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FROM: CHRISTINE COLLINS
Police Division
23 September 1994

- cc: PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
- PS/PUS (B&L) - B
- Mr Legge - B
- Mr Steele - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Lyon - B
- Mr Daniell - B
- Mr Wood (B&L) - B
- Mr Marsh - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Brooker - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mr Perry - B
- Dr Rosborough
- Mr Cleland
- Mr Beeton
- Mr Millar, Info Services - B
- Miss Bharucha

PS 26/9

UNCLAS
SEC 1240/9
23SEP1994
CENT SEC

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (B&L) - B

CONFERENCE OF COMMUNITY AND POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEES - COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL, KELLS

The Secretary of State has accepted an invitation from Mr Cook, the Chairman of the Police Authority to attend the Fourth CPLC Conference and to address the gathering. The Authority is aware that the Secretary of State will leave at 12.05 pm.

when?

2. The development of the CPLC network throughout the Province has been the main thrust of the Police Authority's community effort over the past five years. CPLCs are independent of both the Authority and the police. There are twenty-eight committees in total and although most are District Council based, some draw their membership from the general community. The committees provide a forum for the police and the public to consult on local community issues.

3. The Secretary of State is timetabled to speak for twenty minutes at 10.55. A draft speech has already been submitted (my submission of 20 September).

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4. The delegates at the conference will be made up of representatives from the majority of local councils and all the CPLCs. In addition to Authority members and the RUC, there will be delegates from a variety of interested organisations, including the churches, the Community Relations Council, Lay Visitors, Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the CBI. We understand that Ken Maginnis and Ian Paisley Jnr will also be attending the conference as delegates.

5. The Secretary of State has indicated that he is willing to take questions from the audience for about ten minutes. The main concerns of the audience ought to be community issues, and the impact of policing structures reform upon the community. Topical issues related to the ceasefire are also likely to be raised. This will provide an opportunity for reassurance on these issues to a fairly broad spread of 'responsible' (and solid) citizens. A question and answer brief is at Annex A. I am grateful to all those who provided inputs for this.

6. The press are not admitted to the Conference, but given the significance of the occasion, a press release will be issued after the Secretary of State's speech. A draft press release has been submitted separately by the Press Office for the approval of the Secretary of State.

7. The key personalities whom the Secretary of State is likely to meet are:

Mr David Cook, Chairman

Mr Pat Armstrong, Vice-Chairman

Mr Sean Neeson, Conference Director and Authority Member

Mr Reid Armstrong, Chief Executive of Authority

Chief Superintendent Robin Long - D Department, Operations Support

Superintendent David Stewart - Sub-Divisional Commander, Waterside; RUC Speaker

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Personality notes (including notes on all the members of the Police Authority) are at Annex B.

8. The text of Mr Cook's speech and of Superintendent Stewart's speech will be forwarded separately (not to all); as soon as they are available.

9. Mr Legge, Dr Smyth (PAB), Miss Bharucha and I will also attend the Conference.

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* important to encourage people to get involved in objective change to have a say in how their community is
CHRISTINE COLLINS
Police Division

* important to get people involved in other areas - eg Crime Prevention - and overcome the feeling of helplessness.

Q. How to make policing as "open and visibly accountable as possible"?

* see this as vital to successful policing in Northern Ireland

* reports: the Chief Constable already publishes an Annual Report, and HMIC's reports are now published. We propose that the new Authority will produce a report for publication; and that the costed police plan will also be published

* the police already have targets and goals. The proposed system of objective setting is a logical next step from this. It will take place in a more open way so that the public will know what the goals of the police are, and how successful they are in achieving them

Q AND A BRIEF

Q. "Partnership between the police and the community": what can be done in practical terms to improve this?

- CPLCs are an important interface between the police and the community: encouraging and facilitating contact and dialogue over a very broad range of issues - young people, traffic, crime prevention etc.
- removing any barriers of mistrust which exist: see signs that this is happening. Hope that this will continue
- important to encourage people to get involved in objective setting. Real chance to have a say in how their community is policed.
- important to get people involved in other areas - eg Crime Prevention - and overcome the feeling of helplessness.

