment of new staff for "difficult" work could be by way of job centres, rather than through advertisements. Staff difficulties were also being felt by DOE (Works Service) NI.

## AGREED ACTION

7. Mortar proofing at Newry RUC station - this work has been approved by GOC and design work for a new roof is in hand. The building work should begin early in November, following procurement of necessary materials.
8. Authority of PSA to employ direct labour - PSA work management are preparing plans to set up labour only contracts should the need arise. HQNI have prepared a trawl list of personnel with skills in the building field amongst the part-time UDR and will keep this in view. The Police Authority will continue to examine the possibility of using direct labour.
9. Sir George Young's letter of 4 August - NIO (Mr Innes) and PSA at HQ level have had a meeting on intimidation as a factor in pricing contracts and will consider further the need for flexibility.
10. Contractors - Mr Stephens to keep in view the need to identify a GB contractor for security force related work in Northern Ireland (see the attached notes - not to all).
11. Foreign contractors - the Police Authority to continue on a contingency basis to explore the implications of using a Hong Kong firm for building work in Northern Ireland.
12. Pre-fabricated buildings - the urgent Police Authority work in conjunction with DOE-NI on producing standard designs is on course. (The buildings will be secure.)
13. Advice for contractors - IDB had reported that industrialists generally were not experiencing problems over intimidation and few were now seeking advice on this. It was confirmed in the meeting that over the last fortnight little use had been made of the NIO contact point.

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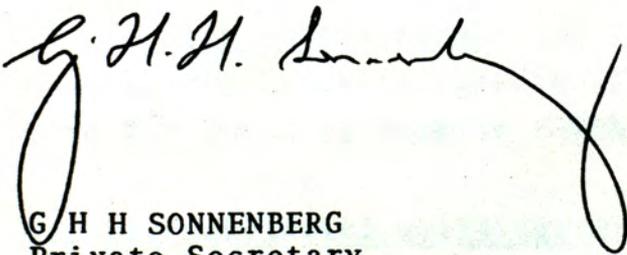
14. Situation reports - NIO (Mr Shannon) will continue to act as a clearing house.

15. Staffing matters - DFP (Mr Hodges) to continue to co-ordinate action on claims from staff for special allowances for working in difficult security situations or in the face of intimidation.

16. Refusal to deliver - as in the note of the previous meeting, efforts should be made to negotiate reductions in contract prices where suppliers stop delivering to police stations or security force bases but supply to central points.

17. PR - NIO (Mr Gilliland) to provide early advice on the possibility of discussing with the media their reporting of instances of intimidation.

18. Next meeting - in about three weeks time (not two weeks); date to be arranged.



G. H. H. SONNENBERG  
Private Secretary

11 September 1986

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