



FROM: THE PRIVATE SECRETARY

PS/SCS B+L  
 B/MR INGRAM B+L  
 MR WARENS  
 MR LEACH  
 MR LEWIS  
 MR ROGERS  
 MS FOSTER  
 SPB/288/98

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Paul Mageean Esq  
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 Committee on the Administration of Justice  
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24 September 1998

Dear Mr Mageean,

Thank you for your letter of 10 August to Adam Ingram, Minister of State. I have been asked to reply on his behalf. I am sorry for the delay in replying.

The Government made it clear in its response to the UN Report that it will not tolerate harassment or intimidation of lawyers and nor will the Chief Constable. Where allegations are made they are investigated and if there is sufficient evidence to substantiate such allegations the appropriate action will be taken. However, as the UN Special Rapporteur states, solicitors have failed to lodge complaints. He has, as the Government has done, encouraged them to do so.

Obviously the documents enclosed must be of concern to Ms Nelson and the others mentioned. The Minister has asked me to say that he hopes that those who produced them can be brought to justice for their threatening behaviour.

We passed the documents immediately to the Chief Constable's office for investigation. They would obviously, given the nature of the material assess the security risk against Ms Nelson.

I should mention, in case Ms Nelson is not already aware, that the Northern Ireland Office runs a limited non-statutory discretionary scheme by which security measures can be installed in homes at public expense. The scheme is

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by necessity limited in its scope and cannot protect everyone who may be at some degree of threat from terrorist. It's aim is to protect those whose death or injury from terrorist attack could damage or seriously undermine the democratic framework of government; the effective administration of government and/or the criminal justice system' or the maintenance of law and order. Clearly a judgement has to be made about the candidacy of any individual who applies to join the scheme, and of the level of threat which they might be under. If Ms Nelson wishes to be considered for the scheme she should apply to the Northern Ireland Office, Key Persons Protection Scheme, Room 41 Massey House, Belfast. We cannot of course give any assurances as to the outcome. Any application will be dealt with on it's merits.

Any applications for a personal protection weapon should be made to the Chief Constable to consider. Application forms can be obtained from the local police station or Firearms Licencing Branch, RUC, Lisnasharra, 42 Montgomery Road, Belfast.

Ms Nelson may also contact her local crime prevention officer in relation to security advice at her home and at her workplace. I hope you understand that beyond these general points it would not be appropriate to comment further to a third party on the security of an individual.

*Yours sincerely,*

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Private Secretary to Adam Ingram JP MP  
Minister of State