

20 FEB 1992

18 February 1992

Mr J O'Neill
Department of the Environment for NI
Churchill House
Victoria Square
BELFAST

Dear John, 20/2/92

I wrote to you on 17 December, following the explosion in Chichester Street on 28 November, setting out IDB's case to have all windows in IDB House (with the exception of those facing the Victoria Centre car park) replaced with heavier more blast resistant frames and double glazed panels. At that stage, I believe, DOE were considering whether to include the Victoria Square elevation in the project, but our view was that a number of factors weighed heavily in favour of this more extensive option.

As we are both aware, however, a second explosion occurred on the night of 18 December in Victoria Street and IDB House again suffered considerable damage, not only to the facing elevation, but also to the Victoria Square side of the building. I understood, from our discussion the following day, that DOE had agreed to endorse IDB's argument and had conveyed this view to DFP.

I am disappointed, therefore, to learn from our meeting with the DOE Project Team on 13 February that no decision has yet been reached on whether the Victoria Square side is to be scheduled for replacement windows. Our primary concern must be to ensure as far as possible the safety of staff in IDB House (both in terms of vulnerability of the Victoria Square area and during evacuations). We consider it essential that the rear elevations of the building are included in the plans for the fitting of the new windows. Moreover, I am concerned that any delay in implementing this recommendation could lead to slippage in the timetable for the project as a whole, currently scheduled to begin in June 1992.

I should be grateful therefore to have some reassurance from you that the overall project as detailed above has DOE and DFP support, and that the window replacement work scheduled to commence in June will proceed without delay.

Yours sincerely

John Smith

J B SMITH
Executive Director
International Promotions, Communications
and Personnel

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10 JAN 1992

Mr O'Neill 10/1/92

BOMB DAMAGE

Thank you for your minute of 8 January regarding the impact of the recent Belfast bombings on the Works Service budget.

As far as 1991/92 is concerned you will have received a copy of Jack McGibbon's minute of 8 January in which he advised that there would be a further check on pressures and easements at the beginning of next week so that Spring Supplementary Estimates can be adjusted if possible to reflect the latest position. For that exercise I would ask you to provide an indication of any remaining pressure which you believe will have to be met this year which cannot be covered by your present allocation. Dick MacKenzie has just spoken to me about the problem in relation to the Planning Office in Bedford House and I assume you will be able to give me at least a ball-park figure for the current year costs arising from the 2 most recent explosions.

As far as the major expenditure on IDB House is concerned I would of course wish to register with DFP the pressure on your budget for 1992/93 created by the recent explosions and by complying with the DFP Government Security Branch advice. Can you clarify for me the expenditure which will be incurred next year for which I need to lodge a bid? Will any of the £1.340m be paid this year?

You will appreciate that there is no mechanism for altering the allocations made at the end of the 1991 Survey activity in advance of the normal in-year monitoring exercises - the first of which will not be until June. However, I will lodge a special claim but would not expect your budget to be adjusted before June at the earliest. However, if you are satisfied that the advice given should be followed you will no doubt wish to go ahead with the remaining arrangements in advance.



W N CAMPBELL

9 January 1992

PB/WNC/D 045

JB

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Mr W N Campbell
Finance Division

BOMB DAMAGE

We have now been able to firm up some of the costs involved in the clearing up and reglazing exercise brought about by the two explosions in the vicinity of IDB House. Although the accounts are not yet in, the cost of the clearing up and making wind and weatherproof by the two contractors involved will be in the range £500K - £600K. In the light of the further costs (as yet unquantified) incurred in the wake of the Bedford House and River House explosions, the £700K from the December monitoring round may prove inadequate.

A Project Team has been established to deal with the reglazing of the building which will also require new window frames. The advice from Government Security Branch in DFP is that we should take this opportunity to reglaze to the standard required for all new buildings to be occupied by civil servants ie 7.5mm laminated glass. The order of costs would be:-

Chichester Street elevation	£710K
Victoria Street elevation	£150K
	—————
	£860K

Security Branch also recommended as a third priority the fitting of laminated glass to the Victoria Square (ie rear) elevation of IDB House - their advice was received after the Chichester Street but before the Victoria Street explosion. This would add £480K to the cost giving a total of £1340K. Although there is some protection afforded to the rear elevation because of the stand-off provided by the security search point in Victoria Square, IDB have expressed to me their concern that laminated glass should be installed as quickly as possible particularly as the staircases used to evacuate the upper floors are located at the rear of the building and staff using them would be in considerable danger from flying glass. It should also be borne in mind that because of the proximity of the Law Courts, the Chichester Street/Victoria Street/Victoria Square area is likely to remain a target zone for terrorist attack. From the Works Service standpoint there are advantages in including the rear elevation in the project - some savings would result from one contractor rather than two being involved and should it be

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necessary to replace any windows or frames in the future after further explosions, this would be an easier and cheaper task if only one type of window were involved since there is no guarantee that if the rear elevation is glazed at a later stage, the same type of window will be installed as will be fitted to the front and side elevations.

For the reasons outlined, I would wish a bid to be made to DFP for sufficient funds to install laminated glass in the front, side and rear elevations of IDB House.

John O'Neill

J O'NEILL
Works Service

8 January 1992

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