Q. How to make policing as "open and visibly accountable as possible"?

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- reports: the Chief Constable already publishes an Annual Report, and HMIC's reports are now published. We propose that the new Authority will produce a report for publication; and that the costed police plan will also be published
- the police already have targets and goals. The proposed system of objective setting is a logical next step from this. It will take place in a more open way so that the public will know what the goals of the police are, and how successful they are in achieving them

new legislation will remove the unclarity of the present system and put in place clearer lines of accountability so that the public can see who is responsible for which decisions.

Q. You talk about "freedom from political control" - but proposals will mean political control of the police through the purse.

- the RUC is unique among UK forces in receiving 100% of its funding by way of central Government grant
- the Secretary of State is accountable to Parliament for these funds
- the sums involved are immense - nearly £2 million a day - but ultimately they are finite
- it would be a dereliction of duty on the part of Government if it did not satisfy itself that these sums were being used as effectively as possible
- this is why we propose to introduce a costed police plan which will clearly set out the resources available and the priorities of the community - established through the Police Authority - in line with which those resources should be applied. The community itself will then be able to assess for itself whether resources are being directed wisely.

Q. What about people who are too scared to play an active part in the policing of their community?

- appreciate the problems which those who wish to be involved in policing often face
- must guard against the dangers of self-appointed vigilantes, and maintain standards
- we must all play our part in encouraging the community to get involved in policing: the RUC, PANI and Government have not

been sluggish about this, and will be paying careful attention to it in future close liaison with local people

- hope that this situation will improve. security policy, and must remain accountable to Parliament for this.

Q. What sort of objectives would the new Authority set?

- You talked a lot about the accountability of the NUC: what the Authority will represent the wishes and concerns of the community to the police - eg for a focus on burglary, or the traffic policing where road accidents are a clear cause for concern
- the Police Authority will have a vital role to play as the it will be for all local people to make their priorities and wishes known, whether these concern road safety, burglaries, or more visible policing; it will be for them to decide.

Q. How would the Authority go about seeking the views of the community?

- What will the statutory definition of the Police Authority's matter on which I will value views
- there is already a statutory requirement for the Authority to seek the views of the community in policing adequate and efficient police force"
- we intend to make it a duty of the new Authority to take these views into account when setting its objectives y's important role in representing the community
- CPLCs have done excellent work in this area
- the definition in legislation of the functions of all three intend to make policing structures more open to encourage to greater participation by the public. and to any specific views but feel that perhaps each party should have an obligation so to

Q. What will be the new Authority's involvement in security matters?

- the Authority will be involved in setting objectives to make clear the public's wishes on the impact on the community of all aspects of policing, including those emanating from security operations. For example, Authority could set an objective for maintenance of an efficient, effective, and acceptable police

recognition of a local Council of major security force operations; and close liaison with local people

- I have a unique role in determining security policy, and must remain accountable to Parliament for this.

Q. You talked a lot about the accountability of the RUC: what about the Secretary of State and the Police Authority?

- the Secretary of State is, of course, answerable to Parliament
- the Police Authority will have a powerful input at the strategic level into the discharge of its duties.
- the Police Authority will have a vital role to play as the channel of communication between the community and the Secretary of State
- the Police Authority will have to ensure that it reflects the wishes and fears of the community in the discharge of its duties.

Q. What will the statutory definition of the Police Authority's role be in the new legislation?

- at present, under the Police Act 1970, the Police Authority is charged with "securing the maintenance of an adequate and efficient police force"
- this definition does not encompass the Authority's important role in representing the community

Q. What will the proposals mean for the Authority's civilian staff?

- the definition in legislation of the functions of all three parties will have to reflect accurately their contribution to the tripartite structure: look forward to any specific views but feel that perhaps each party should have an obligation so to conduct their functions and fulfil their duties as to secure the maintenance of an efficient, effective, and acceptable police service.

Q. [The role and status of the Police Authority will be diminished as a result of the proposals.]

working group of officials has been set up on which the we want to see a strong and dynamic Authority - we believe that the proposals contained in the consultation document will achieve this

- the public perception of the Authority as strong and effective is very important
- for the first time, through setting objectives and then monitoring the Chief Constable's costed police plan, the Authority will have a powerful input at the strategic level into policy.

Q. [Operational independence of the Chief Constable.]

- political direction and control of the RUC is unacceptable
- committed to safeguarding the Chief Constable's operational independence in statute
- but the police must also be accountable to the public if they are to command the support and confidence of the community. For this reason, one of the main aims of our proposals is to strengthen the accountability mechanisms.

