

21 October 1992

RESTRICTED

PAB/8383/WKL/RN

FROM: W K LINDSAY  
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION  
DATE: 22 OCTOBER 1992

Mr J W Thorp  
British Embassy  
Dublin

ASST  
SEC 26 OCT 1992  
CENT SEC

cc

Mr Alston - B  
Mr Watkins - B  
Mr Cooke - B  
Mr Farr, RID  
Mr Maccabe  
Mr McKervill

Mr Hefner / 588/91  
But any visit to NI  
without going to Belfast  
officially was found to  
be negative.  
ab9/10  
23 OCT 1992

CENT SEC

25.10

Ms Murphy

#### POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN LORD MAYORS OF DUBLIN AND BELFAST

Following receipt of John McKervill's minute of 20 August on this subject PAB made informal soundings of the Lord Mayor of Belfast. The response was not totally dismissive (nor it must be said was it encouraging) Alderman Ditty said he would need to consult his party colleagues on the Council. Despite reminders, nothing was heard - I suspect some of this was due to the fact that so many councillors were out of Northern Ireland on business in the intervening weeks. When in the City Hall on other business today I took the opportunity to speak to the Lord Mayor in the presence of Fred Cobain and the latter, who is influential in the Belfast City Council UUP declared his outright opposition to what he described as a window-dressing stunt. The Lord Mayor said nothing in the face of this strong expression of opposition.

2. The PAB assessment of the situation is that Alderman Ditty does not really want to mark his year in office by embarking on a symbolic event such as this without party support. He also needs to secure the agreement of his "running-mate" Deputy Lord Mayor Frank Millar who is likely to be greatly opposed to such a move. It may all prove too difficult. However we have also raised the question quietly with Jim Wilson, Chief Executive, UUP and he is to speak to Reg Empey, who as you know is a more accommodating UUP councillor. We should be in a position to comment further on this after the UUP conference on Saturday (24 October).

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R E S T R I C T E D

On timing or indeed the propriety of a visit to Belfast by Mr Mitchell, depending on the programme we feel there should be no impact on the current Talks process. If Alderman Ditty is offered a slot in a programme and refuses he will not be able to complain too much. It should be possible to construct a reasonable programme, in or out of Belfast, as happened for the very personable Mayor of Wexford some time ago, although she was here under the wing of a unionist, Jim Rodgers. It would be interesting to have a view from you as to whether the proposed links are likely to be a Gay Mitchell personal promotion or a serious attempt to build bridges. If the latter then I'm sure we could help with a useful programme in several parts of the Province.

[signed]

W K LINDSAY  
Ext 2266 SH

WKL/RN/9611

2. The Committee will consider the impact of a visit by the Dublin Lord Mayor to Northern Ireland in the talks process through the President's visit to Northern Ireland last month seemed to have no effect on the latter. But the purpose of John McKeever's minute of 14 August was to ask the attitude of the Lord Mayor of Belfast to possible links - either a visit north by Mitchell or south from Belfast. Unless you see objection, we would be grateful if you could simply sound out the Lord Mayor of Belfast's office as to what their attitude to a visit might be. The point raised by Mike Horwell, which implies that the Lord of Mayor of Belfast should have a veto on any visit by Mitchell to Northern Ireland, is a separate, but essentially secondary, issue.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF

R E S T R I C T E D

R E S T R I C T E D



21 October 1992

R E S T R I C T E D

588/91

From: J W Thorp  
British Embassy, Dublin

Date: 16 October 1992

cc: Mr Alston - B  
Mr Watkins - B  
Mr Cooke - B  
Mr Farr, RID - B

Mr May - B

UNDER/ 693/10  
SEC  
16 OCT 1992  
CENT SEC

ASST  
SEC 16 OCT 1992  
CENT 465/10 SEC

*Mr May*

*Ms Murphy*

POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN LORD MAYORS OF DUBLIN AND BELFAST

1. Mike Maxwell's minute of 24 August to you unfortunately went to ground here. HMA is to see the Lord Mayor of Dublin on 19 October, to extend an invitation to visit the City of London. Mr Mitchell is certain to raise again the question of contacts with Belfast and Northern Ireland in general.

2. We would of course have to consider the impact of a visit by the Dublin Lord Mayor to Northern Ireland in the talks process (though the President's visit to Northern Ireland last month seemed to have no effect on the latter). But the purpose of John McKervill's minute of 20 August was to ask the attitude of the Lord Mayor of Belfast to possible links - either a visit north by Mitchell or south from Belfast. Unless you see objection, we would be grateful if you could quickly sound out the Lord Mayor of Belfast's office as to what their attitudes to a visit might be. The point raised by Mike Maxwell, which implies that the Lord of Mayor of Belfast should have a veto on any visit by Mitchell to Northern Ireland, is a separate, but essentially secondary, issue.

SIGNED ON BEHALF OF

J W Thorp

R E S T R I C T E D



21 October 1992

R E S T R I C T E D

583/91

From: J McKervill  
British Embassy, Dublin

Date: 20 August 1992

cc: Mr Alston - B  
Mr Cooke - B  
Mr Maxwell - B  
Mr Farr - B

Mr Peter May  
PAB - B

POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN LORD MAYORS OF DUBLIN AND BELFAST

1. We spoke on 17 August about a call which HMA made on Gay Mitchell, newly elected Lord Mayor of Dublin, on 13 August during which Mr Mitchell said that he was very keen to improve contacts with Belfast and with Northern Ireland in general. In particular he said that he would be grateful if we felt able to sound out the Lord Mayor of Belfast on possible links - for example a visit North by himself or South from Belfast. A note of Mitchell's conversation with the Ambassador is being sent by the next unclassified bag.

2. Your initial reaction on 17 August was to suggest that the present Lord Mayor of Belfast would be unlikely to have much truck with such a proposal. Certainly, his stance in refusing to invite Carruth to the civic reception for McCullagh last week gives some indication of his position. When sounded out by Mitchell about whether he would like to be invited to the Dublin celebrations for the Irish olympic medal winners Ditty declined on the basis that he had a prior engagement and an invitation could not be accepted.

3. Nonetheless we should be grateful if you could make an approach to the Lord Mayor's office to get his reaction to the possibility of a visit and, if he could not countenance that, to find out what other ways, if any, he would like to see links between the two cities improved.

R E S T R I C T E D

ASST  
SEC 24 AUG 1992  
CENT SEC

UNDER/  
SEC 577/8  
24 AUG 1992  
CENT SEC





R E S T R I C T E D

Mitchell told the Ambassador that he wanted to pay a visit to Northern Ireland perhaps before the end of September and perhaps with his family, which might be tourism based, for example some fishing or a trip to the Glens of Antrim. He felt however there is a chance that political pressure might be put on Willy Hays not to see Mitchell because of the potential embarrassment it might cause Ditty, if the latter chose not to see him.

5. I should also be grateful for your and Mike Maxwell's views on what we might be able to set up for Mitchell in, say, the housing, environment, recreational and health fields if he undertook a visit to Northern Ireland. It might be possible to organise a useful visit for the Lord Mayor of Dublin even if his Belfast counterpart was unwilling to see him.

(SIGNED on behalf of)

J McKervill

R E S T R I C T E D

(SIGNED)

J W. Thorne

Ms Murphy