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NOTE OF A MEETING WITH MR R COOPER ON THURSDAY 26 MARCH 1987 TO DISCUSS THE
MACBRIDE PRINCIPLES

1. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the California MacBride legislation but a number of other items arose in the course of the meeting.

2. TRADE UNION INVOLVEMENT

Firstly Mr Cooper advised that he had had a meeting with John Freeman. Mr Freeman wanted to discuss a letter he had had from Ron Todd (General Secretary TGWU) from a body which Mr Cooper thought was called Trade Unions for Ireland. Apparently this body, which Mr Cooper thought was relatively small, intends to run a conference to promote the MacBride Principles and had asked Mr Todd if he would act as a co-sponsor. Mr Cooper said that Mr Freeman would be strongly recommending Mr Todd to have nothing to do with the conference and since Mr Todd places a high value on Mr Freeman's views it is thought unlikely that he will take part.

US COMPANIES

3. Mr Cooper advised that Kent had now agreed to sign the Declaration of Intent and indeed may already have done so. He commented that the composition of the workforce was quite good - thought to be 55-60% Catholic which was close to the overall figure for the Enniskillen area. Mr Cooper found it difficult to understand the reluctance of US companies to monitor their workforce and to make their figures available and indeed thought that if the companies got together and produced a composite figure this would stand up very well. Only two of the companies were likely to have poor figures - Hughes and TRW - and these would be offset by Du Pont (whose size would affect the balance) and Essex etc.

SHORT BROTHERS

4. With regard to Shorts statistics Mr Cooper said that ideally he would prefer to leave publication of the 1985 figures until the 1986 figures were available. So far he had only received the 1986 apprentice figures and these were well down. He hoped to get the other 1986 figures shortly and expected that they would be in a position to publish the data fairly soon after this. In connection with the apprentice figures Mr Cooper commented that the company had

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shown a certain lack of imagination and foresight in their apprentice recruitment since they had advertised for these posts in July and had not taken the chill factor into account. Few West Belfast parents encouraged their children to apply for apprenticeships in Shorts - encouragement to apply for these posts came from careers teachers and of course in July the schools had broken up and the teachers were not available to give this encouragement. Mr Cooper agreed that the FEA would be happy to examine and validate the Short's workforce percentages if these were made available to them.

CALIFORNIA HEARING

5. Mr Cooper expressed his willingness to attend the California Committee hearing on the MacBride Principles on 21 April. He was advised that the Bill had to be out of Committee by 1 May but that Tom Hayden who had proposed the Bill had the option of postponing the hearing up to three times between 21 April and 1 May. If Hayden heard that there was strong opposition to the Bill he could well decide to arrange a new date. It was probable that the vote would go against the Bill and it was considered at this moment in time that no lobbying requirement was likely to be needed. However there was the possibility that the situation could change. Mr Cooper advised that a change in the timing could create problems since he had to be here on 24 and 25 April to attend a SACHR decision-making meeting.

6. Mr Cooper was advised that no vote was available in DED from which the trip could be funded. It was necessary for the FEA to bear the costs but a detailed record should be kept by him. Increased funding as necessary would be provided to the FEA in due course.

7. Mr Cooper mentioned that he was keen that two of the FEA's officers George Patterson and Rory Galway should go to the US to gain knowledge of the workings of the EEOC. He felt that they would be very useful for lobbying purposes while there. He was confident that they would present the right case.

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CONSULTATIVE PAPER

8. Mr Cooper advised that the FEA's comments on the Consultative Document would be issued on either 27 or 30 March. It was the intention that the comments would be published in due course but this would not take place immediately and certainly not this side of Easter. He said that the FEA had come down against goals and timetables but had taken the line that in cases where a company was using affirmative action but change was not taking place there was a case for preferential treatment as a last resort. Companies should be entitled to search out and recruit qualified minority candidates or those who would qualify with some training. The main support for this line had been from Jane O'Dempsey who had a very powerful voice on the Board and had managed to persuade the other members to this line.

9. Mr Cooper did not consider that this view would have any effect on the line taken by the FEA on the MacBride Principles. This line was that (i) the Principles were against NI law; (ii) the Principles were appallingly detrimental in terms of the disinvestment effect; and (iii) the analogy between Northern Ireland and South Africa was totally absurd. When challenged that the FEA's endorsement of preferential treatment in the context of the Consultative Paper would undermine his credibility as a witness against the MacBride Principles and be manipulated by the MacBride lobby Mr Cooper said he would think this out. He appreciated the difficulties that the line taken on the Consultative Paper would present in opposing the MacBride Principles but thought that opposition to the Principles could be maintained. He felt that he could have persuaded the Board to support goals and timetables in lieu of preferential treatment but his opposition to goals and timetables was well established and he had not changed his views. He considered that goals and timetables were ambiguous and did little to advance the cause of fair employment.

SACHR REVIEW

10. Mr Wilson asked about slippage on the timing of the SACHR review and was advised that the SACHR Report should be drafted by June and there was no slippage there. However there was slippage on the PSI policy review and the SACHR Report could not be published until the results of this review had been produced and taken into account. He felt that SACHR may recommend religious discrimination being adjudicated by industrial tribunals. He personally would be against this line - the problem with industrial tribunals was that there was

* no investigation stage which he considers crucial.

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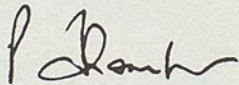
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INVESTIGATION INTO MOTOR TRADES

11. The investigation into the motor trades had been broadened to take in some other companies but investigations had been completed in four of the five initial companies investigated. In one company in particular the position was appalling.

AREA INVESTIGATIONS

12. Mr Cooper was keen that one of their next investigations would be area based eg Cookstown. He commented that in locations such as Londonderry there was a large proportion of Catholics employed in the public services and in the larger companies but despite this overall unemployment among Catholics was much greater. This indicated that Protestant employment in smaller companies must be substantial. He did not consider that a major number of workers signed on and worked across the border and therefore did not see this as a problem.



P THOMPSON (MISS)

7 April 1987

cc Secretary

Mr Mayne

— Mr Wolstencroft

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