

Arbitration file

27 AUG 2002

Mary Bunting

08/26/02 01:58 PM

To: ArbitrateArdoyne@aol.com, [REDACTED]

cc: Derek Wheeler/OFMDFM/DFP@DFP, Sheila
Bradfield/OFMDFM/DFP@DFP

Subject: Ministers' letter to groups in Ardoyne

----- Forwarded by Mary Bunting/OFMDFM/DFP on 08/26/02 01:55 PM -----

Sue and Steve,

I've called into the office today to pick up the e-mails from Friday.

Both Thursday and Friday were obviously busy days for everyone -many thanks to both of you and Derek for your hard work.

I'm forwarding the final copies of the press release and the letter to parties - Derek may have sent it by now, but just in case, here they are again.

I'll talk to you on Tuesday about the next steps.

Best wishes,
Mary



23-08-02 - NorthBelfast final press release. 23 Aug Ministers letter to Father Troy.d

ArbitrateArdoyne@aol.
com

08/24/02 07:28 AM

To: Derek.Wheeler@ofmdfmi.gov.uk

cc: Mary.Bunting@ofmdfmi.gov.uk

Subject: Ministers' letter to groups in Ardoyne

Dear Derek,

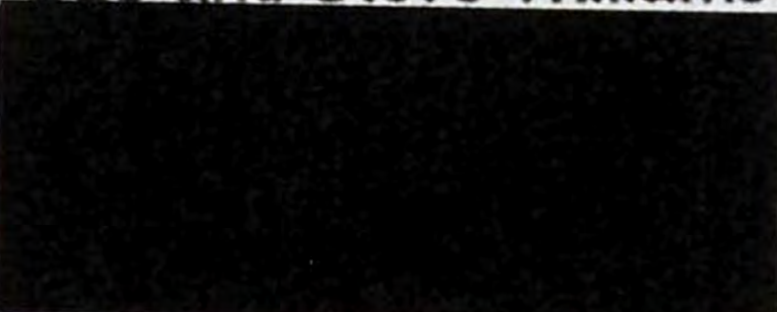
Thank you for your letter to us, summarising what was discussed and agreed with the Ministers on Tuesday.

As you know, yesterday we delivered copies of our report with covering letters to Fr. Aidan Troy for the Holy Cross Board of Governors, to Gerard McGuigan for the Ardoyne Group and to Jim Potts and Ronnie Black for the Concerned Residents of Upper Ardoyne. We also delivered copies to offices or homes, as appropriate, of the 6 MLAs for North Belfast.

We understand that the Ministers have now written to the above groups setting out their response to our report and recommendation. In anticipation that we may have further contact with these groups, could we please have a sample copy of the Ministers' letter to these groups and also the press release that was issued by the Ministers' yesterday. Thank you.

With best wishes,
Steve and Sue

Sue and Steve Williams



Email: ArbitrateArdoyne@aol.com

PRESS RELEASE

23 August 2002.

The First Minister and the Deputy First Minister today accepted the recommendations made by independent arbitrators on aspects of community safety on the Ardoyne Road. They are now examining how best to implement all of the recommendations as quickly as possible. They intend to take the report to the Executive in order to secure agreement on the proposed way forward and to make the necessary arrangements with relevant departments, including the Department for Social Development.

The arbitrators, Sue Williams and Steve Williams, worked on the arbitration process during the summer and discussed their report with Ministers earlier this week.

The First Minister said:

"In recent months we have sought to build a consensus and make progress in this area by offering assistance with both community dialogue and community safety. We are glad to note that the arbitrators recognised this need. We would like to thank Mr and Mrs Williams for their work. For our part, we will continue to help resolve community tensions in Ardoyne/Glenbryn and in North Belfast more widely."

The Deputy First Minister stated:

"Since becoming involved in this Executive Initiative for North Belfast, we have always emphasised that it is only through community dialogue that a lasting solution to the tensions and divisions at this interface can be found. We are fully committed to supporting dialogue between the two communities, which we believe to be more urgent than ever given the increased tensions in the area in recent weeks. We therefore ask all parties to provide feedback to the arbitrators in order to assist in achieving meaningful community dialogue."

