

CONFIDENTIAL

MH SC/9

Mr N Hamilton
Central Secretariat
Stormont Castle
BELFAST

9/9/87

Mr Donohoe

There is considerable confusion over who is doing what about the meeting. My understanding is that D&E are taking the lead, co-ordinating, briefing etc.

Can you check this out please and if so, pass the attached to the D&E Co-ordinator.

9/9/87

SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING WITH DEPUTATION FROM
DERRY CITY COUNCIL

I refer to Mrs S Hamilton's minute of 26 August 1987 to you on the above.

Please find enclosed defensive briefing for the Secretary of State on Magee University College.

S. Campbell

PP

J R E MacDONALD
HQ/Co-Ordination Branch
DENT

8th September 1987

AH

CONFIDENTIAL

SECRETARY OF STATE'S MEETING WITH DEPUTATION FROM DERRY CITY COUNCIL
MAGEE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

1. INTRODUCTION

Arrangements have been made for the Secretary of State to meet a deputation from Derry City Council and it is possible that higher education provision in the City may be raised. In particular, the City Council has pressed the DOE for the creation of an academic (university) precinct in the area of Magee.

The Secretary of State may wish to mention the loss of three lives at Magee campus in March.

LINE TO TAKE: GENERAL

The Secretary of State may wish to mention that the special needs of the north-west of the Province have been acknowledged by Government and a substantial programme of capital development, in step with an ambitious academic plan prepared by the University, has been agreed and is in progress.

Tribute could be paid to the role played by local industrialists and businessmen who were actually involved in the Derry Civic Committee, which met under the chairmanship of Mr Michael Canavan, to press the claims of the Magee campus in the period leading up to the establishment of the University of Ulster.

LINE TO TAKE: ACADEMIC PRECINCT

While land adjacent to the Magee campus could offer scope for further development there is no evidence to suggest that the needs of the University cannot be met by the current development, at least until the mid 1990s.

LINE TO TAKE: RECENT DEATHS AT MAGEE CAMPUS

The Secretary of State may wish to express his regret at the loss of three lives at Magee campus in March. The Government has pledged that it will do everything in its power to rid Northern Ireland of terrorism; in seeking to achieve this goal it relies on the continued support of all sections of the community. The Government's policy of extending opportunities in higher

education to the whole community of Northern Ireland is a commitment which will not be swayed by acts of mindless violence.

GENERAL BACKGROUND

1. There has been provision for higher education in Londonderry in one form or another, since the establishment of Magee University College in 1865. From 1971 until the merger of NUU and the Ulster Polytechnic in 1984, Magee operated as an out-centre to NUU offering mainly foundation studies for mature students seeking university entrance and a range of part-time professional courses. It is now one of the four campuses of the University of Ulster and has become a significant element within the new institution.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN

2. A Development Plan for the Magee campus has been drawn up by the University of Ulster. The full implementation of this would provide for approximately 750 additional places bringing the total capacity to 1,000. This development is being supported by Government and an additional £6.5m has been made available to the University for the entire building programme which is expected to take about five years to complete. In March 1987 the University announced the award of contracts for the first phase of the building programme costing some £3.3m and work has now started.

The new building will provide facilities for technology, art and design, computer studies and information technology, as well as library facilities.

STUDENT NUMBERS

3. Numbers at Magee have trebled since 1984; and there are now approximately 700 full-time equivalent places (FTE) (including 75 from outside NI).

ACADEMIC PRECINCT

4. There has been some discussion on the designation of an academic precinct in the area of Magee. This is a matter for DOE and any such proposal would have to be brought forward as an amendment to the present area plan with provision for the usual public representation and, if necessary, public enquiry. The present area plan is effective until 1996 and the scope of

developments now being planned at Magee is considered adequate to meet the anticipated student demand until that date.

The purchase of Aberfoyle House and a small area of the estate to provide access was considered by the University as a possible option for the development of the Magee Campus. DENI indicated its willingness to consider any proposals made by the University with regard to the development of Magee but required assurance that it was not possible or cost-effective for the University to build on existing property before considering any fresh acquisition. The University's preference was for their present development plan which provides purpose-built accommodation on an integral site rather than acquiring a listed building which would not be usable without extensive adaptation.