



DUNDONALD HOUSE
UPPER NEWTOWNARDS ROAD
BELFAST
BT4 3SF

Dr J T Alderdice
Alliance Party of Northern Ireland
88 University Street
BELFAST
BT7 1HE

Your Ref: JTA/ER/PL/H&SS

JTA January 1988

Lea Tol

Thank you for your letter of 13 January 1988 about security problems at the Royal Victoria Hospital.

I am of course well aware of the problems which do exist at that hospital and I would be glad to get any comments you might wish to make about the situation. You should, however, know that my Department has been involved with the Eastern Board in recent discussions about ways of improving security at the hospital. You may therefore find it helpful to raise the issue, if you have not already done so, with the Chairman of the Eastern Board, John Simpson, who can bring you up to date on the various measures the Board is considering.

Richard Needham

RICHARD NEEDHAM

JTA/ER/P.L./HSS

19/2/88

Mr. John Simpson,
Chairman,
Eastern Health & Social Services Board,
Londonderry House,
Chichester Stret,
BELFAST 1.

I have been contacted by a number of staff and visitors to the Royal Victoria Complex, to complain about the serious security problems there, and as a result of correspondence with Mr. Needham, I have been advised to arrange a meeting with yourself to discuss the question. I should therefore be much obliged if it would be possible to have such a meeting.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

JTA/ER/P.L./HSS

19/2/88

Dr. M.D. O'Hara,
Senior Lecturer/Consultant Pathologist,
Royal Victoria Hospital,
Belfast,
BT12 6BA.

Further to your letter, I have been in correspondence with Mr. Needham, who is the Minister responsible, and have requested a meeting with the Chairman of the Eastern Board, Mr. John Simpson, and will try to keep you informed of our progress.

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

To: D.U.P., O.U.P., S.D.L.P., W.P., James Kilfedder (Party Leaders)
Alderman James McClure DUP HSS Spokesman
Rev. Martin Smyth, OUP " "
Cllr Joe Hendron SDLP " "
Ms Mary McMahon WP " "

10/2/88

We have all been appalled at the critical deterioration in the Health Service in Northern Ireland, brought about by the Government's savage financial cut backs. There are almost unbridgeable gaps between the Parties on Constitutional matters at present, but as demonstrated by the joint meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on the future of the Shipyard, there is no reason of principle why we should not meet to produce a joint approach to Government on the future of the Health Service. We are told that the Treasury is awash with money and the Chancellor will therefore be making a decision in the near future as to whether to use this money to repair the damage to the Health Service, or to cut taxation.

We would therefore propose an early meeting of Leaders and Health & Social Service Spokesmen to produce a programme of joint political action on this matter. On hearing your response we can co-operate on the necessary practical arrangements for a meeting, at a mutually agreeable time and place.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Cllr Stewart Dickson
Spokesman
HEALTH & SOC. SERVICES

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

Cllr Brian Wilson
Spokesman
SOCIAL SECURITY

JTA/ER/P.L./H. & S.S.

13/1/87

Dr. M.D. O'Hara,
Senior Lecturer/Consultant Pathologist,
Royal Victoria Hospital,
Belfast,
BT12 6BA.

Thank you very much for your letter of 5th inst. I have been aware for sometime that the situation in the Royal Group of Hospitals site was a serious one, but had not fully realised that not only cars, but staff, at all levels, were in such physical danger. I will certainly take this matter up with the relevant authorities and may well be in touch with yourself or Dr. Sloan in the near future.

Best wishes.

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

JTA/ER/P.L./H. & S.S.

13/1/88

Mr. Richard Needham, M.P.
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State,
Department of Health & Soc. Services,
Stormont,
BELFAST 4.

I have had a number of representations to me in the recent past, about the serious security situation on the Royal Group of Hospitals site. Prior to making any formal representations, I wanted to check with you whether the matter of security of persons and vehicles, was a matter which fell within your area of responsibility since it is on Health & Social Services property, or whether it more properly falls within the remit of your colleague, Mr. Stanley. Perhaps you could clarify this matter for me.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

JTA/ER/P.L./H. & S.S.

13/1/87

Dr. M.D. O'Hara,
Senior Lecturer/Consultant Pathologist,
Royal Victoria Hospital,
Belfast,
BT12 6BA.

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Best wishes.

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

EASTERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES BOARD
ROYAL VICTORIA HOSPITAL
BELFAST BT12 6BA
Telephone: (0232) 240503, Ext. 2518

Consultants:

Prof. P. G. Toner
Prof. I. V. Allen
Dr. J. M. Sloan
Dr. M. D. O'Hara
Dr. H. Bharucha
Dr. C. M. Hill
Dr. M. Y. Walsh

Senior Chief MLSO:
Mr. J. A. Reid

Department of Pathology

MDOH/CMcM

5th January, 1988

Dr. Alderdice,
Alliance Party of N. Ireland,
88 University Street,
BELFAST BT7 1HE.

Dear Dr. Alderdice,

Security on the Royal Group of Hospitals Site is a problem that you will no doubt have heard of before. You will appreciate, on reading a copy of my recent letter to Mr. Needham of the Northern Ireland Office, that an incident has recently occurred which is to many of us, quite frankly, the last straw.

