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From: Dr J J M Harbison


cc: Secretary
Mr Simpson
Dr McCoy
Mr Conliffe
Mr Park
Mr Hamilton

Date: 15 May 1998

Ms Jennie Murphy
Rights and European Division NIO

FAMILY TRAUMA PROJECT

1. Our various discussions on the above refer.
2. I attach draft press release with associated 'notes for editors' on the Project.
3. I have discussed with Mr Worthington who has endorsed the priority given to the Project; as I suspected he suggested that the Fund might make contribution to the first full year running costs for the service, but this is something for discussion between the two Ministers.
4. Could I highlight a number of points in the press release:
 - the service would be developed to provide a regional consultation service for all of Northern Ireland;
 - the stress on the fact that we believe more needs to be done particularly through improved local community support;
 - the service will meet recommendations in both the Bloomfield and SSI Reports;
 - the current estimate is that running costs will be around £350k per annum;
 - can you ensure that Mr Worthington is copied into all material;
 - we will need to alert S&E Belfast Community Trust if/when an announcement is due.
5. Happy to discuss.


J J M HARBISON

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

A NEW SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES WHO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE TROUBLES

Victim's Minister Adam Ingram today announced that the Government was to spend £500,000 on a new service to help young people and their families who have been affected by the Troubles. The new service would build on the work currently being done at the Young People's Centre in Belfast and would aim to provide a comprehensive therapeutic service to families experiencing trauma. The specific aim would be to meet the psychological needs of families and individuals affected by the troubles. It would also provide training and a regional consultation service for all of Northern Ireland .

Mr Ingram said *"In his report Sir Kenneth Bloomfield drew attention to the lack of specific treatment facilities for severely traumatised young people many of whom are inappropriately admitted to adult wards. I welcome this new service and I believe that it will go a long way to meet the need which Sir Kenneth has identified in his report. However the Government will also be continuing to study what else needs to be done for example by way of improved local community support to help other people who are perhaps less traumatised but in need of help."*

Mr Ingram added *"When this new service is in place I believe that a more professional, effective and responsive service will be available to many children, young people and their families who have been traumatised by the troubles"*

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The £500,000 will cover the purchase of suitable property and the cost of adaptation.
2. This new provision will be provided by South and East Belfast Health and Social Services Trust but will aim to provide a service to cover the whole of Northern Ireland. The Trust will recruit additional professional and other staff to ensure that this work is taken forward quickly.
3. The DHSS Regional Strategy identified the need for the assessment and development of child and adolescent psychiatric services and Health and Social Services Boards are developing plans to meet their local requirements. This new provision will cater for the most acute needs throughout Northern Ireland and reflects recommendations in the recently published report by the Social Services Inspectorate "Living with the Trauma of the Troubles"
4. Sir Kenneth Bloomfield's report "We Will Remember Them" was published earlier this week.