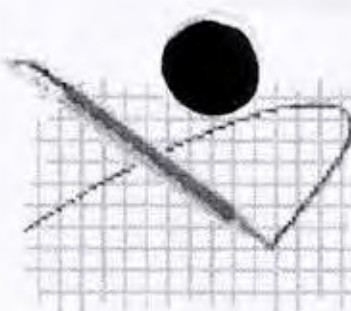


ES/5054

File

(2001 - Two Communications)



private.office

Sent by: Cathy Procter

23/07/01 13:18

Please respond to
private.office

To: norman.caven@dfpni.gov.uk

cc: perm.sec@dfpni.gov.uk, david.ferguson@dfpni.gov.uk,
geraldine.mcgurk@ofmdfmi.gov.uk,

edgar.jardine@dfpni.gov.uk, damian.mcateer@dfpni.gov.uk,
James.Gillan@dfpni.gov.uk, gillian.mckeown@dfpni.gov.uk

Subject: Submission: Unclassified

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

Unclassified

From: Cathy Procter

Private Office

To: Norman Caven

Date: 23/07/2001

Action Copy: PS/PERM.SEC (DFP)

David Ferguson

Tony McCusker

Edgar Jardine

Damian McAteer

James Gillan

Gillian McKeown

354/1986/25
Confidential ES OTR

M. Beatty.

You may wish to
hold this.

03072

SUB/566/2001:PRESS ENQUIRY ON RELIGIOUS SPLITS IN NI

The Minister has seen and read your submission of 11/07/2001 and has noted the reply

Many thanks.

Cathy Procter (Private Office)

Rathgael House Tel: 028 91 858158

OffName

ES/4974/01

McAuley House
2-14 Castle Street
BELFAST BT1 1SA

Tel: 028 9034 8102
GTN: 440 67102

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GTN: 440 67106

email: norman.caven@dfpni.gov.uk
Web: www.nisra.gov.uk

FROM: T N CAVEN (DR)
Registrar General

cc: Secretary
Mr Ferguson
Mr McCusker
Mr Jardine o/r
Mr McKervill
Mrs McKeown
Mr McAteer
Dr Gillan

11 JULY 2001

PS/MR DURKAN

Issue: Press Enquiry on Religious Splits in Northern Ireland.

Timing: Routine.

Recommendation: The Minister is invited to note the attached reply.

Background

1. The enquiry is from the European Correspondent of a Canadian Newspaper who has been over here covering Drumcree.
2. The material provided is either factual results from Censuses and Surveys or is the conclusion of published academic research.

[Signed]

N Caven

N CAVEN

Dear Mr Freeman,

Information on the questions you asked is detailed below.

Points 1 & 2 - The religion question on the 1991 census was not compulsory. The published census reports state, along with those who gave their religion, the numbers of those who gave no religion (none) and those who did not answer the question (not stated).

Below are the results from the 1991 Northern Ireland census showing the religious breakdown of the 1.58 million persons enumerated.

Year							Percentages	
	Catholic	Presbyterian	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Others	None	Not Stated	Total
1991	38.4	21.3	17.7	3.8	7.8	3.7	7.3	100.0

Some published research has attempted to ascribe a community background to those not stating a religious denomination. An estimate was derived by ascribing the 'not stated' and 'no religion' categories to 'Catholic' and 'Protestant and Other' community backgrounds pro rata to those who indicated a religion in answer to the religion question; this was performed at each of the Census enumeration district levels and summed. This study concluded that the percentage of the population estimated to be Catholic was 42% and the percentage Protestant & Other was 58%. Other academic research which has employed a different methodology has estimated the Catholic proportion at around 41% in 1991.

Results from the Continuous Household Survey (a sample social survey) covering the years 1998-99 to 2000-01, indicated that 42 per cent of the Northern Ireland population was Catholic and 53 per cent was Protestant (of the remainder 4 per cent were other religions/no religion and 1% were unwilling to answer). It should be noted that as with all surveys a margin of error is associated with the estimate because only a sample of the population is used.

Point 6 – 1991 census religion figures for Belfast District Council area are as follows:

Percentages								
Year	Catholic	Presbyterian	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Others	None	Not Stated	Total
1991	39.0	17.1	18.0	5.3	7.2	5.3	8.2	100.0

Results from the 2001 census will be published in 2003.

The 1991 census religion results for the Belfast Urban Area as defined by the then Department of Environment Town and Country Planning Service are given below. The urban area encompasses a number of local authorities (Belfast – all, Carrickfergus – part, Castlereagh – part, Lisburn – part, Newtownabbey – part, and North Down – part).

