

By fax:

12 December 1995

We've asked the NIO

for advice. BF 21/12

Armed? No 15/12

I tend to agree

British Embassy
DublinC DC
CHRoderic Lyne Esq., CMG
No 10 Downing Street

Roderic

Dear Rod,

The Ecumenical Service
idea is a bad one. Will
rebound.

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO DUBLIN, 21/22 DECEMBER

1. I have been giving further thought to topics the Prime Minister and Taoiseach might discuss in Dublin, from the particular perspective of the Irish predilection for symbolic gestures. I have two suggestions you may like to consider.

i) Ecumenical Service in Liverpool Cathedral. I wrote to Martin Howard about this on 23 October, and to Tony Galsworthy on 27 November. On both occasions Sir Patrick Mayhew expressed support. Briefly the idea is that a Service would be arranged in Liverpool to commemorate the victims of the famine, along the lines of one which took place in Tuam, County Galway, in September. Having attended that, I can vouch for the dignity of the occasion, and the absence of any implicit or explicit criticism of the British. Such a Service would need careful handling, but sensitively managed it would help to lay to rest some of the ghosts of the past, which, as you know, remain all too real here.

ii) Belfast-Dublin Motorway. There is a long history to this and I am not familiar with the details. There may be insuperable problems. Nevertheless the current road is slow and tedious, and a joint decision to upgrade it would not only be welcomed by those who have to use it, but should also encourage an increase in exchanges between the two cities.

2. I have not discussed either of these suggestions in any detail with Paddy Teahan, and should do so if you think - as I hope - that they are worth pursuing.

Yours ever,

Veronica

Veronica Sutherland
AMBASSADOR

cc: Martin Howard, Esq., NIO
William Ehrman, Esq., FCO
Paul Lever, Esq., Cabinet Office.

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