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Northern Ireland Office
Stormont Castle
Belfast BT4 3ST

P/A

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His Excellency Peter Jay
HM Ambassador
British Embassy
Massachusetts Avenue
WASHINGTON DC

DEPT. OF COMMERCE
- 4 AUG 1977
RECEIVED IN August 1977
PRIVATE OFFICE

Dear Peter.

currently with Mr. (name)

Briefing folder:
TITLE: dealing with violence
from Loyalist paramilitaries
as well as IRA.

When we met on 7 July I undertook to send you some material which you might employ to demonstrate that the Government and the Security Forces in Northern Ireland are as resolute in dealing with violence from Loyalist paramilitary organisations as with that from the IRA. The following notes will provide you with a background brief which you might draw on if the question arises.

I should say that it is not our normal practice to release figures on the sectarian attribution of responsibility for violence. To do so might encourage further division between the two communities in Northern Ireland and, worse still, stimulate the extremists of one side to "right" any supposed imbalance. The accusation however remains a common one and if pressed you may wish to back up your rebuttal with statistical material.

1. The policy of HM Government is that the law will be applied fairly and impartially to all sections of the community in Northern Ireland. The only criterion for the Security Forces therefore is whether the law has been broken. The Security Forces apply the law with equal determination to the terrorist criminals in both communities and their record speaks for itself. The Government and the Security Forces are determined to bring violence to an end from whichever side it comes and no exception is made among those who break the law.
2. Violence in Northern Ireland is perpetrated by both Loyalist and Republican terrorist groups. The responsibility for violent incidents

cc Mr Parker
Mr Hughes

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during the first six months of 1977 is believed to have been as follows:

	<u>Loyalist Responsibility</u>	<u>Republican Responsibility</u>	<u>Unattributable</u>
Murder	21	51	7
Shooting	71	465	160
Bombing	59	249	27

The majority of violent incidents continue to be the responsibility of the Provisional IRA and the balance of attention of the Security Forces is therefore directed towards the detection, arrest and charging of members of that organisation.

3. The Security Forces are making significant inroads against those responsible for acts of violence in both communities. The expertise in criminal detection which the Royal Ulster Constabulary have developed and the dwindling support for the terrorist organisations in their own communities have enabled the Security Forces to achieve increasing success in arresting and charging criminals from both camps. In the first six months of 1977 the following numbers of Loyalists and Republicans have been arrested and charged in connection with serious terrorist offences:

	<u>Loyalists Charged</u>	<u>Republicans Charged</u>
Murder	22	35
Attempted Murder	13	61
Firearms Offences	62	107
Explosives Offences	14	62
Other Terrorist Offences (including armed robbery, arson, etc)	150	158
Total	261	423

Taken with the figures in para 2, this gives the lie to any suggestion that the Security Forces show partiality towards Loyalist criminals. The point that the RUC acts just as vigorously against Loyalist criminals as against Republican criminals is further demonstrated by the selective list of recent cases given in Annex A.



The Courts in Northern Ireland are impartial. Convictions are secured in some 85% of cases coming before the Courts. This applies just as much to cases involving Loyalists as to those involving Republicans and is reflected in the prison statistics which indicate that of those currently serving prison sentences for terrorist-type offences some 40% are Loyalist and 60% Republicans.

As I am sure you will appreciate this is an emotive subject and one which is always susceptible of misinterpretation. As I have said, care should be taken when employing sectarian figures; we want to avoid the trap that the Government takes religion into account in the formulation and implementation of security policy. Subject to this, however, the above material should allow you to rebut any allegations of discriminatory action by the Government and the Security Forces in Northern Ireland.

Sincerely
Roy

Hidden copies: PS/Secretary of State (B&L)
PS/Junior Ministers (L & B)
PS/PUS(L&B)
Mr Janes
Mr Marshall
Mr Ford
Mr Gilliland
Mr Roberts
Mr Seaman
Mr Cradock
Mr M Hall
Mr Wilson
Mr Innes
Mr Buxton
Miss F Elliott
Dr Quigley

Annex A. A REPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE OF RECENT TERRORIST CASES

- (a) February 1977 Two men (PIRA) convicted of the murder of a housewife and the attempted murder of soldiers in Belfast on 30 March 1972.
- (b) February 1977 Two men (PIRA) charged with the murder of Geoffrey Agate (the manager of Du Pont Ltd in Londonderry) in February 1977; one of these men charged with another man with the murder of a policeman in Londonderry also in February 1977.
- (c) March 1977 Two men (PIRA) charged with the murder of 15 month old baby in Glengormley on 1 January 1977.
- (d) March 1977 Four men (UVF) convicted of the murder of two UDA men in April 1975; this was part of a lengthy trial involving a number of charges which resulted in the break-up of the East Antrim "Brigade" of the UVF.
- (e) April 1977 A man (PIRA) convicted of the murder of a Magistrate, Martin McBurney, in Belfast on 14 September 1974.
- (f) April 1977 One man (UVF) convicted of four murders in an attack on a bottling store in Belfast in October 1975; a second man has since been similarly charged.
- (g) May 1977 Six men (UVF/UDA) have been charged with involvement in 18 murders, including a number of murders in which the victims had been beaten and had their throats cut.
- (h) May 1977 A man (PIRA) charged with the murder of 3 soldiers and a civilian in Belfast on 19 June 1976, 24 October 1976 and 11 January 1977.
- (i) June 1977 A man (PIRA) charged with two murders of policemen in 1976.
- (j) June 1977 Two men (PIRA) convicted of the murder of a UDR man and the attempted murder of another UDR man on 30 July 1976.