



Netherleigh

Massey Avenue, Belfast BT4 2JP
Telephone (0232) 529900 ext
Facsimile (0232) 529550

1 March 1994

Ms Danielle Wells
SER Section
UKREP

Dear Danielle

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE REPORT

I attach, for your information, copies of a recent exchange with Robin Ratchford, so that when Tom Spencer returns from Washington by tomorrow, 11am your time, there will be some possible amendments for him to table prior to 4 March. Robin Ratchford talked of him seeking Socialist support, from MacMahon et al, but that is clearly up to him.

I do not think there is anything further we can do at this stage. If a set of amendments is agreed with MacMahon I might have a word with Belinda Pyke who in various informal discussions has indicated some sympathy to our case, and a willingness to encourage the UK Socialist Group to also help.

*Yours
WDA*

W D A HAIRE



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
An Equal Opportunities Organisation



Mr Robin Ratchford
Group of the European
People's Party
European Parliament

Netherleigh

Massey Avenue, Belfast BT4 2JP
Telephone (0232) 529900 ext
Facsimile (0232) 529550

1 March 1994

Dear Mr Ratchford

VANDEMEULEBROUCKE REPORT

Thank you very much indeed for your fax of yesterday. I think that your combining of our proposed amendments to the resolution, with some of the ideas contained in my letter of 22 December and issues brought up by Richard Royce presents a sensible way forward, and I hope that after this exercise it is possible to get agreement with a number of MEPs to put down amendments to the Resolution.

I presume from your note that at this stage we do not make comments in relation to the draft Report, but clearly you have the material which we enclosed in our previous correspondence if such amendments are possible.

Turning to your proposed amendments I make the following comments.

(I am only making comments on your draft where I am suggesting any slight changes, and otherwise you can take it that we are content with your proposals)

Amendments 1 & 2

You will notice that these two amendments are alternatives.

Amendment 5

I would suggest that you slightly develop this to read:-

"Whereas the particular problems of the age structure and skills of the Northern Ireland workforce and the location of established industries render it extremely difficult to reduce the differential between Catholic and Protestant unemployment in the short term".

NWIL0112JMK


DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
An Equal Opportunities Organisation



Amendment 9, Recommendation 3

I would suggest that this should read:-

"Whereas the 1976 anti-discrimination legislation did not bring about the hoped for improvement in the employment position of Northern Irish Catholics, but the 1989 legislation is having a significant impact".

Amendment 11, Recommendation 6

I would suggest that in the final line of this it should read
"..... this campaign may damage investment in Northern Ireland".

Amendment 13, New Recommendation 8

An alternative wording of this, though with the same meaning would be:

"Notes that the use of reverse discrimination and quotas to produce immediate change in employment between Protestants and Catholics would itself be discriminatory and totally unacceptable".

Amendment 14

If we can remove the old Recommendation 8, which calls for the funds to be conditional on the significant improvements etc, I do not think it is essential to have this Recommendation inserted. My reading of the Regulation - and I sat through all the Council preparations of them - would suggest that such conditionality could not be required by the Commission. I do not know if Richard Royce has similar views. I do not think it is an issue however which we want to get into particular debate. On the other hand if you do feel that its an important play to put this forward, it is an issue on which I personally feel one could make a stand and putting forward such a strongly worded amendment may be a useful way to knock out the existing Recommendation 8.

NWIL0112JMK



Amendment 15

I fully understand the nature of your proposal. One of the problems we face here however is that there are, in particular areas, Protestant communities with very severe economic problems. It is important for us, and I think for the Community, to emphasise that funds are sent to those in greatest need, whether they are Protestant or Catholic. The fact that the majority of areas with severe problems are Catholic does not deny the reality of the problems of certain Protestant communities. I would therefore suggest that you either consider amending the second line to read "... to those in greatest need, whether Protestant or Catholic" and then stop the Recommendation; or you do that and continue to the fourth line where it should read "... fair opportunities and, because of the particular economic situation, this should assist the position of many Northern Irish Catholics".

I hope that this is of some use to you, and I would be very happy to talk to you and to Mr Spencer further prior to 4 March.

*Yours sincerely
Louis Haure*

W D A HAIRE

Amendment No. 11

Does recommendation B

Amendment No. 13

new recommendation B

Notes that in reality there is no prospect of adequately financing the situation of the Protestant communities out of the funds available to the Government, but that such funds would in itself be disproportionately small.

