

FILE NOTE

SOCIAL VIOLENCE AND CR: JARMAN RESEARCH

FIRST MEETING OF DEPARTMENTAL GROUP

E4.04, Castle Buildings, Stormont

Wednesday 26 March, 2002 at 10am

Present: Dr Stephen Donnelly, OFMDFM
Ms Bernie Duffy, OFMDFM
Mr Vincent Gribbin, OFMDFM
Ms Helen Leith, NIHE
Mr Martin Thompson, DE
Mr Damien McNally, DHSSPS
Mrs Siobhan Morgan, NIO
Miss Louise Cooper, NIO
Mr Richard Scullion, PSNI
Miss Ursula Duffy, PSNI
Mr Michael Harkin, OFMDFM Race Equality
Mrs Dorina Edgar, OFMDFM Gender Policy
Dr Neil Jarman, ICR
Dr Rachel Monaghan, ICR

Apologies: Dr Tracy Power, DRD

Dr Donnelly asked everyone to introduce themselves. He said that the purpose of getting the group together was to (i) inform them about the research and to enable members to feed this information back to their Departmental colleagues (ii) facilitate the research through useful and meaningful dialogue between the researchers and Departmental colleagues with an interest in this area.

Dr Jarman tabled a handout (attached) and outlined his previous research into racist incidents, and spoke to a paper he had prepared.

Dr Donnelly suggested that the group should meet again at key stages of the research. The suggested timing for the next meeting was **end of May/early June** to enable the researchers to feed back some initial results. Ms Duffy agreed to arrange a suitable date.

Ms Duffy agreed to compile and circulate a list of contact addresses for the group.

Dr Donnelly thanked everyone for attending.

Post meeting action

Dr Donnelly suggested inviting a representative from the Policing Board and Police Ombudsman Office onto the group. Mr Arthur Rice and Dr Malcolm Ostermeyer have been contacted and invited to participate.

Social Violence and Community Relations: Racism, Homophobia and Sectarianism

Project Outline

1. Racist, homophobic and sectarian harassment has been increasing in Northern Ireland in recent years. The available information indicates that the number of racist incidents has almost doubled in each of the past four years, that homophobic attacks are a growing problem, and sectarian violence remains a constant concern.
2. However accurate data about each of these issues and analysis of the scale and nature of the problem is lacking. This project therefore aims to analyse the scale of the problem and the nature of individual incidents as well as explore the wider nature and context of these three distinct, but inter-related forms of harassment and violence. *aims*
3. Because of the different scale and histories of the three forms of violence there will be a slightly different research starting point for each of these topics.
4. **Racist Harassment:** The RUC has been collecting data on racist incidents since 1996. A preliminary review and analysis of incidents from 1996-99 has been completed, the incidents have been entered onto a database and a report has been published. The research will add the data for 2000 and 2001 and provide a revised analysis of racist harassment from 1996-2001. *integrate census data on size of minority ethnic communities*
5. **Homophobic Incidents:** The RUC has been recording such incidents since July 2000. Thus there will only be two year's data to draw on at the start of the project.
6. **Sectarian Violence:** At present the police do not isolate such acts from more general crimes. Some information, such as attacks on Orange Halls, on churches and on schools, can be isolated from police data, while other details, such as assault on the person and on domestic property will be gathered through a review of the press. One aim of the research will be to begin to quantify the scale and range of sectarian incidents in the same way as is being done for racist and homophobic incidents.
7. The existing racist incidents database will also be used to log, categorise and analyse homophobic and sectarian incidents.
8. Responding to such violence has traditionally been viewed as the responsibility of the police, however the findings of the Patten Report, the Criminal Justice Review and the Stephen Lawrence Report have all pointed to the need to develop a broader approach and to increase the involvement of a wide range of statutory, voluntary and community organizations, including in particular those responsible for Education, Housing, Health and Social Services.

ints@ Agency level? or indiv. level?