CIVILIAN STAFF

Q. What will the proposals mean for the Authority's civilian staff?

- the Chief Constable will be responsible for the management of civilian staff and he will need a civilian management structure to support the discharge of his responsibilities
- all options in relation to the employment are being carefully examined: position of employees is safeguarded in law (TUPE)

a working group of officials has been set up on which the Authority are represented - this issue is part of the working group's remit.

Q. [How will proposed reforms be implemented?]

- the reforms which are proposed will require legislation. I am aware of the strength of feeling which was demonstrated during the consultation process in favour of a Bill rather than an Order in Council. The constraints of Parliamentary time will also have to be taken into account in deciding how to move forward. And of course, if there is a full and permanent end of terrorism, the implications of this would need to be considered - but too early to speculate at present.

Q. [Transferring control of resources from the Authority to the Chief Constable will weaken the Authority and mean political control through the purse.]

- policing resources are already provided by the Secretary of State who must balance the allocation of resources for policing against competing demands. PANI cannot do this
- the Authority will continue to be involved in resources through the costed police plan: and will have a real strategic influence (for the first time) through setting objectives to be reflected in that plan.

Q. The Costed police Plan is meaningless - the Chief Constable can ignore it; how can the police be made more accountable when they are being given so much control of the budget?

- the costed police plan is anything but meaningless. It is the Chief Constable's method of telling the Police Authority and Government, (the providers of the money) just exactly how the Chief Constable means to spend the resources directly under his control over a 12-month period. It links into the Public Expenditure System and as such will suffer the same rigors of

examination as any other spending Department - including ultimately to the Public Accounts Committee.

manpower levels.

- the costed police plan must reflect the community objectives agreed between the Chief Constable and the Police Authority. The Authority must endorse the Chief Constable's spending plans before resources will be made available

PERMANENCE

- the Chief Constable as holder of the police grant (currently the largest single area of expenditure in Northern Ireland) will be answerable, along with the Permanent Under Secretary of the NIO, to the Public Accounts Committee who will use the detailed costed police plan as the basis of their scrutiny of police expenditure.

CEASEFIRE IMPLICATIONS

Q. What effect will the current ceasefire or any future political developments have on the Government's policy for the police service?

- policing matters will obviously be included in any future political discussions
- detailed work still needs to be done on the proposals: the consensus which the consultation process revealed shows that there is a firm foundation, of agreed principles, for reform
- aim is to establish a framework which can respond to whatever specific arrangements might be agreed for the future.

Q. Is the Government considering a reduction in RUC manpower levels following the announcement of the ceasefire?

- force levels have always been kept under review
- the Government will continue to ensure that the strength of the RUC is adequate to uphold law and order in Northern Ireland

too early to consider whether any changes are necessary in manpower levels.

- if reductions are possible, there will be careful planning, and full consultation with all the interested parties.

PERMANENCE

Q. You say you are not yet certain of permanence - what more do you need?

- we need to be sure that Sinn Fein's commitment to exclusively peaceful methods is without reservation and that the IRA's violence is over for good. Everything in the past few weeks points to that being the case, but after so much violence it is natural and right to remain cautious.

Q. You say things are moving in the right direction - what evidence?

- we have had 4 weeks without IRA violence. The original statement has been followed up by Sinn Fein spokespeople - including the agreed statement issued by the Taoiseach, John Hume and Gerry Adams. There has also been a letter in the Irish News from IRA prisoners supporting Martin McGuinness's statement that the ceasefire will hold "in all circumstances". This is a growing weight of evidence that the cessation is meant to last and the commitment to democratic methods is real.

Q. If that's so why not accept it and stop obstructing the peace process?

- the Government is not obstructing peace. The peace process is something we have worked hard to create and carry forward. We have also demonstrated that our response to developments will be positive.

Q. If you cannot accept it's permanent why make concessions to Sinn Fein?

- we have made no concessions to Sinn Fein. The Chief Constable and the GOC have felt able to make some adjustments to the profile of the security forces in the light of their professional judgement to the level of threat. If the security situation continues to improve that will naturally be reflected in future decisions.

REFERENDUM

Q. Referendum - Does this apply only to the outcome of talks? Are there lesser changes to government in NI which would be covered?

