

Roinn an Taoisigh
Department of the Taoiseach

Fax Message

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of:- **DFA**

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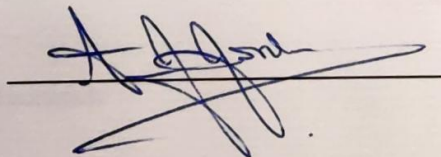
Date:- **10 September '96**

of pages attached/ to follow:- **FOUR**

Message:-

I would be grateful for ^{any} your observations/ suggestions ^{you may have} on the attached draft reply for issue by the Taoiseach to senator McAughtry.

Sincerely



DRAFT

September, 1996

Senator Sam McAughtry
14 Copeland Crescent
Comber
Co. Down
BT23 5HY

Dear Sam,

Thank you for your letter of 23 August.

I should point out in the first instance that the letter which the Sinn Féin councillor, Mr. Mairtín O'Muilleoir, was reputedly going to send me has not in fact been received.

I do however very much agree with your view that the Irish language is part of the heritage and culture of Unionists as well as Nationalists and is no more the property of one community than the other. It is unfortunate that anyone should try to use this shared heritage, and specifically the Irish language, in a divisive way when, if anything, it should be a means by which reconciliation and mutual understanding are promoted.

I can assure you that the Government will continue to support Irish culture in a cross-community sense through organisations like the Ultach Trust which does so much valuable work in this area.

I very much appreciate that you brought your concerns to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Taoiseach