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PERMANENT SEC.

Memo

From: Peter Robinson
Minister for Regional Development

Your ref:

Our ref:

Tel: (028) 9054 0105

Date: 15 March 2002

To: Office of the First Minister and
Deputy First Minister

cc: PS/Mr Loughran
PS/Mr Hamilton
NI Permanent Secretaries
Mrs Brown
Mr Sweeney
Mr James
Mr Martin
Mr McArthur
Mr Bullick

EXECUTIVE PAPER FOR WRITTEN PROCEDURE E (WP) (02) 27 VICTIMS STRATEGY

I have now seen Nigel Dodds comments on the memorandum. I fully endorse the points he has raised.

Peter Robinson

Peter Robinson
Minister for Regional Development

Mr Gannon

chie, Margaret

From: Private Office, DRD [private.office@drdni.gov.uk]
Sent: 15 March 2002 14:25
To: 'ps.ministers@ofmdfmni.gov.uk'
Cc: 'gerry.loughran@ofmdfmni.gov.uk'; Boyle, Pauline; Stewart, Claire; Keenan, Joanne; McKibbin, Malcolm; Martin, Robert (Chief Executive); McArthur, Alan; McWatters, Louise; Anne Wallace; christine.young@dhsspsni.gov.uk; Clive Gowdy; doreen.daly@dardni.gov.uk; helen.ferguson@deni.gov.uk; john.hunter@dsdni.gov.uk; Karen McCartan; maria.mcquoid@detini.gov.uk; Mary Condrón; perm.sec@dfpni.gov.uk;
Subject: permanent.secretary.office@dhfeteni.gov.uk; Stephen Quinn
E (WP) (02) 27
Importance: High



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DP 426/02

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DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

7th Floor, Churchill House, Belfast, BT1 4SD

Unclassified

From: Mark O'Donnell
Private Office

To: Mr D Wall

CC List :

Mr J Hunter

Mr C Radcliffe

Mr D Baker

Mr C Thompson

Mr B Davis

Mr D Crothers

Mr D O'Hare

Mr M Thompson

Mr I Crozier

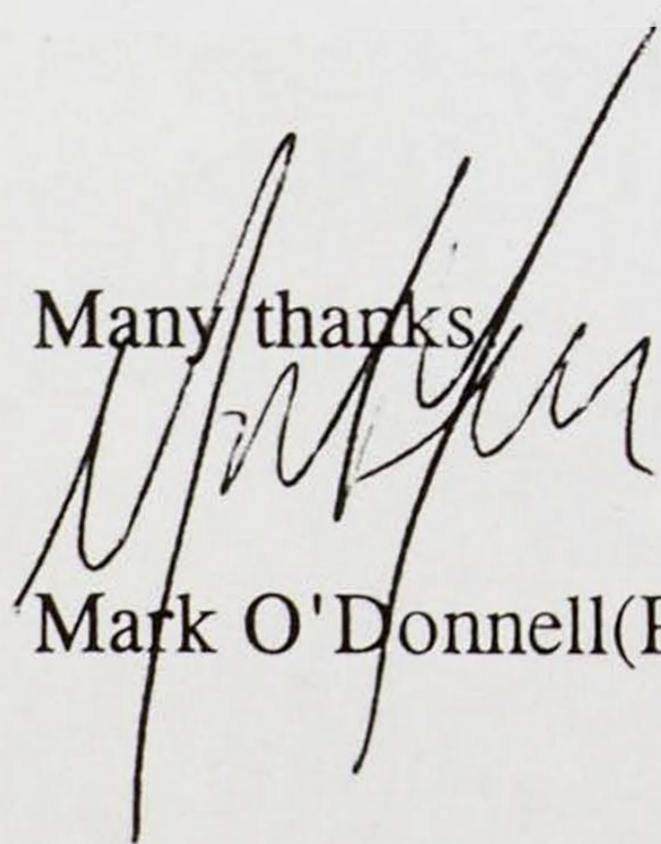
Mr J Johnston

Date: 19/03/2002

**SUB/186/2002 : EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT BY WRITTEN PROCEDURE TO THE
PUBLICATION OF A DRAFT VICTIMS' STRATEGY.**

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 06/03/2002. I attach a copy of Mr Dodds' response which was e mailed to Mr Loughran on 15 March.

Many thanks



Mark O'Donnell(Private Office)

From The Minister's Office

Churchill House
Victoria Square
Belfast BT1 4SD

Fax: (028) 9056 9244
e-mail: minister@dsdni.gov.uk

From: Nigel Dodds MP MLA
Minister for Social Development

cc: Permanent Secretaries
Mr Radcliffe
Mr Baker
Mrs Devlin (OFMDFM)
Mr Johnston
Mr Crozier

Date: 15th March 2002

Mr Loughran
Secretary to the Executive Committee

VICTIMS STRATEGY

When consulted on the Memorandum circulated to Ministers in June last year, my predecessor, Maurice Morrow, commented upon a number of issues.

