

338/95

RESTRICTED

ASST 207/3
SEC - 7 MAR 1995
SEC

FROM: SIMON ROGERS
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L)
6 MARCH 1995

C

cc: PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (L,B&DENI) - B/T
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Watkins - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Bramley - B
Mr Dew, HME Dublin - B
Mr Margetts - B

ASST LD 21013
SEC - 7 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

UNDER/ 236/3
SEC
- 7 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

MR LAMONT, RID - B

Mr Kelly

EXCHANGE OF NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

The Secretary of State has seen the exchange of minutes on this subject.

2. He agrees with Michael Ancram's and Mr Brooker's conclusion that it is less sore-making to maintain the practice of silence than it is to use any of the available formula. Mr Bruton, he comments, has recently described our relations as "excellent" and the Secretary of State feels that they will not be worsened by sticking this year to our past practice, especially when Unionist sensitivities are understood (and witnessed) in Dublin as never before.

3. The Secretary of State's view, therefore, is that there should be no message this year.

SIGNED

Mrs Kenny

Mrs De... LD 7/3

SIMON ROGERS
PS/Secretary of State (L)
OAB Ext 6461
6 March 1995

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SOFS/DEH/25803

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FROM: J A Dew
British Embassy, Dublin

DATE: 3 March 1995

CC: PS/SofS (L&B) - B
PS/Michael Ancram (L&B) -
PS/PUS (L&B) - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Bramley - B
Mr Margetts - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Watkins - B

ASST
SEC
-E
LO 12913
CENT

UNDER/ 147/3
SEC
-3MAR'95
CENT SEC

Mr Kenny

by [signature] 106/3

Mr Lamont
RID - B

EXCHANGE OF NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

1. Thank you for your minute of 1 March.
2. The Ambassador's strong advice is to stick as close to the agreed global text as possible, getting round the name of the country and the vexed question of "people of Ireland" with the formula ".... you and all your fellow citizens".

(Signed)

J A Dew

RESTRICTED

R E S T R I C T E D

ASST 173/3
SEC -6 MAR 1995
CENT

FROM: C G MACCABE
POLITICAL AFFAIRS DIVISION
3 March 1995

ASST 10 177/3
SEC -6 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

- 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 Bell - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mr Bramley - B
- Mr Dew, HME Dublin - B
- Mr Margetts - B

lu h...
SEC
186/3
3 MAR 1995
Mrs Kenny
WD6/3

Mr Lamont, RID - B

EXCHANGE OF NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

My initial, and indeed sustained, reaction to the proposal in your minute of 1 March to Mr Dew, was to ask "Why now?"

2. Although I take your point that a message from The Queen to President Robinson would be a gain for us, rather than a concession, I doubt if many Unionists would see it that way. At the present time, when even moderate Unionists are showing acute sensitivity, such a message would be more than usually open to misinterpretation, and would therefore have the potential to do more harm than good. Having waited all this time, a further year's delay in introducing what is an eminently civilised courtesy between two friendly countries, should not be controversial. Furthermore, I understand the issue was raised by the BBC's Dublin correspondent last year so no doubt he has it in BF for about now. If I am right, a change of practice at this juncture would surely make him a bigger story than maintenance of the status quo.

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R E S T R I C T E D

3. If, however, the consensus is that we should take the initiative now, I would argue most strongly for a reference to "the Republic of Ireland" in place of "the people of Ireland".

[signed CGM]

C G MACCABE
SH EXT 27085

R E S T R I C T E D

CP28059

R E S T R I C T E D

FROM: PUS
2 MARCH 1995

ASST *128/3*
SEC - 6 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

- cc. PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
- PS/Michael Ancram (L,B&DENI) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mr Williams - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mr Bramley - B
- Mr Margetts - B
- Mr Dew - B

UNDER 145/3
SEC
- 3 MAR 1995
Mr Kenney
CENT SEC
Mr 21 128/3

MR LAMONT, RID, FCO - B

EXCHANGE OF NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Thank you for letting me see a copy of your minute to Mr Dew of 1 March.

2. I commend the proposal to send a message, and think that it should properly be described as to the Republic of Ireland - "the people of Ireland" would I think be too broad and seen as heavily biased to the notion of a united Ireland, and while I can see the good argument for appending a sentence about the way the two Governments are proceeding in the peace process, I do not think a reference to laying a new foundation for Northern Ireland in a message to the Head of State of a Republic would be free of controversy. So I agree with your final conclusion.

Signed:

JOHN CHILCOT

2 MARCH 1995

R E S T R I C T E D

JEN/L/3/16/63453

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ASST SEC 40 9613
-2 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

UNDERV SEC 96/3
-2 MAR 1995
CENT SEC

FROM: Donald A Lamont,
Republic of Ireland Dept

DATE: 1 March 1995

CC: PS/S of S - B
PS/Mr Ancram - B
PS/PUS - B
PS/Mr Fell - B
Mr Thomas - B
Mr Bell - B
Mr Stephens - B
Mr Bramley - B
Mr Margetts - B
Mr Maccabe - B
Mr Williams - B
Mr Watkins - B

Mr Kenny
Mr John
402/3

Mr Dew

EXCHANGE OF NATIONAL DAY MESSAGES WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

1. As you know, I intend to recommend that The Queen this year diverts from the practice whereby she has sent no message of congratulations to the Irish President on the Republic's National Day. The evidence suggests that the reason for this omission, unique among members of the European Union, lies more with Irish reservations about dealings with the Royal Family than with any reservations on our part. If a message is sent and politely received, it would therefore be a gain for us, not a concession.

2. The message agreed for global use this year is as follows:

"On the occasion of your National Day, I have much pleasure in sending you and the people of (name of country) my congratulations.

Elizabeth R"

3. Two questions arise. The first is how we should deal with the name of President Robinson's country. Would reference to "the Republic of Ireland" be regarded as point scoring? Would "the people of Ireland" be seen in Northern Ireland as too ambiguous? Would it therefore be best to adopt some formulation such as "you and your people"?

4. The second question is whether we should recommend any amendment or modification to the basic message. There is an argument that, as this would be the first such message, some reference to the climate of relations between us would be appropriate. We might add a sentence along the following lines:

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"I believe that our two countries have laid the foundations for a new beginning in Northern Ireland and the island of Ireland and I send you my warmest good wishes for the future".

5. Other formulations are possible, but my own inclination is towards a message that is as clear and invulnerable to criticism on grounds of political content as possible. The short message may seem stark, but it can be pointed out that this is the style adopted by Her Majesty in all such communications. To give the message additional warmth may bring with it the risk that it could be portrayed by some Unionists as unnecessarily political.

6. I should be grateful for your views, and those of copy recipients.

(SIGNED)

Donald A Lamont

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