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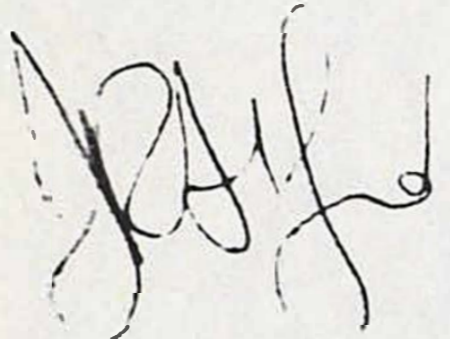
FROM: J R ALFORD, PAB
27 JANUARY 1989

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Mr R J Minnis
DED

MACBRIDE

In reply to your minute of 5 January concerning counter-Macbride material I attach PAB's contribution in respect of "SDLP View of Macbride Campaign".



J R ALFORD
Political Affairs Division
SH Ext 266

DP/2968

SDLP VIEW OF MACBRIDE CAMPAIGN

The SDLP attitude to the Macbride Campaign is that it is difficult to criticise the Principles individually but as a package they constitute an inadequate response to the multi-dimensional issue of fair employment. Moreover they believe that the campaign in America has little to do with improving the lot of the minority community in Northern Ireland and much more to do with destabilising the political climate. In this regard therefore they see the Macbride campaign as likely to undermine the prospects of attracting job-creating investment in Northern Ireland and to this extent the Macbride campaign only holds out the prospect of maintaining the historic disadvantage of the minority community.

The SDLP approach is a two-pronged one and rather than see investment prospects penalised by focusing on outline principles they see greater value in seeking to attract inward investment (and thus improving employment opportunities for all) and matching this with extensive improvements to fair employment law and the mechanism for its implementation.

In this regard last SDLP Annual Conference expressed a welcome for the Donnelly 'carrot and stick' approach of the one hand providing incentives for investment by US firms in areas of high unemployment who have affirmative action practices in any such industrial plants, and on the other penalising companies with poor fair employment records. There is indeed good evidence that members of the SDLP were involved in discussion with Donnelly before he finalised the drafting of his proposals.