

E.R.

CONFIDENTIAL

cc

Mr Stephens
Mr Fell
Mr Spence
Mr Cole
Mr G Hewitt
Mr J McConnell
Mr J Thompson
(DED)
Mr A Ireland (NIO)

1827

*at the request
of the*

*Miss Hare
19th/3/77*

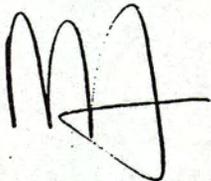
PS/Sir Kenneth Bloomfield

COMMUNITY GROUPS: TWINBROOK TENANTS AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

I attach for consideration a draft submission which I propose to send to PS/Secretary of State concerning Government assistance to the above Association.

The links with PIRA, as indicated in the evidence produced separately, are sufficiently strong to justify a recommendation to the Secretary of State that grant assistance to the group should be terminated.

As has been the practice in the past, I would be grateful if Mr Cole would call with me to see the separate report on which my recommendation is based and to discuss the implications if the Probation Board is directed to withdraw from its commitments to the Association.



NIGEL HAMILTON
Central Secretariat

22 July 1987

CC10/DC/7/4

CONFIDENTIAL

DRAFT

cc PS/Ministers (B & L)
PS/PUS (B & L)
PS/Sir K Bloomfield
NI Permanent Secretaries
Mr Cole
Mr Spence
Mr G Hewitt
Mr J McConnell
Mr J Thompson (DED)
Mr A Ireland (NIO)

1. PS/Mr Stanley (B & L)
2. PS/Secretary of State

COMMUNITY GROUPS: TWINBROOK TENANTS AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

PURPOSE

1. This submission seeks the Secretary of State's approval to the termination of public financial assistance to the Twinbrook Tenants and Community Association.

BACKGROUND

2. Since the Government's policy on payments of public funds to community groups with paramilitary links was first announced on 27 June 1985, there have been 27 cases referred to the Secretary of State. In 16 cases public financial assistance was refused or terminated. In the remaining 11 (including 2 revised decisions) assistance was agreed, subject in a number of cases to certain conditions.

3. The Twinbrook Tenants and Community Association has operated an ACE scheme in West Belfast since September 1983. The scheme currently comprises 6 posts in the provision of advisory, social, recreation and educational facilities. ACE funding amounts to approximately £30,000 per year. The ACE funding agreement terminates on 31 August 1987 at which stage it was intended that the Twinbrook project, along with other ACE projects, would come under the auspices of a West Belfast consortium but still retain its existing management committee. All employees on the project are due to terminate on 31 August 1987.
4. The Twinbrook Association is also funded, under the Lynx crime prevention strategy, by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) from cash provided by the NIO. During 1985/86 PBNI paid £2,270 to the Association and beginning with 1986/87 has entered into a commitment to provide funds of £10,400 per annum for 3 years - the sum being revised in the light of inflation and the Board's other commitments. Funding in 1987/88 will in fact be of the order of £12,155 of which £2,600 has already been paid. A letter offering such funding was issued to the Association on 23 June 1986.

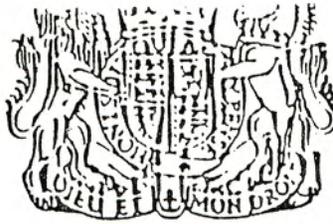
DISCUSSION

5. The Secretary of State will note from the confidential advice submitted separately that several members of the Twinbrook management committee have close republican paramilitary connections. There is a distinct danger of public funding to the group being used to further the aims and influence of PIRA in the West Belfast area. The paramilitary links are sufficiently strong to justify a recommendation that in accordance with the policy outlined in the Parliamentary statement on 27 June 1985 (copy attached) Government assistance to the group should be withdrawn as soon as possible.
6. Under the ACE scheme a contract with a group can be terminated at 3 months' notice but as noted above the current agreement with the Twinbrook group runs to end August only. The group has yet to submit claims for the months of July and August - a total of some £5,000 - but against this the group is holding an advance of £3,528 ACE money.
7. Funding from the Probation Board can be reduced in cases where the PBNI believes that its limited funds could be better spent on other projects. In

addition under the Probation Board (NI) Order 1982, there is provision for the Secretary of State to direct the Board as to the use and expenditure of the sums it receives from the NIO. Legal advice is being sought on the implications of PBNI withdrawing from its existing commitments to the Association.

RECOMMENDATION

8. The Secretary of State is asked to agree that:-
- (i) public financial assistance to the Twinbrook Tenants and Community Association be terminated as soon as possible;
 - (ii) DED terminates ACE funding to the group after 31 August 1987 and recovers the advance already made from outstanding claims; and
 - (iii) NIO and Central Secretariat officials should, in light of legal advice being obtained, discuss with the Probation Board the most expeditious means of terminating funding to the Association under the Lynx scheme.



NORTHERN IRELAND
Information Service

27 June 1985

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

The Secretary of State, Rt Hon Douglas Hurd MP, today gave the following written parliamentary reply to Mr John H Taylor (Solihull), who had asked what plans Mr Hurd has to ensure that Government financial support for community activities is not used to foster the aims and objectives of paramilitary interests.

Mr Hurd: "It is the Government's policy to encourage voluntary and community-based activity which has the genuine aim of improving social, environmental or economic conditions in areas of need, and various grant-aid schemes exist for such purposes. However I am satisfied, from information available to me, that there are cases in which some community groups, or persons prominent in the direction or management of some community groups, have sufficiently close links with paramilitary organisations to give rise to a grave risk that to give support to those groups would have the effect of improving the standing and furthering the aims of a paramilitary organisation, whether directly or indirectly. I do not consider that any such use of government funds would be in the public interest, and in any particular case in which I am satisfied that these conditions prevail no grant will be paid."