



An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

Reference Code:	2017/10/61
Creation Dates:	3 April 1987
Extent and medium:	2 pages
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Accession Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN, LONDAIN



IRISH EMBASSY, LONDON

CONFIDENTIAL

3 April 1987

17, GROSVENOR PLACE,
SW1X 7HR

Telephone: 01-235 2171

TELEX: 916104

*PSS
A1 Section
A.1 Secretariat
Box.*

Lunch with John O'Sullivan, Special Adviser to Mrs Thatcher. ²⁴⁶⁰⁶₂₂₆₂₈

Dear Assistant Secretary

O'Sullivan, as I reported previously, is taking two years leave of absence as Associate Editor of the Times to join the Prime Minister's Policy Unit. When he returns to the Times Murdoch may offer him the editorship of either the Sunday Times or Times.

O'Sullivan is presently engaged in the election campaign with speeches and manifestos. He and the other five members of the unit work directly with Mrs Thatcher and also liaise with Norman Tebbit and Central Office. Their offices are on the second floor of 10 Downing Street beside the Thatchers' flat.

O'Sullivan said the only danger to the Agreement now, in view of Dublin's clarification, would come from a hung Parliament where Unionists would have leverage. O'Sullivan, himself, was never enthusiastic about the Agreement but if one wanted confirmation of Mrs Thatcher's support for the Agreement it is reflected in O'Sullivan's new-found acceptance of it.

O'Sullivan said that the Irish budget seemed impressively resolute and had confounded the critics.

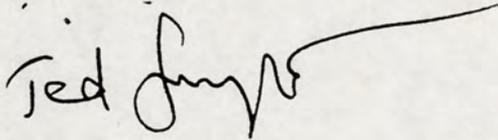
As for British elections he thought a lot depended on how the Soviet visit affected the polls. He denied that Mrs Thatcher was angry with Tebbit about his attack on the Alliance; ^{"he is} ~~X~~ Rhodesia to her South Africa".

.../

We talked about vacancies to be filled in the Cabinet if Mrs Thatcher is elected and he spoke of John McGregor, both Chris and John Patten, Cecil Parkinson, Norman Lamont and Leon Britain among others. For the position of Secretary of State for N.I. he speculated (with no particular authority) about Malcolm Rifkind, McGregor (very able, tough and diplomatic) or even Parkinson. The N.I. job could always be used as a stepping stone to Home Office or Treasury if the candidate's star was in the ascendant.

Finally O'Sullivan asked if there was anyway Mrs Thatcher could maximise the Irish vote in Britain given Labour's signals to Unionists. Naturally on a purely personal informal basis I mentioned such issues as the outstanding items on the Agreement Agenda such as the Courts and RUC Code of Practice, the Birmingham Six and Guildford Four and I said that critical stories from Ministers about Irish immigrants (cf this week's Daily Telegraph) should be stopped. He said he would write a memo and be back to me on all of this.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ted Smyth', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Ted Smyth