- no. The 26 March 1991 statement said that the outcome of the talks would have to be acceptable to the people. I have spelt out how I believe this ought to happen.

Q. What happens if the talks have broken down? Referendum on anything else the Government might propose for Northern Ireland?

- we are committed to the success of the talks and I am confident that we will be able to reach agreement in them.

Q. Do the Northern Ireland parties support a referendum?

- they will offer their own reactions but I am confident that this will be widely recognised as a fair way to endorse whatever emerges from the Talks process.

Q. Will there be a referendum in the Republic? Will they be simultaneous?

- not for me to speak on behalf of the Irish Government although it is widely recognised that any amendment of the Irish constitution would require a referendum. The mechanics of how a

Referendum would be conducted is a matter for discussion between the Talks participants.

Q. What threshold would the referendum require for the endorsement of a package; who will decide how the question is phrased, etc?

- the mechanics of how the referendum would be conducted is a matter for discussion between the Talks participants.

Q. Isn't this a totally novel idea in terms of the Talks process?

- no. It builds on the agreed Talks statement of 26 March 1991 which said that "the outcome (of the Talks process) will need to be acceptable to the people". The Prime Minister's announcement in Belfast explained how that might be done. Many commentators have speculated that this could be one way of securing endorsement for an eventual package.

Q. Does this make the provisions allowing for a border poll, in the 1973 Constitution Act, redundant?

- no. The Constitution Act declares that "in no event will Northern Ireland or any part of it cease to be part of Her Majesty's dominions and of the UK without the consent of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland voting in a poll" held for this purpose. In other words the Constitution Act offers a guarantee that Northern Ireland will remain in the UK so long as that is the wish of a majority. The referendum deals with the different issue of whether any package that emerges from the Talks process commands widespread support in Northern Ireland.

Q. Isn't this handing the Unionists a veto over any eventual settlements?

- I don't see it in those terms. The whole objective of the Talks process is to produce a package of measures by agreement between the two Governments and the constitutional parties. A

referendum would give everyone in Northern Ireland an opportunity to endorse whatever package emerges.

Q. Where are we going on the Joint Framework Document?

- no question, as far as HMG is concerned, of delaying further work on the document. The two Governments have made good progress but further work remains necessary
- I want to see the document finalised as soon as possible so that the two Governments have an agreed basis for going back to the main constitutional parties and carrying the Talks process forward.

Q. Loyalists and Joint Declaration?

- the principles in the Joint Declaration are equally valid for both communities in Northern Ireland. We call on all those who use or support violence to end it now. The Declaration confirms that "democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process, are free to participate fully in democratic politics and to join in dialogue in due course between the Governments and the political parties on the way ahead".

BROADCASTING RESTRICTIONS

Q. Why are you lifting the restrictions now?

- encouraging progress has been made in the last few weeks. Terrorist violence in September 1994 is not at the same level as in October 1988, when the restrictions were introduced. Developing events have enabled us to make this step.

Q. Does this mean that you accept the IRA ceasefire is permanent?

- the removal of the restrictions is a response to changed circumstances.

Why are you lifting it from Loyalist organisations, who continue to bomb and kill?

- I hope that this decision will encourage all the organisations in respect of which the restrictions applied to end their violence for good.

Q. What do you hope to achieve?

- lifting the restrictions sets a test for Mr Adams. Will he now declare that the IRA's violence is over for good? It provides an opportunity for the public to hear how Mr Adams responds to this question. It also enables other paramilitary organisations to follow suit. Let them do so now.

Q. Can you foresee circumstances when you would re-impose the restrictions?

- we will be keeping the situation under constant review.

EXCLUSION ORDERS

Q. Why do you not now lift the exclusion orders?

- it would be far too early to do so. Under the legislation, the Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland must use their powers to prevent acts of terrorism. The time will be right when events have proved that violence has come to a permanent end.

Q. Exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein

- our approach will continue to be measured, and we shall take one step at a time. The crucial issue is that there should be a permanent and established cessation of violence. So far the indications are that it is intended to last, but we must be sure

that before we move to bring Sinn Fein into the normal democratic political life of Northern Ireland - initially through exploratory dialogue.

