

KW x 1/SG

McKinlay FE (Fiona)

From: Laing SG (Shirley)
Sent: 19 November 2004 08:55
To: McKinlay FE (Fiona)
Subject: FW: PETITION PE 535; POTENTIAL STATE RESPONSE

-----Original Message-----

From: MacLean CR (Colin)
Sent: 18 November 2004 17:44
To: Minister for Education and Young People
Cc: PS/ED; Laing SG (Shirley)
Subject: RE: PETITION PE 535; POTENTIAL STATE RESPONSE

Minister

Copy Mike
 Shirley

You will have seen from Shirley's email that the final draft, as cleared by OSSE, provides a stronger statement about the scope of the apology than we had thought they might be willing to agree. Not sure if that changes your view on whether or not it would be helpful for you of FM to use it in advance of, or during, the debate.

I appreciate a key judgement is whether or not it might be seen as grudging. Compared with what is expected, I suspect it will come as a welcome surprise. No doubt there will still be calls for a more direct and explicit apology for what the state did, but the draft goes much further than I expected. And probably much further than INCAS expects. We will let you have a draft speech by close tomorrow to let you see this 'apology' in context.

Colin

-----Original Message-----

From: Laing SG (Shirley)
Sent: 18 November 2004 17:10
To: Minister for Education and Young People
Cc: Deputy Minister for Education and Young People; PS/ED; MacLean CR (Colin); Edgar R (Rachel); McKinlay FE (Fiona); Nelson G (Gillian); Donnelly LM (Louise)
Subject: PETITION PE 535; POTENTIAL STATE RESPONSE
Importance: High

PS/Minister for Education and Young People

Copy as above – with grateful thanks for such a swift and helpful turnaround.

PETITION PE 535; POTENTIAL STATE RESPONSE

The Minister asked us to seek advice from colleagues in OSSE on a draft of an apology re the above as consideration was being given to the First Minister making a statement of this nature in the Chamber, perhaps during FMQs, next week. I understand that the Minister has had a preliminary discussion with the First Minister around this issue earlier today.

I attach a text which has now been cleared by OSSE. This takes account of OSSE's concerns around earlier wording of the State 'placing' vulnerable young people in schools and 'failing to detect'