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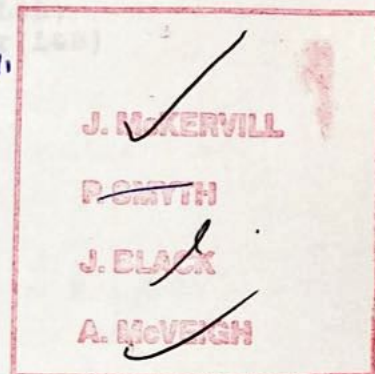
B/S

FROM: QUENTIN THOMAS  
POLITICAL DIRECTOR (L)  
8 November 1996  
QT/MR/71486



PUS(L&B)

cc PS/Sir David Fell  
Mr Bell  
Mr Stephens  
Mr Hill  
Mr McCabe  
Mr Lamont RID/FCO  
HMA Dublin  
Ms Bharucha



**TALKS CHAIRMAN - SUCCESSION TO SENATOR MITCHELL**

Many thanks for your minute about this.

2. We have been thinking on similar lines and IPL are dusting down their files on chairmen. The position may in fact be even worse than you suggest: on one line of policy development we might lose General de Chastelain to look after decommissioning in which case we may need a new chairman of Strand 2 who might or might not be the same person as any new chairman of Plenary.

3. Although we may, as you suggest, fall in with the idea that we should need a new chairman of Plenary and that it should be an American I dare say we should make the Irish side work to persuade us of this. We could run the argument that Mr Holkeri and General de Chastelain between them manage the process for four or five weeks through October and that it is not clear that it was worth bringing in a newcomer at this stage. But I suspect that in the end we should agree gracefully that another American would be a good idea and that for this reason it is indeed right that we should start with RID and our Washington Embassy to identify possible candidates. There may be several people in Washington out of jobs very soon...

[SIGNED]

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