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cc

PS/Mr Stanley (B&L)  
PS/Mr Viggers (B&L)  
PS/PUS (B&L)  
PS/Sir K Bloomfield  
Mr Burns  
Dr Quigley  
Mr Fell  
Mr McAllister  
Mr Chesterton  
Mr Gowdy  
Mr Wilson  
Mr Bell  
M/C

1988/89 PS  
file  
(filed already?)

① cc as per Mr  
② file MacBride resources

TO: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (B&L)

FROM: PS/MR VIGGERS

MacBRIDE CAMPAIGN: RESOURCES

Following Mr Fell's submission of 13 January and the note of 20 January from PS/Mr Stanley, the Secretary of State asked for a review of the costs associated with the measures agreed to fight the MacBride campaign in the US.

As the Secretary of State will recall, the measures set out in Mr Fell's submission were agreed at the meeting at Hillsborough on 24 November. At that meeting, three options were considered - seeking to reach an accommodation with MacBride, taking a minimalist approach to the issue or adopting a more professional approach to the campaign - and it was agreed that it was necessary to continue to fight it as professionally as possible. Officials were asked, however, to draw up a set of measures which would substantially reduce the envisaged cost of £1.4m. The measures set out in Mr Fell's submission of 13 January represented a reduction on this figure of over 60% to £550,000.

The breakdown of these reduced costs was:

|       |                                                 |          |
|-------|-------------------------------------------------|----------|
| (i)   | Use of Professional lobbyists                   | £150,000 |
| (ii)  | Use of NI Spokespersons                         | £330,000 |
| (iii) | Visits to NI by Influential US politicians, etc | £30,000  |
| (iv)  | Use of External Monitoring Agent                | £40,000  |

(There was in addition a DRC cost of £112,000 within DED, which DED intends to meet through re-allocation of its existing DRC resources - which are already under intense pressure.)

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The major factors were the need to buy in the services of professional lobbyists in the key States and to provide spokespeople from Northern Ireland to appear at the hearings in the States considering MacBride legislation. In the case of the professional lobbyists the original estimate had been that £50,000 per State would be allocated to a total of 3 key States. In discussion with the Embassy this was altered to £40,000 per State for a maximum of 3 first priority States and the balance of £30,000 to be used for professional advice and help in perhaps 5 or 6 second priority States. In the case of the Northern Ireland spokesmen, it was estimated that there would be 42 hearings to attend (average of 2-3 hearings per each MacBride Bill), with teams of 4 spokespersons at a cost of £2,000 each at each hearing.

Following the Secretary of State's request, officials have undertaken an exercise to try to further reduce these costs and it is now proposed that the original costs should be amended as follows:

(i) Use of Professional Lobbyists

The first priority States were assessed to be California, Illinois and Pennsylvania. The defeat of the MacBride Bill in California in the current session (which was itself substantially due to professional lobbying) has given us a temporary respite in this State and the lobbyist who has been working for us on a pro bono basis there is willing to undertake the lower level lobbying which continues to be needed in this important State at a nominal fee rate. The net effect of this is that we can reduce the resources requirement for professional lobbyists in 1988/89 to £135,000 and if we continue to have a favourable exchange rate this figure will in practice be further reduced, since the original estimate was drawn up at a less favourable exchange rate than at present.

(b) Use of Northern Ireland spokespeople

As indicated above, it was assumed that it would be necessary to send NI spokespeople to a total of 42 hearings in 1988/89. Moreover, the norm has been to field a team of at least 4 people at each of these hearings, to allow a spread of experience across business and community life

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(particularly from the Catholic community) in NI to be read into the record and to provide a solid defence against the weight of evidence advanced by the MacBride lobby. To reduce the cost officials will trim back on the number of hearings attended and on the number of witnesses used on some of the hearings. This will involve some 18 fewer appearances by NI spokespersons and it is estimated that it will be possible to reduce the resource cost to £295,000 in 1988/89 in this way.

In total, therefore, officials believe that the envisaged cost of the MacBride counter-measures can be further reduced to £500,000 in 1988/89. Furthermore, it is hoped that this figure may represent the peak in the anti-MacBride campaign, since the major focus of the MacBride effort is likely to fall in this year and it is to be hoped that the announcement of Government's new legislative proposals on equality of opportunity will do much to undermine the force of the MacBride case in the US. It is clear, however, that we will need to continue to mount a professional campaign in the next 12 months or so to defend against the current strength of the MacBride campaign, which has been given a fillip by the adverse publicity in the US over Stalker and the Birmingham Six. With the benefit of professional help it is possible for us to deliver punishing blows to the MacBride campaign, as has been demonstrated by the defeat of the MacBride bills in California and New Hampshire recently and the stalling of the bills in Illinois and Pennsylvania, and we will need to plan our campaign carefully to continue to achieve this sort of success.

The FCO are keen to have the budget clarified as soon as possible to allow the planning of the agreed counter-measures to proceed as a matter of urgency. The Ambassador is due to see the Secretary of State on 18 February and is likely to raise the matter at that meeting. It would therefore be desirable to have the resource provision agreed in advance of the meeting.

DFP have been consulted about these figures. They have indicated that they will endeavour to assist DED in meeting the requirement of £400,000 which will need to be found from outside the existing DED provision during in-year monitoring. (DED and IDB have already agreed that £100,000 will be transferred from the IDB

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promotional budget to help fund the MacBride counter-measures. If DFP are unable to assist, DED accept that the entire funding for the MacBride effort will have to be found from within the DED allocation. Mr Stanley has indicated that he is content with these arrangements.

Mr Viggers is satisfied with the measures and costings proposed by officials and would ask the Secretary of State to approve the revised costings outlined in this minute.

*Georgina Campbell.*

GEORGINA CAMPBELL

PS/Mr Viggers

16 February 1988

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