

CONFIDENTIAL

UNDER/ SEC 316/S
9 MAY 1996
CENT :

DM: C D KYLE
PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L)
9 MAY 1996

ASST/ SEC 88/S
9 MAY 1996
C.C.R.U.

- cc: PS/Secretary of State (L&B) - B
- PS/PUS (L&B) - B
- PS/Sir David Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mrs Brown - B
- Mr Hill - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mrs Vineall - M
- Mrs Fenning, RID - B
- Mr Tansley, HME, Dublin - B

Miss Clare Checksfield, IPL - B

PRESIDENT ROBINSON'S VISIT: ECUMENICAL SERVICE

The Secretary of State has seen your submission of 8 May regarding the Irish proposal for an ecumenical service in York Minster during the presidents visit in June. In accordance with the conclusions in paragraph 9 of your submission Sir Patrick is content that on this occasion HMG should be represented by a senior colleague and not the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

SIGNED

C D KYLE
PS/Secretary of State (L)
OAB Ext 6461
9 May 1996

PA-309/96

m. Giff 13.5

An Coslett

M. Lomas..

Don. J. U..

S. 13 / 5..

S. 13 / 5..

CONFIDENTIAL

SOFS/HBY/31336

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Clare Checksfield
IPL
8 May 1996

ASST/ SEC 92/S.
5 MAY 1996
C.C.R.U.

UNDER/ SEC 265/S
8 MAY 1996
CENT SEC

PA- 309/96

- cc PS/Michael Ancram (DENI, L&B) - B
- PS/PUS (L&B) - B
- PS/Sir David Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Bell - B
- Mr Leach - B
- Mr Watkins - B
- Mrs Brown - B
- Mr Hill - B
- Mr Maccabe - B
- Mr Stephens - B
- Mrs Vineall/ - B
- Mrs Fenning, RID - B
- Mr Tansley, HME, Dublin - B

*1. cc Mr Wood
for the solicitor at t.
2. to Conference 12/5
3. Mr Casser
f.r ✓*

*7. Gassos..
Do. f.ie..
s.
13
5..*

PS/SECRETARY OF STATE (L&B) - B

PRESIDENT ROBINSON'S VISIT: ECUMENICAL SERVICE

1. The Secretary of State will want to know that the Foreign Secretary has approved an Irish proposal for an ecumenical service in York Minster during her visit in June.
2. The service is not related to earlier famine related proposals, and is being largely organised by the Dean of York. The Dean is happy to accept a "general steer" from the FCO, who are also in discussion with the Irish Embassy in London.
3. This submission invites the Secretary of State to:
 - (i) approve the FCO's general proposals, and
 - (ii) to consider the question of Government representation.

Proposals

4. President Robinson has requested a "quintessentially English" event. The Dean of York envisages a non-communion service, devoted to peace and reconciliation, with:

CONFIDENTIAL

CT/TPU/1537

CONFIDENTIAL

- (i) a sermon by the Archbishop of York;
- (ii) two readings, read by the President and the senior British representative;
- (iii) hymns and anthem;
- (iv) prayers of intercession, and
- (v) possibly some responsorial commitment to the shared beliefs of all Christian Churches and the need for reconciliation.

5. References to Northern Ireland are likely to be prominent, but not to dominate the proceedings. The Dean is confident that he can provide a broad, and specifically local, ecumenical flavour to the service by involving:

- (i) the Roman Catholic bishops of Middlesbrough and Leeds; X
- (ii) the Abbot of Ampleforth, and
- (iii) a representative of the Free Churches.

Government representation

6. The Duke of York (the senior Royal available, and approached because of his title and because he would balance likely local representation by the army and the air force) will attend. The Prime Minister (who in any event would not accompany a visiting Head of State), the Deputy Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary are unavailable.

7. Candidates (in no significant order) are:

- (i) the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland;

CONFIDENTIAL

CT/TPU/1537

CONFIDENTIAL

(ii) Baroness Chalker;

(iii) the Lord President.

8. Our instinct (shared by the FCO) is that the Secretary of State's attendance would change the nature of the present proposals to an event where Northern Ireland was centre stage, with the likely consequential of broadening attendance to Northern Ireland party leaders and Irish clerics. Other senior Government representation would anchor the service as a further expression of the bonds between the two countries.

Conclusion

9. The Dean of York's proposal seems both sensible and well-balanced. The Secretary of State is seeing the President on two separate occasions during her visit to the UK - is he content that on this occasion HMG should be represented by a senior colleague? The FCO would be grateful for confirmation of the Secretary of State's approval by the end of Thursday 9 May. This can be passed through official channels.

(SIGNED) :

Clare Checksfield
Room 1/111
Tel: 210-6503

CONFIDENTIAL

CT/TPU/1537

133