

26th

March 2002

To: PS/Minister

cc

Mr Arbuthnot

Mrs Mars *AM*

From: Alan Shannon

*cc Mrs Kincaid
Mrs Newport*

Further to our discussion this morning I attach a note on the Ex-Prisoner issue.

AS

ALAN SHANNON

Enc

BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT OF EX-PRISONERS

Two issues –

Terminology

- “Political Prisoners” – unacceptable.
- “Politically Motivated Prisoners” – a phrase originating in a NIACRO report of around 1993 – less contentious but may be unacceptable to some.
- “Former Paramilitary Prisoners” – unpopular with prisoner groups.
- “Scheduled Offenders” – accurate.

Substance

NIO and the Probation Board have statutory responsibilities to support the resettlement of offenders and it would be odd for the Executive to chair a group with a remit which covered all ex-prisoners.

However the Executive has a particular concern with the consequences of the GFA and it would be reasonable for it to concern itself with the barriers to employment for those prisoners released under the Agreement. This could be extended to include “Scheduled Offenders” more generally.