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FROM: F GREEN
DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL & SERVICES
13 FEBRUARY 1997



cc PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Sir David Fell (L&B) - B
PS/Mr Semple DFP
Mr Shannon
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Mogg
Mr White
Mr McCaffrey
Mr O'Reilly (DFP)
Mr Smith (DFP)

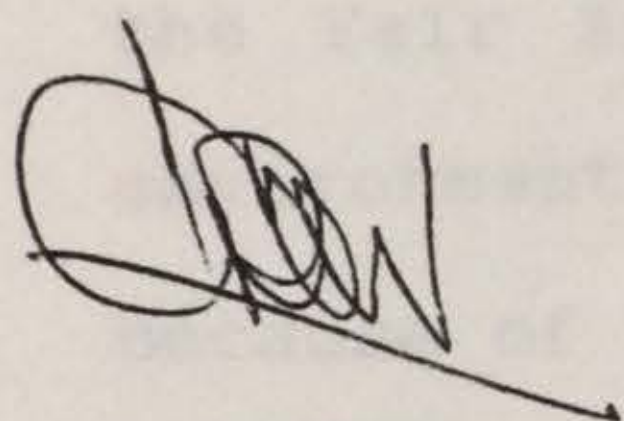
TO: PS/SIR JOHN WHEELER (L&B) - B

REMOVAL OF QUEEN'S PORTRAIT AT HM PRISON, MAGHABERRY

1. The purpose of this note is to alert Minister to current media interest in a decision by the Governor at HM Prison, Maghaberry to remove a portrait of the Queen from his personal office.
2. The Governor's office is frequently used for meetings involving staff, prisoners and representatives of all sections of the community. The decision to remove the portrait of the Queen was taken personally by the Governor in the interests of creating a neutral working environment. This had been resented by some staff at the prison and the issue has been picked up by the local media.
3. There is no specific policy on the display of portraits of the Queen or other members of the Royal Family in the offices of individual civil servants. The issue was however raised by Mr Robert McCartney, MP for North Down in a Parliamentary Question in November 1995. The reply, approved by Minister, stated that:

"There are circumstances in which the display of a portrait of HM The Queen and other members of the Royal Family is officially approved. The display of any pictures by individual civil servants in their offices is, of course, subject to Civil Service policy on promoting a good and harmonious working environment for all its employees."

4. Our response to this latest approach by the press on this issue is consistent with this line and has been agreed with DFP. A copy is attached for Minister's information.



F GREEN

HM PRISON SERVICE PRESS OFFICE

February 1997

BLIS/12065/MD

REMOVAL OF QUEEN'S PORTRAIT - HM PRISON, MAGHABERRY

I can confirm that the Governor at Maghaberry prison has removed a portrait of the Queen from his office to facilitate a neutral working environment. The Governor's office is frequently used for meetings involving staff and representatives of all sections of the community. His decision is consistent with the obligations on the Prison Service under the Fair Employment Code of Practice to promote a harmonious environment in the workplace in which no one feels unwelcome because of his or her religious beliefs or political persuasion.

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February 1997

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