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Arbitration was undertaken by American conflict consultants, Sue and Steve Williams.

The Arbitrators' report states:

"The meeting of the basic safety needs of one community ought not to be subject to the consent of another community. There is a clear obligation to meet safety needs, provided that this is not done in a way which interferes with meeting the needs of others. Issues of consent may limit the specific choices of method or mechanism for meeting safety needs, but lack of consent does not remove the obligation to meet the needs. At the same time, dialogue and confidence-building are essential if the problems are ever to be solved in any meaningful way."

The Arbitrators recommended the following:

1. "OFMDFM should address the basic safety needs by implementing what we have called the Minimal Wall/Fence Proposal. This would involve building a wall along the Alliance Avenue side of the intersection, following the current line of the footpath along the cobbled area, in order to disrupt the sightlines somewhat for youths at the intersection, while preserving the sightlines as children walk along the road to school. Beyond the CCTV camera, the wall will join with and be replaced by an lbex fence, which will offer protection from missiles to houses 43-49, and at the same time ensure that no one can use the wall as a screen for attack, since they would be visible for some distance. We believe that this addresses the basic safety needs on both sides.
2. Further attempts should be made to build confidence and dialogue processes between the two communities.
3. A process should be devised to test consensus on further improvements, both to safety and to the environment. This testing would at least make it clear how the communities feel, give authority to their spokespeople in representing their views, and feed into the dialogue process. If consensus develops to make more extensive changes, then the land could be requested and further improvements implemented".

The first recommendation includes a 3.6 metre lbex fence behind houses on Hesketh Road.

The Arbitrators have invited feedback from the community and elected representatives and Ministers have asked the Arbitrators, as part of this feedback process, to explore with the various interests what assistance might be provided to facilitate the implementation of recommendations 2 and 3 of the report and how the wider needs of the communities at this interface could be addressed.

Copies of the Arbitrators' report are available from the Executive Information Service.

*David Trimble, First Minister and
Mark Durkan, Deputy First Minister*

*Parliament Buildings,
Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX*

Father Troy
The Passionists
Holy Cross Retreat
432 Crumlin Road
BELFAST
BT14 7GE

23 August 2002

Dear Father Troy

Following a series of meetings and correspondence with you during May and June, we wrote to you on 28 June advising you that we had decided to appoint independent arbitrators to address remaining issues on community safety.

The arbitrators have now presented their report to us and we have met with them to discuss their recommendations. We are writing to let you know that we have accepted the three recommendations which are included on page 5 of the arbitrators' report. We are now examining how best to implement all of the recommendations as quickly as possible. We intend to bring the report to the Executive in order to secure agreement on the proposed way forward and to make the necessary arrangements with relevant Departments, including the Department for Social Development.

We understand that the arbitrators have issued a copy of their report to you today. They are inviting feedback on their report and we have asked them, as part of this feedback process, to explore with you what assistance might be provided to facilitate the implementation of recommendations 2 and 3 of the report and how the wider needs of the communities at this interface could be addressed.

Throughout our involvement in this process we have continually emphasised that it is only through community dialogue that a lasting solution to the tensions and divisions at this interface can be found. We have sought to build a consensus and make progress on both issues of community dialogue and community safety. In their report the arbitrators have also recognised this need. They state that:

“there is a need for all the relevant groups and individuals to be able to negotiate with each other about various aspects of the community they want, and to begin to create for themselves a clear, shared vision of a safe, healthy and attractive environment in which everyone can live together peacefully.”

We fully endorse this sentiment. We are fully committed to supporting community dialogue between the two communities, which we believe to be more urgent than ever given the increased tensions in the area in recent weeks. We therefore ask all parties to provide feedback to the arbitrators in order to assist in achieving meaningful community dialogue.

Yours sincerely

RT HON DAVID TRIMBLE MP MLA
First Minister

[Approved by the First Minister and signed
in his absence]

MARK DURKAN MLA
Deputy First Minister

[Approved by the Deputy First
Minister and signed in his absence]