I welcome the fact that his cautionary advice on the subject of memorials has been taken on board, consciously or otherwise, in the production of this latest document.

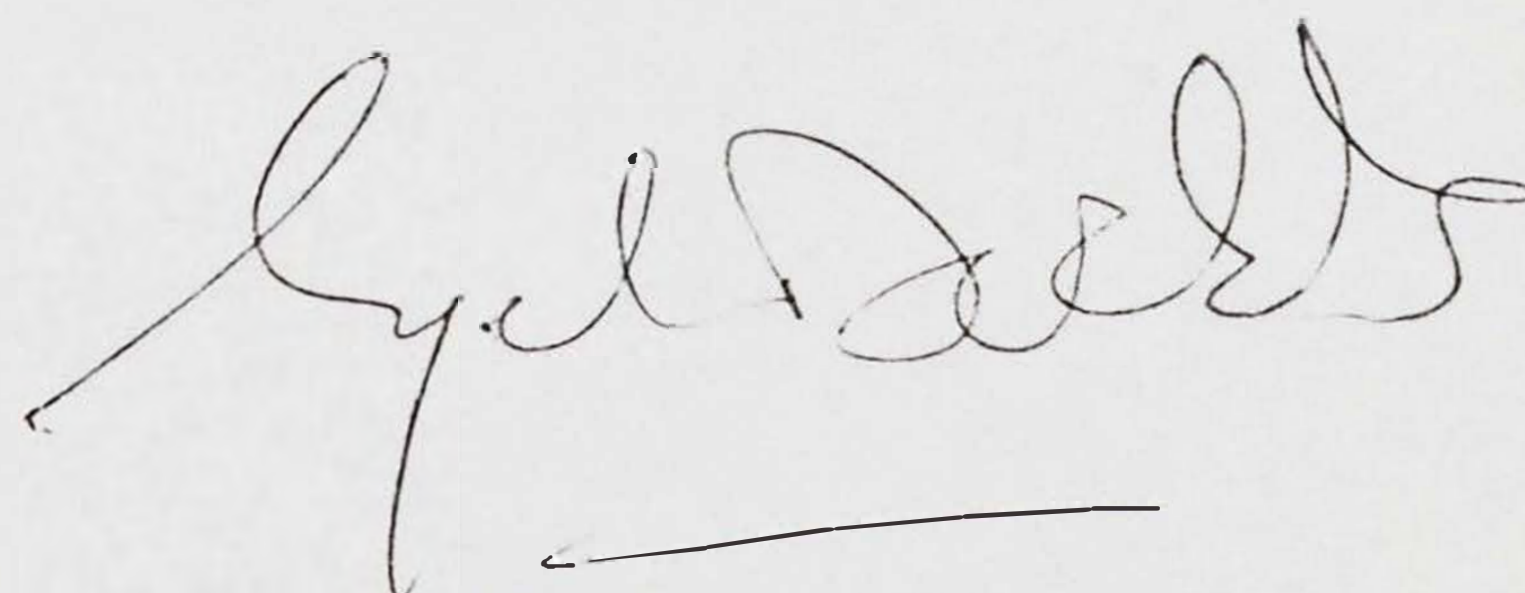
I also welcome the fact that his concerns in relation to the creation of linkages between victimhood and socio-economic disadvantage have also been recognised, at least partially, in the latest draft, in particular at para. 1.9, which makes clear that the strategy does not aim to create "postcode victims". It is essential however that it is made perfectly clear that when the document talks about need, that need is based on a person's status as a victim, rather than any monetary factor. I believe that some more work is required in this area, particularly around the inclusion of unrelated action points like those referring to rates rebate, which Maurice Morrow flagged up, but still remain in the document.

I note in para. 3.18 that there is no intention to move on the appointment of a Victims' Commissioner, however I believe that there is merit in such an appointment and given the range of views expressed, it would be appropriate for further consultation to be carried out in this area.

It is with some annoyance, however, that I note that no cognisance has been taken of our concerns regarding the definition of a victim. It was argued by the centre last year that this could not be taken on board prior to the release of the document for consultation because of a PfG timescale commitment, however there is no such excuse for the concerns to have been ignored on this occasion.

It seems to me perverse that anyone should suggest, for example, that a person who lost his arm as a result of his own bomb exploding prematurely, should be treated in the same way as a member of the security forces who lost an arm as a result of a terrorist attack. I wish therefore to reiterate the formulation that I believe would command the support of all right thinking people:

"The partners and close relatives of innocent people who have been murdered since 1969, together with all those who bear the scars, both physical and psychological, of all unlawful actions connected with the Troubles, their families and those who care for them."

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Dodds', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the bottom of the signature.

