

FROM: Mrs V E Sutherland, HMA, Dublin
DATE: 31 July 1997

cc: PS/SofS, NIO
Mr Lamont, RID

DHM

WARRINGTON RECONCILIATION CENTRE

1. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland told me on 29 July that she would like to do something for Mr Colin Parry of Warrington, who wishes to set up a Reconciliation Centre there. This was not, however, a project for which she could recommend Government funding.
2. I commented that the idea of linking the Glencree Reconciliation Centre with a new centre in Warrington was superficially attractive, but that I had some doubt about the capacity of the present organisers to cope with a significantly expanded effort. The private sector, e.g. Guinness, might help, but this would need careful handling.
3. We did not discuss how this might be taken forward. An essential first step - if only to establish whether such a project would be viable - is some kind of project appraisal. That would at least provide a solid foundation on which private sector sponsors might be approached, if this were indeed appropriate. Mr Parry has told me he intends to contact all Irish local authorities about his scheme. Could we fund such an appraisal through AUSPB? Would this be appropriate? I am not sure.
4. I wonder if you could discuss this further with Ken Lindsay to clarify the Secretary of State's thinking, and consider how to proceed. We certainly do not want her to be involved in any venture unless it is on a sound footing.

V.S.

Veronica Sutherland
Ambassador

RESTRICTED