

E.R.

NOTE OF A MEETING HELD IN DUNDONALD HOUSE, ROOM 328 AT 3.00 PM ON TUESDAY 18 APRIL 1978

*RCP 84/77)*  
*mb*  
*12/4*

Present: Mr Dunn Mr Dugdale  
Mr Hannigan Dr Baird  
Dr Weir

Mr Dunn had asked Mr Hannigan to arrange the meeting because of the renewed concern about maltreatment of prisoners being expressed by Dr Elliott of Armagh and other police surgeons. He thanked Mr Dugdale and Doctors Baird and Weir for responding so quickly.

Dr Baird showed Mr Dunn a letter he had received from Doctor Elliott seeking transfer from his duties at Armagh because of what he described was an intolerable situation regarding maltreatment of persons under interrogation.

Mr Dunn said that he had been brought up to date regarding Dr Elliott's complaints by Mr Baird of the Police Authority earlier in the day and he wanted to get to the root of the problem so that it could be rectified. In this respect he was seeking advice and guidance. He emphasised his position in so much that he would not condone cruelty to or manhandling of persons being questioned in Armagh or other centres and if it was in fact happening it would have to be stopped.

Dr Baird said that Dr Elliott was an excellent clinical doctor, conscientious and could be relied upon to carry out his duties to the full. He was certain that Dr Elliott, in reporting his concern about maltreatment was acting according to his conscience. His medical reports, two of which were shown to Mr Dunn, were completed in a very objective manner and he devoted part of each to the question of any wounds being self inflicted. In addition each report was always corroborated by another medical practitioner. Dr Baird also pointed out that Dr Elliott was not alone in his expression of concern as various back up doctors were noising their unrest.

Dr Baird  
Dr Weir  
Mr Dugdale  
Mr Gilliland  
Mr Roberts

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Dr Weir said that while as far as possible medical services in prisons and in police centres were kept separate, it was apparent that initial medical examinations at prison establishments upheld some of the police doctors views on maltreatment taking place. He also referred to the fact that at Castlereagh 60% of persons detained left the centre without medical examination as against 98% being examined in Armagh.

Mr Hannigan raised the question of the circulation of reports of maltreatment. Dr Baird explained that the report was primarily completed for the Police Complaints and Discipline Branch with copies to the Police Authority and himself.

Mr Dunn and Mr Hannigan expressed their concern about possible escalation of publicity and the possibility of Dr Elliott leaving Armagh with the consequence of leaving the matter open for a public argument which would not serve the interests of anyone in Northern Ireland except the men of violence. To move some way to saving the situation and to give any hope to curing the problem for good it was essential that Dr Elliott stay in his position and give everyone a chance to make headway. Mr Dunn asked Dr Baird if he would try to persuade Dr Elliott to do this on the strict understanding that he could be assured of action although by the same token he must appreciate that it would all take time. Dr Baird said that he could not absolutely guarantee Dr Elliott's co-operation but was almost sure he would agree. Mr Dugdale agreed that this was the best course of action and suggested that perhaps Mr Dunn should see Dr Elliott himself. Mr Dunn said that it may be advisable for Mr Hannigan to see Dr Elliott but he would bear this in mind. Mr Dugdale and Mr Hannigan undertook to liaise closely and keep Mr Dunn fully informed of developments.

W G Cleland  
Private Secretary

cc PS/S of S (L & B)  
PS/PUS (L & B)  
Mr Stephens  
Mr Hannigan  
Mr Dugdale  
Mr Ford

Dr Baird  
Dr Weir  
Mr Cromey  
Mr Gilliland  
Mr Roberts

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APPENDIX

NAMES OF PERSONS WHOM DOCTORS HAVE ALLEGED WERE ILL-TREATED WHILE IN POLICE CUSTODY

Matthew BRADLEY

Dominic H J CANAVAN

John DYNAM

JOHN F FUSCO

Daniel J HAMILL

Patrick P KERR

Peader A MOHAN

Charles MORGAN

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