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NWIL0112JMK



Amendment No. 7, New Point (K)

whereas changes in the unemployment differential do not provide a meaningful indicator of progress towards employment equality

***Amendment No. 8, recommendation 2**

delete technically speaking

***Amendment No. 9, recommendation 3**

(three words deleted) ^{15 1976} ~~whereas~~ anti-discrimination legislation ^{did} over the last 20 years has not brought ⁱⁿ about any substantial improvement in the employment position of Northern Irish Catholics, ^{the report for} but ^{15 1989} legislation is showing signs ^{having a} significant impact.

***Amendment No. 10**

delete recommendation 4

***Amendment No. 11** *Recommendation 6*

Notes that Northern Irish Catholics see the (one word deleted) 'MacBride Principles campaign as (15 words deleted) assisting them in overcoming their problems, but also acknowledges the British Government's argument that this campaign may lead to disinvestment in Northern Ireland

damage

***Amendment No. 12**

Delete recommendation 8

Amendment No. 13

new recommendation 8

Notes that in reality there is no means of suddenly changing the situation, other than forcing Protestants out of jobs and replacing them with Catholics, but that such action would in itself be discriminatory and would be totally unacceptable

Notes that the use of reverse discrimination to produce immediate change in employment between Protestants and Catholics would itself be discriminatory and totally unacceptable and ~~discriminatory~~

Amendment No. 14

new recommendation

Notes that, under the existing Regulations, the Commission has no authority to make EC funds available conditional on significant improvements, through setting time frames and objectives, in the situation in the Northern Irish Catholic Community

Amendment No. 15

new recommendation

Notes that the plans submitted for Northern Ireland for assistance under Objective 3 clearly recognise that resources must be targeted to those in greatest need and that the British Government intends to continue to ensure that all parts of the plans secure fair opportunities and improvements in the situation of Northern Irish Catholics

*write
Provision
Catholic*

*because of their status they should assist
the people of any N - 1
Catholic.*

*Amendment No. 11
Notes that Northern Irish Catholics see the (one word deleted) MacBride Principles campaign as (18 words deleted) assisting them in overcoming their problems, but also acknowledges the British Government's argument that this campaign may lead to investment in Northern Ireland*

*Amendment No. 12
Delete recommendation 8*

*Amendment No. 13
new recommendation 8*

Notes that in reality there is no reason to suddenly change the situation other than to put Protestants out of use and reducing them with Catholics, but that such action would in itself be discriminatory and would be totally unacceptable

*Notes that the use of scarce resources to produce...
...independent bodies...
...would itself be discriminatory and would be totally unacceptable*

6. Notes that Northern Irish Catholics see the worldwide 'MacBride Principles' campaign as a great source of support in overcoming their problems and endorses the campaign's moral principles, but also acknowledges the British Government's argument that this campaign may lead to disinvestment in Northern Ireland;
7. Considers that money made available under the Structural Funds - specifically, to fund Objective 1 - must be so deployed as to give fair employment in Northern Ireland a proper chance;
8. Calls on the Commission to examine within the next six months how EC funds earmarked for Northern Ireland can be made conditional on significant improvements, through setting time frames and objectives, in the situation of the Northern Irish Catholic community;
9. Is well aware that a political solution to the Northern Irish problem, to which both the Unionist and the Catholic sections of the Northern Irish population must subscribe, is a necessary precondition for a significant improvement in the economic situation in Northern Ireland, and therefore supports all efforts to encourage negotiations between Northern Irish political leaders and the British and Irish Governments;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council of Ministers, the Irish and British Governments and political and church leaders in Northern Ireland.

VANDEMEULEBROUKE REPORT - SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS

Here are some suggestions. Amendments marked with * are those proposed by Will Haire's office (via UKREP). The others are my own proposals, based on the utterances of Richard Royce from the Commisison and the letter of 22 December 1993 to you from Will Haire.

***Amendment No. 1**

delete second indent

linked
version

***Amendment No. 2**

move second indent to fourth position

***Amendment No. 3 Point A, preamble**

Whereas British fair employment legislation has not succeeded in bringing about any substantial improvement in the unemployment situation of Northern Irish Catholics

***Amendment No. 4 Point C, preamble**

Whereas Northern Irish Catholics are 2.1 times more likely to be unemployed than Protestants

Amendment No. 5, New Point (I)

whereas the particular problems of Northern Ireland's demography and its labour market render it extremely difficult to reduce the differential between Catholic and Protestant unemployment in the short term

and skills
age structure
the workforce
and the location
of the established
industries

Amendment No. 6, New Point (J)

whereas the higher rate of unemployment among Catholics is due to the interaction over time of a complex array of factors