

453.1au
453/94
195/10
ASST/ SEC
18 OCT 1994
C.C.R.U.
CONFIDENTIAL

Ms Murphy
FROM: PS/SECRETARY OF STATE
18 October 1994

ENTERED 26 OCT 1994

RECEIVED 20 OCT 1994

DBS89/94

19 OCT 1994
15034

cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Sir John Wheeler (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Daniell - B

1109/10

19 OCT 1994

CENT SEC

Mrs C Collins - B
Police Division

MEETING WITH CHAIRMAN OF PANI

Ms Brown 24/10

cc Mr Watkins
Mr Caplan 19.10

You attended a meeting between the Secretary of State and Mr Cook, Chairman of PANI, yesterday afternoon, 17 October. The Secretary of State was very grateful for the briefing provided with your minute of 14 October.

2. After some initial opening remarks about James Molyneaux and the possibility of his being awarded a Viscountcy (!) Mr Cook set out his general concerns about the Chief Constable - he described his^{wa} as "unreformable". This was against a background of an increasing debate about the role of the police in the community in which the Police Authority and the RUC had to take part. Mr Cook felt that the Chief Constable did not understand that some things would clearly remain under police control, but that others would need to be dealt with under broader political auspices.

3. More specifically, matters had come to a head over the long running issue of fair employment. Mr Cook, on behalf of the police authority, had written to the Chief Constable (copy attached) requiring him, under Section 15 (2) of the Police Act (Northern Ireland) 1970, to report in writing on the actions taken to pursue fair employment within the RUC. Mr Cook felt that unfortunately, this would do little to dispel the existing animosity between the Chief Constable and the police authority, but that he felt he had a right to this information and was justified in pursuing it. We do not know at this stage how the Chief Constable has reacted or is

CONFIDENTIAL

453.1a4
CONFIDENTIAL

likely to react, but he has the right under Section 15 of the police act to refer to the Secretary of State if he feels that it would be prejudicial to release this information as requested by the police authority. Mr Cook also felt that this relationship might be exacerbated still further by a potential row over non-selection of a particular individual for promotion.

4. The Secretary of State responded by saying he was grateful for a full account of these difficulties. He rehearsed some of the points that he made about the RUC in his speech to the Conservative Party Conference at Bournemouth and agreed to provide a copy of the transcript speech to Mr Cook. (I will arrange this.) Having said this, he regretted that the letter had gone to the Chief Constable before he (that is the Secretary of State) had had a chance to talk to Sir Hugh Annesley. In general, the Secretary of State did not feel it was helpful for these matters to be dealt with through statutory regulations rather than by discussion and consultation. The Secretary of State is due to have dinner with the Chief Constable and Mr Cook on 31 October and obviously this issue will come up then. It remains to be seen whether the formal demand made by the police authority will make things any easier in regards to the Fair Employment Policy within the RUC. More generally, the Secretary of State felt that this dispute was symptomatic of a wider problem over the respective roles of the RUC and the police authority. Some of this reflected practice under the previous police authority regime, which the Secretary of State was pleased to observe had changed under Mr Cook's chairmanship. (Since dictating this, I see that Mr Cook has issued the attached press release. Mr Cook did not say he was going to do this. The Secretary of State does not regard^{it} as a helpful development).

5. Mr Cook then asked about the policy he should adopt in a meeting with representatives of Sinn Fein. The Secretary of State rehearsed the current position on these matters and stressed that it was important that the Police Authority and the RUC kept in step with each other and did not get ahead of or too far behind what the Government was doing. We will keep the Police Authority in touch

CONFIDENTIAL

HS/5073/20361

453 law
CONFIDENTIAL

h developments on this score. In a similar vein, Mr Cook raised the question of an arms amnesty, and an amnesty for prisoners convicted of terrorist crimes. The Secretary of State made it plain that there could be no bending of the law. But he pointed out that the differences in practice between the treatment of those convicted for life and those for determinate sentences could lead to problems in the future. There was also a brief exchange about the long term future of the RUC and in particular over the use of the epithet 'Royal', and the argument between a province wide police force and local police forces.

6. The dinner on 31 October is clearly going to be very difficult. But the Secretary of State is keen to take the opportunity to try and mend fences between the Chief Constable and the police authority. It would be helpful to have further advice on the lines of argument and debate that he might follow in pursuit of this objective.

Signed

MARTIN HOWARD
Private Secretary

CONFIDENTIAL

BB/SOFS/20361

FIVE HOUSE 41 HIGH STREET BELFAST BT1 3DB TELEPHONE: (01232) 230111 FAX: (01232) 244872