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588/91

ASST MM 683/7
SEC 28 JUL 1993

CENT

FROM: J McKervill
Dublin

DATE: 27 July 1993

cc: Mr Williams - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Cooke - B
Mr Archer, RID - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Ms Lodge - B
Mr Maxwell - B

HMA

UNDER/ 953/7
SEC
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LUNCH WITH JIM GLENN: 26 JULY

1. On 26 July I had lunch with Jim Glenn, First Secretary (Political) at the American Embassy in Dublin. One or two points of discussion may be worth recording.
2. He was naturally interested in the media speculation about a deal between HMG and Unionists. I assured him that there had been no deal. Unionist support for HMG had been based on their assessment of how life might have been for them under a Labour Government. He mentioned two reports in the weekend papers here about the Irish Government seeking support from the Americans to prevent any deal between HMG and the UUP. As far as he was concerned this was media speculation: there had been no approach to the American authorities either in London, Dublin or Washington.
3. We then went on to discuss Mrs Kennedy-Smith and how she was settling in. He said she was still very much in a learning mode but had expressed to him, as recently as last week, that she felt the Irish Government was not taking sufficient account of Unionist concerns or views. He then revealed that the Ambassador had recently hosted a dinner for Presbyterians, including the Reverend Dunlop, at which the Tanaiste and Taoiseach, were also present, although he declined to comment on whether the Ambassador was following any particular agenda in having this make up of guests.
4. He then asked what HMG's reaction would be to a visit to Northern Ireland by the Ambassador. I said that HMG would be pleased that Mrs Kennedy-Smith would want to visit Northern Ireland, her predecessors had visited from time to time, but

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it would be important that she was not seen to be visiting Northern Ireland as an accredited Ambassador. As it was his patch, I suggested that any proposed visit would need to be cleared with the US Ambassador in London. If she did undertake a visit it would also be important to ensure that it was balanced. He accepted these points and said that were she to visit Northern Ireland the Ambassador would clearly wish to have meetings with people from the Unionist tradition as well as with nationalists. She also had a strong interest in womens' issues and would almost certainly wish to include meetings with womens' groups in any visit. On one point he was very clear - there would be no handshake with the Sinn Fein President!

5. He also said that when the Ambassador had called on Mrs Geoghegan-Quinn last Friday the latter has stuck to the line that both the Irish and British Governments wished to see, and were working towards, a resumption of NI talks in the autumn. But if a resumption of talks did not prove possible then the two Governments would have to think again. The question of a peace envoy did not arise during their conversation.

Comment

6. This was the latest in a number of discussions I have had with Jim Glenn. Although interested in internal political affairs in the ROI, much of his time is spent looking at Anglo-Irish relationships as seen from Dublin and in keeping up to speed with the NI political process. He is generally sympathetic to British interests and on a number of occasions, this encounter included, he has been extremely critical of the Irish Government. At the moment his mood is one of irritation at what he describes as Irish political "self-righteousness".

(SIGNED)
J McKervill

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