



542/94

DB/41/94

Per 2/13

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Cc Mr Maxwell

You may be interested to see, esp 2.3 below

ASST SEC 13 SEP 1994

S61/9

PSE 580/94

7 September 1994

TO: MR FELL

FROM: R B SPENCE

13/9

9 SEP 1994
12.31

cc PS/PUS
NI PERM SECS
MR THOMAS
MR LEGGE
MR WILLIAMS
MR BELL
MR MACCABE

Mrs Kenny

12.9

Mr Spence 13/9

*cc Mr Spence
We should speak to Hanley about this.*

*Fell
11/9*

POLITICAL FEEDBACK

1. Along with Tony McCusker and Paul Sweeney, I spent a couple of hours last night with a dozen of the key community leaders in Belfast from both sides of the community, including some who are close to the paramilitaries. While we were supposed to be talking about DOE issues in the city, the discussion concentrated inevitably on the current political scene.
2. The following points are worth highlighting:
 - 2.1 there was a cautious optimism that the violence was genuinely over and that a new realism existed on both sides of the community;
 - 2.2 the loyalist paramilitaries would very soon stop terrorist action, but reserve their "right" to change their position if republican terrorism restarted;
 - 2.3 the "Hurd principles" should be reviewed urgently in order to enable former terrorists to get involved in constructive action at community level; Government should be willing to take some risks with "political

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vetting" in the interests of channelling the abilities and commitment of former paramilitaries into positive action; it should, it was argued, be possible to insist on systems and controls which would prevent abuse of public funds;

2.4 the end of terrorist violence would be succeeded by increased law and order problems in inner city areas - racketeering, drugs, vandalism, car theft, robberies, etc - which required sensitive policing with community support; as one participant said "forget North-South structures, what matters is whether your kid is on drugs or the squeal of hand-brake turns at the front door";

2.5 in loyalist areas, DUP influence will wane further in favour of community activists, including ex-paramilitaries seeking election;

2.6 in republican areas, Sinn Fein representatives will be seeking greater involvement in community based projects and activities.

3. Finally there was unanimous and powerful support for early and extensive action to tackle long term unemployment with the replacement of ACE by 2 to 3 year jobs in the community with proper training leading to real qualifications. It was almost as if they have been reading the proposals which DED has been developing! The community leaders stressed that action on this front was critical to securing peace and stability.

RBS

R B SPENCE

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