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IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON.

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CONFIDENTIAL - Special Courier

29 March 1988

Dear Assistant Secretary

At a Seminar, organised at Lambeth Palace yesterday by the British-Irish Association and the Project of the Churches on Human Rights and Responsibilities in the United Kingdom and Ireland, I had a conversation with Dr Christopher McGimpsey.

Dr McGimpsey said that he had now been informed that his constitutional case will probably be taken during the week beginning 20 June. My understanding is that the actual date could still vary depending on whether Court business goes as predicted in the meantime. However, McGimpsey seems confident now that the case will be taken before the Courts rise for the Summer.

McGimpsey also professes to be increasingly optimistic regarding the outcome of the case and believes that he has a good legal team. Hugh O'Flaherty S.C. is one member of the team.

McGimpsey expressed the hope that a success in the Court would result in a 'de facto' suspension of the Anglo-Irish Agreement pending the organisation and holding of a referendum. Such a 'de facto' suspension would, in his view, enable Molyneux and Paisley to become involved in genuine discussions on the future of Northern Ireland. When I questioned whether it was likely that, even in these circumstances, Molyneux and Paisley would be prepared to move far enough, I got the distinct impression that McGimpsey himself had some doubts in this regard. He commented that it would be disastrous if they were not prepared to seize such an opportunity.

Yours sincerely

Patrick O'Connor
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