



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

**Reference Code:** 2021/97/44

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**Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland  
Helsinki**



**Telefax**

**Secure 156/95**

**5 December 1995**

**FOR: A/S Ó hUigínn, Anglo-Irish Division**

**FROM: Ambassador O'Ceallaigh**

*Doiseach  
to see please  
Mr  
6/12/95*

**3 Pages (including cover page)**

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**Telefax +358 0 646022**

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**Message: Mr. Harri Holkeri**

*Mr. Collins  
S.H.*

**COPY TO:**  
*4E* PST  
*6/12* PSS  
✓ MR. F MURRAY  
MR. P TEAHON  
MR. S. DONLON  
MR. T DALTON

Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland



2/3  
Irlannin Suurlähetystö  
Irlands Ambassad

Secure Fax

5 December 1995

For: A/S Seán Ó hUigínn,  
Anglo-Irish Division

From: O'Ceallaigh

Mr. Harri Holkeri

You asked for a pen picture of Mr. Harri Holkeri.

Born in 1937 he is from a rural background where his father was a policeman. He has a masters degree in political science. He has been involved in the Kokoomus Party, which is variously translated as Conservative or National Coalition Party, since his university days and from 1959 to 1971 he was youth secretary, information secretary, research secretary and eventually Party Secretary of Kokoomus. He was leader of the Party from 1971-79 and a member of Parliament from 1970-78. Since 1978 he has been a member of the Board of the Bank of Finland. Kokoomus was in opposition from the mid-sixties until 1987 when the then President, Mauno Koivisto, a social Democrat and former Governor of the Bank of Finland, invited Mr. Holkeri to form a coalition government with the Social Democrats which he led from 1987 to 1991, returning to the Bank of Finland when the Government changed to one led by the Centre Party.

Mr. Holkeri is a quiet spoken well regarded elder politician. He is not known for flamboyance but is seen as a solid middle of the road cautious person. He has a commitment to duty and when asked to join the International Body he saw it as his duty to respond positively given the honour being done to Finland. He is personally a little anxious that his knowledge

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of the issues is not great and hence his strong desire for support from the Finnish official institutions. He understands English well but is a little hesitant in speaking it.

When I visited him to-day in company with the British Ambassador he said that he had received great encouragement from the positive reaction of the Finnish public to his appointment. He said he intends to be a listener. He does not propose to respond to the press on the substance of the matter in which he is now engaged.

To sum up he is by nature a listener and a persuader who generally shuns publicity in favour of seeking compromise.

1/3 (F7)

**Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland  
Helsinki**

**Telefax**

**Secure 157/95**

**5 December 1995**

**FOR: Mr. Colm Ó Floinn, Anglo-Irish Division**

**FROM: Ambassador O'Ceallaigh**

**3 Pages (including cover page)**

**Telephone +358 0 646006**

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\*\*\*\*\*

**Message: Call on Mr. Harri Holkeri**

*See. O'Flaherty  
Counsellor  
Mr. Mc Intyre  
Joint Secretary*

<b>COPY TO:</b>
PST
PSS
MR. F. MURRAY
MR. P. TEAHON
MR. S. DONLON
MR. T. DALTON

Ambasáid na hÉireann  
Embassy of Ireland



2/3  
Irlannin Suurlähetystö  
Irlands Ambasad

Secure Fax

5 December 1995

For: Colm Ó Floinn, Anglo-Irish Division  
From: O'Ceallaigh

Subject: Call on Mr. Harri Holkeri

Together with the British Ambassador I called on Mr. Holkeri this afternoon. Both of us offered briefings by Dublin and London.

Mr. Holkeri said he intended to travel to London on Thursday morning 07 December, and to meet there with the Finnish Ambassadors to London and Dublin. He did not think there would be time for a briefing from us or from the British before meeting Senator Mitchell. He will travel onwards to New York on 07 December where the Finnish Ambassador to the UN will set up meetings for him with UN people on disarmament on 08 December. He will meet with Senator Mitchell on Saturday 09 December.

His return flight details are unclear at present but he has to be in Finland on 12 December. Following discussions with us he thought the best time for briefings would be on 13 or 14 December.

*I am in contact with Harri*  
The British said they would give a package of relevant documents to the Finnish Ambassador in London to be given to him. I suggest we do the same with Ambassador Slotte in Dublin. It might also be useful to brief Mr. Slotte.

*Anthony*  
Mr. Holkeri said he would be accompanied by his staffer, Mr. Timo Kantola, who has been seconded from the Finnish UN Mission in Geneva where he is working on disarmament issues.

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Mr. Holkeri said he had met Finnish security police this morning at their request. They asked should they accompany him. Both the British Ambassador and I, while solicitous of his security, felt there is little threat but we undertook to consult. Perhaps you would give me a steer on this. Mr. Holkeri said he might like to take a Finnish security person with him on his first visit and I presume we would have no objection if he so wished.

*Office  
advice on same point  
de Charlevoix sent  
to Ambassador Helsinki*