NIGEL DODDS MP MLA

Minister for Social Development

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E (WP) (02) 27

COR/213/2002

From: D Wall

cc: Secretary

Mr C Radcliffe

Date: 6 March 2002

Mr C Thompson

Mr D Baker

Mr D Crothers

Mr D O'Hare

Mr M Thompson

Mr B Davis

Mr I Crozier

PS/Mr Dodds

Summary

Issue: Executive agreement by Written Procedure to the publication of a draft Victims' Strategy.

Timescale: By 5.00pm on Monday 11th March 2002.

BACKGROUND

1. The Executive has been asked to agree to the publication of the attached draft Victims' Strategy to deliver practical help and services to victims of the conflict in Northern Ireland.
2. Departmental officials have attended the Inter Departmental Group established by OFMDFM to oversee the development of the draft Strategy and have provided written contributions to it. In particular those inputs sought to identify the role of DSD in the following areas:

- Section 2.4 which stipulated that by “beginning in the 2002-03 financial year, all Departments and Agencies will ensure that, where appropriate, victims' needs are reflected in their corporate planning documentation using the framework of common aims and themes as set down in Partners for Change, the Government's strategy for support of the Voluntary and Community Sector”.
 - Section 4.7 outlined the activities of the Department in developing a database with plans to eventually include details of all Government and non-government funding to the voluntary and community sector. When complete, it will enable funders to identify the areas receiving funding and any gaps in provision. Development of a pilot is scheduled to begin in April 2002.
 - Section 4.12 also addressed the important issue of sustainability and set down an action point to ensure that a Taskforce is established to consider the long-term sustainability of the voluntary and community sector including the needs of victims.
3. The draft strategy is a comprehensive document that addresses the very wide range of issues facing victims and sets down clear action points to ensure that its recommendations are progressed.
 4. The definition of “Victim” is described in the document as:

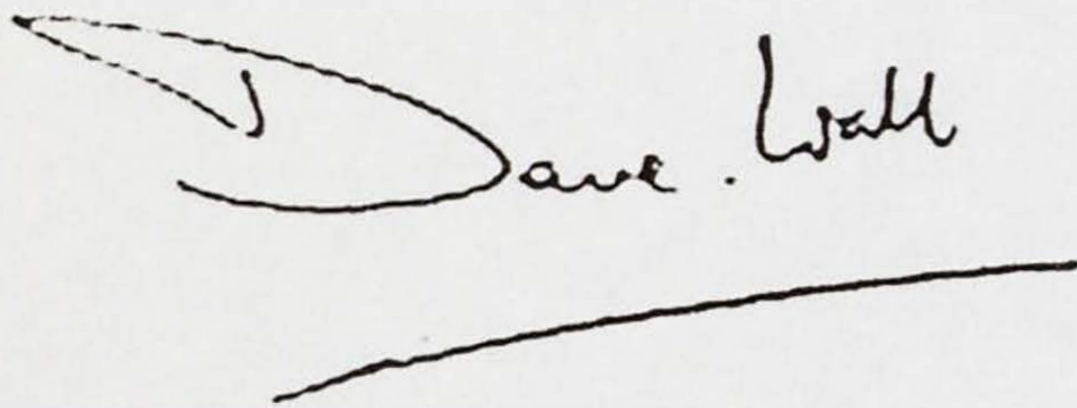
“The surviving physically and psychologically injured of violent, conflict related incidents and those close relatives or partners who care for them, along with those close relatives or partners who mourn their dead.”
 5. This definition will not be rigid or inflexible. The purpose of the Strategy is to help those who have suffered as a result of the conflict and the paper recommends that the definition should be seen in that light.

6. In June last year (SUB/382/2001), the Minister's predecessor Mr Morrow was not content with the proposed definition of 'victim', and suggested the following definition as an alternative:

"The partners and close relatives of innocent people who have been murdered since 1969, together with all those who bear the scars, both physical and psychological, of all unlawful actions connected with the Troubles, their families and those who care for them."

CONCLUSION

7. There has been no change to the definition of 'victim' following the consultation process. The Minister might therefore wish to reiterate the previous comment on the definition of 'victim' and a suggested form of words is included in the attached draft response.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Wall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'D'. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

DAVE WALL

Fax: (028) 9056 9244
e-mail: minister@dsdni.gov.uk

Our ref: COR/213/2002

E (WP) (02) 27

From: Nigel Dodds MP MLA
Minister for Social Development

cc: Permanent Secretaries
Mr Radcliffe
Mr Baker
Mrs Devlin (OFMDFM)
Mr Johnston
Mr Crozier

Date: 15 March 2002

Mr Loughran
Secretary to the Executive Committee

VICTIMS' STRATEGY

When consulted on the Memorandum circulated to Ministers in June last year, my predecessor Maurice Morrow commented on the proposed definition of 'victim'. I note that this has not been changed and I would wish to endorse that earlier view with regard to the exclusion of people killed either by the security forces or in the commission of terrorist activities.

NIGEL DODDS MP MLA
Minister for Social Development