9. A range of NGOs and statutory bodies such as the Equality Commission, Housing Executive, Health trusts and Education boards will be contacted and key people interviewed to gather more qualitative information on such issues as the relationships between the various agencies, the effectiveness of existing responses and ideas for improving working practices and policy frameworks.
10. The research will also include a review of recent studies, policy responses and best practice from the UK and Ireland and from further afield. The research will include field visits to relevant locations and projects.
11. ICR normally constitutes an advisory group composed of key interested organisations and individuals to provide advice, criticism and support for research projects. The initial invitations for an advisory group for this project are being sent to the following:
 - **Racism:** Equality Commission, Race Directorate; Multi-Cultural Resource Centre; Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities; Paul Hainsworth (University of Ulster).
 - **Homophobia:** Butterfly Club; Coalition on Sexual Orientation; Northern Ireland Gay Rights Association; Rainbow.
 - **Sectarianism:** Belfast Interface Project; Committee on the Administration of Justice; Counteract; Trademark.
12. Reports will be prepared at regular intervals so that there is a rolling programme of contributions to the policy debate. An initial report on racist harassment and responses to that harassment will be produced after six months, this will be followed by a study on homophobic violence at the end of the first year and finally a more extensive study of the scale and nature of sectarian violence and current responses to this problem will be produced at the end of the project.
13. The length of the programme will allow each report to build on changing or emerging patterns of policy responses. The third report on sectarian violence will also function as an overview report on the effectiveness and problems of current multi-agency responses to hate crimes and social violence.
14. The material will also be written up in an academic format for wider dissemination of the research findings and contributions will be made to relevant conferences, workshops, seminar and working groups.

Quali.
ints.

Neil Jarman & Rachel Monaghan
Institute for Conflict Research
26 March 2002

invite Phil Spinks
Malcolm Ostermeyer
on to group
Send everyone contact
details.
arrange meeting
early May / early June
cf to travel
dates.

next meet
end May / beg
June.
G feed back
results
G Queries via

RACIST INCIDENTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND 1996-1999

A Summary

1. Defining Racist Incidents

A racist incident is any incident which is perceived to be racist by the victim or any other person.

Simplified definition recommended in the report of the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry written by Sir William Macpherson (1999) to be adopted by all police services and other relevant agencies.

- Emphasis on perception not motivation;
- Ascription of racism not limited to police officers.

Means that racist incidents are:

- Not limited to crimes; includes abuse, name calling etc;
- Incidents based on nationality – attack on a Spaniard should be included;
- Attacks on religious premises – mosque – are racist.

Racist incidents within broad category of hate crime – attacks on members of defined groups which include sectarian and homophobic incidents.

2. Numbers of Racist Incidents

Police have collected data on racist incidents since 1996:

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
35	40	96	186	269

Two points to consider:

- Small number of incidents
- Number increasing significantly each year

Although numbers are small their significance is relative to size of victimised community.

- No precise figures for size of minority communities in NI;
- No census data gathered until 2001;
- Total figures vary - Irwin/Dunn - 11,000; RUC - 15,000; McVeigh - 20,000; but only main communities (Chinese, South Asian, Traveller);
- Other communities– Jewish; Black/African; Muslim; Middle Eastern; ignored or seriously under-represented.

Lack of certainty of numbers illustrative of relative significance of minorities in NI in policy terms.

If we scale up from c200 incidents on a population of 15,000 to NI population generally this would equal c 20,000 incidents per annum – which compares with figures for DV.

Racist incidents have a wide social impact because of number of incidents on which include attacks on in and around the domestic arena.

Comparison with other forms of Social Violence and Hate Crime

	Domestic Incidents	Domestic Violence	Racist Incidents	Homophobic Incidents	Sectarian Incidents
1995	5,903	3,326			
1996	6,727	3,681	35		
1997	8,509	3,805	40		
1998	14,429	6,385	96		
1999	15,304	7,402	186		
2000	14,520	7,335	269	58*	

→ not isolated or documented

* First nine months of year

3. Why is number of incidents increasing?

Annual percentages increase:

1996-1997	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000	1996-2000
14	140	94	45	668

Three prominent reasons:

1. Increase in number of incidents.
2. Increase in number of incidents being reported to police.
3. Increase in number of incidents recorded by police.

