

BREAKFAST MEETING WITH RAYMOND SEITZ, AMERICAN AMBASSADOR, SAVOY HOTEL 23 JULY

1. The Ambassador was interested in the motivation of the unionists in supporting the Government. Had a deal been done? I said no deal had been done, and I believed that they were influenced by what they had seen of a future under a Labour Government - Mr McNamara's paper - and by an understanding of the damage that the Social Chapter would do to employment in Northern Ireland. I drew attention to remarks I had made to the media on this subject, transcripts of which I later sent him.

2. The Ambassador acknowledged that these would indeed be cogent reasons, but nevertheless said that considerable suspicion would exist in Irish and nationalist circles that we had done some deal incompatible with the objectives and procedures of the talks process.

3. I told the ambassador that although I had had a meeting lasting 1¼ hours yesterday with Trimble and Maginnis no question had been raised concerning the vote. Similarly I told him that the Prime Minister had assured me that, although there had been a telephone conversation between him and Mr Molyneaux, no promises had been made and no deal had been done. I said my reading of Unionist attitudes towards the Government was, however, that they believed in the light of recent initiatives - and most notably the attack made upon McNamara's paper - that the Government was alive to, and sympathetic towards, their principle concerns.

4. The Ambassador accepted this. He said, however, that there would be considerable interest in Irish American circles and that anything which was bugging Boston would soon be relayed to the White House.

5. Obviously I accepted this, and made it clear that I was extremely pleased that the President had said at the St Patrick's

Day parade that the best way that the United States could help with Northern Ireland questions was to give encouragement to the continuance of the talks. I thought this was wise, and I added that the Government was wholly committed to the resumption of the talks process, to which end it was busily engaged in confidential talks at the present. I said that there were rational grounds for hope that this should succeed, though it was not going to happen in a hurry.

6. The Ambassador expressed rueful surprise that Mr Spring could have been so ill-advised as to allow his interview to be published in the terms, and at the time, that he had. He recognised that this was bound to confirm unionist suspicions as to Irish motives and an Irish timetable.

7. I raised the subject of Mrs Kennedy Smith and her possible visit to the North. While we were pleased that she wanted to come to the North, we were very anxious that the character and frequency of her visits should not fuel unionist suspicions that their purpose was to corroborate and confirm the territorial claim. I said I hoped that he would take a close interest in her proposals, and that arrangements for them could be routed through him. I said they had derived from invitations sent, and he observed that there was no such thing as a private visit from an American Ambassador to Dublin on an outing to Northern Ireland, still less when she was a Kennedy.

8. Mr Seitz expressed himself as fully alive to the concerns which had led me to raise the matter, and said that he had been giving thought to it himself. An American Ambassador needed the permission of the State Department to leave his or her accredited country, and he would be raising the topic when he was back in America. In any event he would make it clear that as the accredited Ambassador he had an interest. [REDACTED]

Mrs J. [REDACTED] Before parting with the subject I mentioned the need for balance in any visits by Mrs Kennedy Smith, if any, to the Province.

9. I mentioned lastly the impending arrival of Mr Martinez as Consul General in Northern Ireland, and said that we would be very glad if he thought there were value in receiving confidential briefing from us before taking up his post. The Ambassador said that he thought it was a very good thing, and that Mr Martinez was of high quality.

10. Lastly, on the question of his successor the Ambassador said that he had read, along with everyone else, reports in the newspapers that Admiral Crowe was to be his successor, and that he would expect any change to take place with the incumbent taking over next April so as to give him a good three years within the presidency. Nevertheless no-one had told him, the Ambassador, anything at all. [REDACTED]

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