Q. Exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein? When? What purpose?

- we are ready to enter preliminary exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein within 3 months of a permanent renunciation of violence. Our judgement of the right time to enter that dialogue will be made in the light of all the circumstances. We have laid down no pre-conditions for its beginning other than that there should be a permanent and established cessation of violence. Naturally we will take account of evidence on the ground, as well as public statements, informing our judgement of whether that test has been met in practice

- the purposes of such dialogue would be:

1. to explore the basis upon which Sinn Fein would come to be admitted to an inclusion political talks process to which the British Government is committed but without anticipating the negotiations within that process;
2. to exchange views on how Sinn Fein would be able over a period to play the same part as the current constitutional parties in the public life of Northern Ireland;
3. to examine the practical consequences of the ending of violence

- the reason for the time lapse between a permanent cessation of violence and exploratory dialogue is to enable commitment to exclusively peaceful and democratic methods to be fully demonstrated.

Q. Will there be an amnesty for prisoners?

- there will be no secret deals for peace. The criminal law will continue to be applied vigorously with the intention of bringing

those responsible for terrorist crime before the Court. Those convicted of crimes must expect to serve out their sentences.

2. Will the IRA have to surrender their arms?
- our position is well known. Nobody should hold illegal weapons, and we shall continue to uphold the rule of law. In any event one purpose of the "preliminary exploratory dialogue" which we may enter with Sinn Fein within 3 months of a permanent and established cessation of violence is to "examine the practice the consequences of the ending of violence". The surrender of illegal weapons would of course provide some of the most convincing evidence of good faith.

EMERGENCY LEGISLATION

- with an end to violence from all paramilitary groups there would, of course, be a prospect of radical alterations to the anti-terrorist legislation
- it is too soon to speculate about specific provisions. All aspects of emergency legislation are kept under constant review and will remain in force no longer than is necessary.

FORCE LEVELS

- the security forces in Northern Ireland will continue to assess the threat and maintain their vigilance to protect the community from terrorist violence from whichever side of the community it may come
- the Government has long made clear that in the event of a genuine established cessation of violence, then there will of course be major consequences for the maintenance of law and order, and the deployment of troops. But there is no question of military support for the police being reduced while that support is needed.

ROAD CLOSURES

security forces have advised that closure orders on ten border crossing points in Co Fermanagh are no longer necessary, and the Secretary of State accordingly rescinded the orders on Friday 16 September

- closure orders remain and can be justified only where the security forces consider that they are necessary to protect the public
- decisions to close border roads are based on the advice of the security forces. If the ceasefire breaks, any decision to close will be taken only after the most careful consideration of the threat of attack
- the scope for further reopenings will be reviewed in coming weeks. Where judged appropriate, further roads will be reopened
- decisions on further reopenings will be dependent on the security situation prevailing at the time and will only be taken when it is judged safe and sensible on security grounds.

PERSONALITY NOTES

Reid Armstrong Esq, Secretary and Chief Executive - Appointed Secretary and Chief Executive in April 1991. A direct recruit to PANI, he joined in 1972 as a Principal when he was appointed to the Information Services. His earlier career was in journalism.

Chief Superintendent Robin Long - Has 27 years' service; has spent most of his career in occupational posts throughout Northern Ireland. Now responsible for the Operational Support function within the force.

Superintendent David Stewart - Has 21 years' service in the RUC; has held a variety of posts in Belfast and in rural areas. Formerly Staff Officer to the Chief Constable, now Sub-Divisional Commander in Waterside.

Police Authority for Northern Ireland - Appointed 29 June 1994

Chairman

David S Cook Esq - Mr Cook is a practising lawyer and was Lord Mayor of Belfast from 1978 to 1979 and was a member of Belfast City Council from 1973 to 1985. He was a member of the Northern Ireland Assembly from 1982 to 1986. He is active in public life and has been Chairman of the Northern Ireland Voluntary Trust since 1979. He is Chairman of the Craigavon and Banbridge Health and Social Services Trust.

Vice Chairman

Patrick J Armstrong Esq - Childcare nominee. Vice Chairman since June 1994, Mr Armstrong is a retired Chief Inspector of Social Services with DHSS. Chairman of the Catholic Family Care Society. He is an articulate and highly intelligent man who has proved to be an asset. Since retirement, he has played an active part in Childcare NI, and in various church related matters, as well as on PANI.

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