

GAV2 JARDINE 1144

090/92/EJ

- cc: Mr Bell
- Mr Hamilton
- Mr Cooke
- Mr D A Hill
- Mr D J R Hill
- Mr Jardine

From: Mr T McCusker
CCRU

3 February 1992

To: Ms Bryony Lodge
SIL

BUILDING LINKS WITH THE UNIVERSITIES

1. Thank you for copying your note to Peter Bell and the suggested draft about building links with the universities. While CCRU does not have an extensive list of all its contacts with universities, the attached Annex outlining the areas of research presently funded and the academics involved may be useful background information.
2. You probably already know that John Darby is the experience of CCRU and PPRU is that academics greatly welcome more contacts with Government and an acknowledgement that their work may be of some help in the policy making process. When CCRU began extending its academic contacts, it followed one of the models outlined in your draft paper to set up informal contacts through working lunches. These were hosted by CCRU and PPRU and had a simple framework to explain the aims and objectives of CCRU and to explore areas which might be

mutually beneficial. In this we discovered two important facts. First, the links with Government were not many and that the main process tended to be a reactive one where universities put forward proposals for research or studies on different aspects of Government policies. Rarely was there any pro-active work by Government to either stimulate thinking within universities about prominent issues or to commission work on evaluation of policy and programme impact. Second, the links between academics are somewhat limited and this leads to a certain amount of duplication and re-inventing of wheels.

3. In the initial exercise we involved over 50 academics in these informal discussions and we challenged them to consider what more could be done by the universities in the area of community relations and invited them to come and see us at any time to discuss proposals. Since then our contacts with the universities have developed and various discussions eventually led to the emergence last June of a research strategy for Government in the area of community relations. The emergence of that strategy has further developed relationships by encouraging dialogue on a range of research options. A copy of the research document is attached for information.
4. You probably already know that John Darby is the academic advisor to CCRU and that we often use other academics from the Centre for the Study of Conflict in a variety of commissions. For example, Dr Tony Gallagher assists CCRU in some aspects of the TSN debate and Clem McCartney undertakes development work with groups.
5. Strengthening the links with Coleraine in particular will be useful in view of the proposed UN Centre on Conflict Studies. The current Vice Chancellor is the

driving force behind this and, if successful, the University of Ulster at Magee will become a major centre in this area of work.

6. Perhaps the best way forward might be for a senior NIO official to host an informal lunch/dinner with the two Vice Chancellors and a number of senior academics from both universities. This could open the debate and perhaps give both sides a steer for future developments.
7. Finally, one point of detail on paragraph 6 of the draft paper. I know NIO dearly loves CCRU but I do not think we can be described as being within NIO and not part of the NI Departments.

T McCUSKER

Attached is a first draft of a paper to the NIO on 22/92 Allocations. I would like to submit this on 27 January and should be grateful for contributions and comments by lunchtime 24 January.

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