

FROM: C G MACCABE
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION
15 March 1995

ASST 527/3
SEC 16 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

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ASST 10 42013
SEC 16 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

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cc PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (DENI, B&L) - B
PS/PUS (B&L) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Legge - B
Mr Steele - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Brooke - B
Mr Leach - B
Mr Wood (B&L) - B
Mr Brooker - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Bramley - B
Mrs Brown - B
Mr McCusker, DOE - B
[REDACTED] - B
Mr Lamont, RID - B
HMA, Dublin - B
Mr Caine - B

UNDER SEC 756/3
16 MAR 1995
CENT SEC
in hand
Mrs Kenny
Mrs [unclear]
LD1613

Mr Williams

THE PEACE AND RECONCILIATION FORUM GOES NORTH

Sammy Douglas, Chief Executive of the East Belfast Development Agency, got in touch with me yesterday afternoon. He wanted to know - confidentially - if the Office had a view on a forthcoming meeting between Judge Catherine McGuinness, in her capacity as Chair of the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation, and members of a local group called The Forum for Disadvantaged Protestant Communities.

2. The Forum for Disadvantaged Protestant Communities is a loosely-formed body in which Douglas plays a leading role. Its members come from all parts of the Province and include Glen Barr and David Adams of the UDP, Billy Hutchinson of the PUP and Jimmy Creighton, a North Belfast community worker. Judge McGuinness approached Douglas through Avila Kilmurry, Director of the Northern

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land Voluntary Trust, and asked her if the group would be prepared to make a submission to the Peace Forum. After considering the proposition with his colleagues, Douglas sent a message to Judge McGuinness to the effect that it was too early to take such a step, but that the group might be willing to present a paper to the Forum in due course. Judge McGuinness then suggested that as she was going to be in Northern Ireland on 22 March (on unspecified business) she could meet the group on its home turf. Douglas agreed and the meeting has been arranged for next Wednesday evening in Ferndale House Community Centre in the Glencairn Estate.

3. I thanked Douglas for letting me know what was going on. I said HMG was not involved in the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation, although Government observers had attended several sessions, and it was up to Judge McGuinness and her team to decide how to conduct themselves. If members of The Forum for Disadvantaged Protestant Communities were prepared to meet her, personally I thought that was a good thing, but we were not in the business of giving potential participants "official" advice. Douglas said he would proceed on this basis.

Comment

4. As far as I know, we have not been notified, officially or unofficially, about Judge McGuinness' sortie into North Belfast. While she is, of course, a free agent, this is unfortunate as her meeting with the Protestant Forum is certainly newsworthy and provides scope for mischief-making by members of the DUP in particular, something that Douglas and his colleagues are only too well aware of. In the circumstances, it may be appropriate to ask Mr O'Donovan what he knows about the matter.

[signed CGM]

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