The morale of all grades of staff is at an all time low. It seems to us that we have been asked to accept by the R.U.C., the D.H.S.S and the Eastern Board that thefts of and vandalism to our cars and property is just "one of those things" that should be put up with. I now despair that we are to be told that violence to the person is to be added to the list of things which we should regard as one of the hazards of working on this site. Nurses are now being told by their car insurance companies that their vehicles are not insured if brought onto the site. Female staff, in the light of the attacks are understandably frightened to move around the site after dark. Patients and patients relatives, at a time when they may be under considerable stress are increasingly subjected to problems of theft, vandalism and personal attack.

It is our perception that we have been abandoned by the Board, D.H.S.S, R.U.C. and Politicians to await the next series of car thefts, injury or even worse.

On this site situated in West Belfast we are disenfranchised by virtue of the thoughts, words, actions and associations of our elected representative and I therefore write to you in the hope that you and your colleagues will use your influence, wherever you may, to exert pressure to cause meaningful changes to our lot. You should do this in the knowledge that the vast majority of the patients and staff who must enter this site are straightforward, moral, honest people looking only for normality.

I look forward to hearing of some, one might desperately say any, response from you and if I can be of assistance please do not hesitate to contact me at 240503, extension 2518.

Yours sincerely,

Denis O'Hara

Dr. M. D. O'Hara
Senior Lecturer/Consultant Pathologist.

JIA/ER/P.L./H.S.S.

17/6/88

Dr. M.D. O'Hara,
Senior Lecturer/Consultant Pathologist,
Royal Victoria Hospital,
Belfast,
BT12 6BA.

Further to my telephone call some time ago. I did meet Mr. John Simpson and Mr. Pat Kinder, to discuss the question of car parking and security on the Royal site, and received from them a number of reassurances. They undertook to pursue the question of a major multi-storey car park, with appropriate security and surveillance, and also described some changes in the security operations for the hospital site. Rather than describe these on paper, I would prefer to speak to you, and I will try to get in touch to arrange an appointment for us to meet in the next month or so. I will be on leave over the next few weeks, and so it may be mid July before we can arrange to meet.

Best wishes.

Dr. John T. Alderdice
PARTY LEADER

Everyone a sinner.

① Nurses cannot get car

Immune: - speaks volume.

② Physical violence / ^{scumbag} _{non}

③ Bad for morale

④ Bad for RVLT

⑤ What during the winter

⑥: Beating - as well as

stealing - transferring

etc is not happening with

single men.

⑦ Problem of being too open

They etc.

see review -

he: Public Safety Conference.

—
defendant +

L - R - Se

JTA/MA

29/3/89

Dr Denis O'Hara
Consultant Histopathologist
Institute of Clinical Science
Royal Victoria Hospital
Grosvenor Road
BELFAST

Further to previous correspondence, I did, as you know, raise the matter first with Mr Needham, and then had a meeting with the then Chairman of the Eastern Board, Mr John Simpson and with Mr Pat Kinder.

They assured me at that time that an RUC report was being sought on the question of security in the Royal site, and that they will keep me informed. However, when I raised the matter again at a recent meeting with the new Board Chairman, Douglas Paulin, and with Mr Kinder and others, and when they informed me of some of the details of the RUC's Crime Prevention Unit Report, I must say that I was not at all happy.

I therefore raised the question with the Secretary of State at a meeting which I had with him on 14/2/89, and you will find enclosed a letter which he has written to me in reply.

I should be interested to have a response from you to the Secretary of State's letter, for it is my intention to raise the matter with the Chief Constable in the near future, and I am keen to ensure that I am familiar with the views of the medical staff, and indeed of others who have also been in touch with me about the matter.

The whole question of security in the Royal site is a matter of continuing concern, and I should be grateful for your help in keeping me informed of the views of your colleagues on the matter.

Dr John T Alderdice
PARTY LEADER



Northern Ireland Office
Stormont Castle
Belfast BT4 3ST

Dr J Alderdice
Alliance Party of NI
88 University Street
BELFAST 7

13 March 1989

During our meeting on 14 February you raised the question of security at the Royal Victoria Hospital site.

The problems which you mentioned have unfortunately persisted despite determined remedial action on the part of the hospital management and the security forces in the area. Close liaison at local level has resulted in the implementation of a number of measures designed to tighten security. These include improvements to the perimeter walls, lighting and car parking facilities.

Furthermore recommendations contained in the most recent survey by the RUC's Crime Prevention Unit have now been agreed by the hospital management group. Included in this latest list of proposals are the employment of a substantial additional number of security staff, the provision of further secure car parking facilities and stricter control of access to the site by both pedestrians and vehicles. These additional measures are currently being discussed with the trade unions.

While it is clear that there are policing difficulties at the Royal it is not correct, as you suggested at our meeting, that the RUC have abdicated responsibility for law and order at the site. Police foot and vehicle patrols do operate within the grounds but, because of the threat of terrorist attack, these operations require a substantial military back-up. There are also special arrangements



for the investigations of crime occurring within the site. In addition the Army carry out frequent patrols around the perimeter of the hospital and on occasions inside the grounds.

Obviously there is a point at which the level of security force presence on a hospital site becomes oppressive and therefore it is necessary to strike the correct balance between the needs of security and the rights of staff and visitors to move about the site without undue hindrance.

The problem is therefore complex but I am convinced that if a solution is to be found then it is likely to emerge from a continuance of the co-operation between the hospital management and the police who are the people best placed to assess the difficulties. Ian Stewart is presently reviewing this, and he and Richard Needham will be reporting to me if additional measures are considered necessary.

TK

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→
L. King

JB/PROB/20782