

RESTRICTED



File
FAXED
with John Kerr
17/9/96

10 DOWNING STREET
LONDON SW1A 2AA

From the Private Secretary

17 September 1996

Dear Gen,

MITCHELL

I should have recorded that when Nancy Soderberg called on me on 16 September, she said that President Clinton was planning to call on Senator Mitchell's help for the televised Presidential debate(s) before the election. She hoped that would not cause too many problems for us, but was not specific about what this might mean in term of absences from the talks. I said that Mitchell had been away for short periods before. No doubt the process could survive further short absences. But the other independent chairmen, no matter how willing, were no substitute for Mitchell in terms of experience and skills. Long absences would therefore be a problem.

I am not sure whether you were aware of this already. Washington may want to do some checking on what kind of absences we are really talking about.

I am copying this to William Ehrman (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Jan Polley (Cabinet Office) and Sir John Kerr (Washington - by fax).

Yours ever
John

JOHN HOLMES

Ken Lindsay, Esq.,
Northern Ireland Office.

RESTRICTED