

Norris, Hilary

From: Gowdy, Clive
Sent: 01 November 2004 15:13
To: Lindsay, Sharon
Cc: Hamilton, Andrew; Owens, Ambrose; Maguire, Philip
Subject: Telephone to Crawford and other Families

Sharon,

I attach some notes as an aide memoire for the Minister when she speaks to the families later today.



NOTES FOR
TELEPHONE CALLS TO

DHSSPS

NOTES FOR TELEPHONE CALLS TO PARENTS

- Acknowledge distress of parents over deaths of their children and subsequent publicity over the circumstances.
- Refer to UTV Insight programme and indicate the concerns it has raised over how the HPSS handled their cases.
- State your determination to get to the truth.
- Say that you will be announcing an independent inquiry to be conducted by an eminent lawyer.
- Encourage the parents to cooperate fully with the inquiry.
- Assure them that the final report will be made public (subject to any matters that may have to be referred to the PSNI for further action).

If pressed

- Say that the inquiry will have powers to compel witnesses to appear and to produce documents. However, people cannot be compelled to incriminate themselves and the lawyer conducting the inquiry will know how far he can go in this and what to do if people do not answer his questions.
- Confirm that the inquiry will deal with all aspects of the issues raised by the programme, subject only to any related investigations initiated by the PSNI or Coroner, etc.
- Indicate that the inquiry will not re-open the investigation of the deaths of the children as this has been fully investigated by the Coroner, but will concentrate on the way in which the HPSS and the people involved handled the matters concerned.