Police minority community relations are probably better than with sections of majority community – less historical baggage.

4. How accurate are the figures?

In UK accepted that a general under reporting of incidents – as little as 1 in 20 - but has increased recently post Stephen Lawrence.

1. No figures for incidents in schools affecting children.
2. Very low figures for Travellers.
3. No incidents by Health Workers at work (cf recent reports in England)
4. No figures maintained by NIHE (prominent issue in UK).

Suggests the figures seriously under represent number of incidents in NI.

5. Summary of data on incidents

- Racist harassment is experienced by all minority communities in Northern Ireland. Incidents have been recorded in 43 locations, largest number of incidents, and the highest ratio per head of population, reported by Indian and Pakistani community.
- For many people harassment is a persistent factor in their life, in 40% of cases people experience numerous instances of racism before they choose to report it.
- Many incidents involve a combination of racist abuse, violence to the person, damage to property, theft, threats or graffiti.
- 24% involve some form of assault, but violence or physical assault was a factor in over 75% of cases involving children.
- Over 50% of all incidents were recorded in Belfast and over 70% of incidents were recorded in the Greater Belfast area.
- The areas with the most recorded incidents were South, North and East Belfast. Followed by Glengormley, Ballymena, Derry, Belfast Central and Bangor.
- The areas with most recorded incidents are in Protestant areas of South and North Belfast: Donegall Pass, the Village (Chinese), Lower North (Sikh). Very few incidents have been recorded in West Belfast. This may reflect of racist attitudes but more likely it reflects the fact that housing is more readily available in Protestant working class areas than in Catholic working class areas.
- Most incidents are recorded in or around the home – over 56% involve attacks on domestic property or affect people who are in their home; 22% of incidents are related to the place of work – particularly restaurants; 20% occurred in the street.
- Most incidents are not random – victims are known in some way and targeted because of their ethnicity. Once the home location is identified it is relatively easy for the perpetrators to undertake repeat or persistent harassment. In 6.5% of cases the victim had moved or was seeking to move home as a result of the racism.
- In 20% of cases the perpetrator of the racist harassment was identified as a neighbour or someone living locally, up to 47% of cases may involve someone who lives close to the victim.
- The stereotypical perpetrator is a young white male acting in consort with other young white males. In 12% of cases a female was also involved in the harassment.

6. Responding to Racist Harassment

One of the key elements of the Stephen Lawrence Report was that responding to racist harassment was not simply a matter for the police:

17. That there should be close co-operation between the Police Service and local government and other agencies, including in particular Housing and Education Departments, to ensure that all information as to racist incidents and crimes is shared and is readily available to all agencies.

The Report also recommended that there should be a 'comprehensive system of reporting and recording all racist incidents and crimes' (recommendation 15) which should include 'the ability to report at locations other than police stations and the ability to report 24 hours a day.' (Recommendation 16).

Home Office *Code of Practice on reporting and recording racist incidents* elaborated on Macpherson & recommends multi-agency panels for co-ordinating information and to facilitate ease of reporting for those who do not want to report directly to the police. In some areas incidents can be reported in mosques, churches, shops, libraries, schools, community centres, leisure centres, social services, hospitals and doctors surgeries.

To date the response to such recommendations in NI has been minimal. The police have responded positively to many of Macpherson's recommendations, still problems with recording system – no database, no analysis of incidents.

Other relevant agencies have not made any appropriate response to this problem. Racist incidents are still regarded primarily as a policing matter and there is little exchange of information between education boards and the NIHE over this issue.

Only multi-agency panels involve the RUC and NGOs such as NICEM, Chinese Welfare Association, Multi-Cultural Resource Centre and Victim Support.

7. Why No Response?

- Minority Communities remain largely invisible in NI.
- No Pressure to respond to Macpherson – an English problem – ‘we are not racist’.
- Policing is a reserved matter – violence not responsibility of local ministers.
- Wider lack of willingness to address problems of inter-communal and inter-ethnic violence.

Neil Jarman
April 2001