Percentages								
Year	Catholic	Presbyterian	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Others	None	Not Stated	Total
1991	31.2	19.9	20.5	6.1	8.5	5.6	8.3	100.0

Note: figures do not add due to rounding

I hope this is helpful

Yours sincerely,

JAMES GILLAN (DR)

Point 3 - Census results for previous years are as follows:

Year							Percentages
	Catholic	Presbyterian	Church of Ireland	Methodist	Others	Not Stated	Total
1861	40.9	32.7	23.0	2.0	1.3	0.1	100.0
1871	39.3	32.1	24.2	2.0	2.4	0.0	100.0
1881	38.0	31.7	24.7	2.4	3.1	0.1	100.0
1891	36.3	31.8	25.3	3.0	3.4	0.2	100.0
1901	34.8	32.0	25.6	3.6	3.9	0.1	100.0
1911	34.4	31.6	26.1	3.7	4.0	0.2	100.0
1926	33.5	31.3	27.0	3.9	4.1	0.2	100.0
1937	33.5	30.5	27.0	4.3	4.5	0.2	100.0
1951	34.4	29.9	25.8	4.9	4.6	0.4	100.0
1961	34.9	29.0	24.2	5.0	5.0	1.9	100.0
1971	31.4	26.7	22.0	4.7	5.8	9.4	100.0
1981	28.0	22.9	19.0	4.0	7.6	18.5	100.0

Note that the percentage reductions in the religious denominations between 1981 and 1991 should be looked at in conjunction with the rise in the not stated category.

Point 4 - Information on religion is not collected at the registration of a birth. No official statistics are published on the birth rate of Catholics and Protestants. The overall birth rate (live births per 1,000 population) in Northern Ireland is declining but is still higher than the birth rate in the rest of the United Kingdom. The Northern Ireland crude birth rate was 20.6 births per 1,000 population in 1971 and has now dropped to 13.6 births per 1,000 population in 1999. For England, the corresponding 1999 birth rate was 11.8, for Wales 10.9 and for Scotland 10.8. Statistics show that the birth rate for Canada in 1997 was 12.1.

There has been some academic research on live crude birth rates by denomination using a variety of sources - Northern Ireland Economic Council Demographic Review 1995, ISBN 1 897 614 18 7, author Paul Compton. This work noted that historically the Catholic birth rate has been higher than the Protestant birth rate but that both birth rates are falling. It concluded that since 1980 the Catholic birth rate has been falling more rapidly than the Protestant which in time might lead to the birth rate differential disappearing.

Point 5 - Migration estimates are produced every year as part of the calculation of the mid-year population estimates. No annual information on migration is available by religion. The population movements between Northern Ireland and the other countries of the United Kingdom and elsewhere are tracked using changes in registration with the National Health Service Central Register (a list of all patients registered with a General Practitioner). The 2001 Census also includes a question on address one year ago. The information from this question will provide information on migration flows by religious denomination to other parts of the United Kingdom. Results will be available in 2003.

EJ14974101



Brenda Jeffers

11/07/01 16:44

To: Private Office/CSG/DFP@DFP
cc: Perm Sec/CSG/DFP@DFP, Joanne McCarthy/CSG/DFP@DFP,
Tony McCusker/OFMDFM/DFP@DFP, Edgar
Jardine/NISRA/DFP@DFP, John
McKervill/OFMDFM/DFP@DFP, Gillian
McKeown/CSG/DFP@DFP, Damian McAteer/CSG/DFP@DFP,
James Gillan/NISRA/DFP
Subject: Northern Ireland religion statistics



Religious Splits in NI.doc

----- Forwarded by Brenda Jeffers/NISRA/DFP on 11/07/01 16:49 -----

James Gillan

10/07/01 12:38

To: Maire Rodgers/NISRA/DFP@DFP
cc: Norman Caven/NISRA/DFP@DFP
Subject: Northern Ireland religion statistics

Maire,

We spoke, can you do a 1st draft on this to-day please - if not let me know.

James

----- Forwarded by James Gillan/NISRA/DFP on 07/10/01 12:35 PM -----



AFreeGlobe@aol.com

07/10/01 12:29 PM

To: james.gillan@dfpni.gov.uk
cc:
Subject: Northern Ireland religion statistics

Dear Dr. Gillan,

Further to our phone conversation, the following are some questions I would appreciate having answered about religious affiliation in Northern Ireland.

I would appreciate having a response quite rapidly as I am writing a newspaper article on the subject.

1. What are the most up-to-date statistics on the proportion of Catholics and

Protestants in the Northern Ireland population? When do they date from?

2. What proportion of census respondents give no religion as a response? How

do you deal with these responses?

3. Is the proportion of the population that is Catholic increasing? What was

the proportion of the two religious groups in the 1920s? In 1971?

4. How do birth rates compare between the two groups? Is the Catholic birth rate declining? Is it still higher than the Protestant birth rate and the average birth rate in the UK?

5. Do you track migration patterns? Do Protestants have a greater tendency to

leave Northern Ireland than Catholics? Is that a new phenomenon? Do you track

these figures using the census only? (I know that in Canada, inter-provincial

population movements used to be tracked using address changes for family allowance recipients, for example)

6. Are there statistics available on religious affiliation in Belfast? Is the

Catholic population rising in the city as conventional wisdom would have

it
Thank you,
Alan Freeman
European Correspondent
The Globe and Mail (Canada's National Newspaper)