



An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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FAX

For HQ from London

For A/Sec O hUiginn from Hayes

W. Major
R. Keenan
M.
13/14

(28)

cc PSM
PSS: Mr Nally
Joint Secretary
Mr J. Brown
D. Justice
Counsellors M

Sir Patrick Mayhew

The following very preliminary observations may be helpful. The names of the junior ministerial team will be known on Tuesday next.

- Mr Major served as Sir Patrick's Parliamentary Private Secretary while the latter was Minister of State at the Home Office from 1981 to 1983.
- his mother was a Shelia Roche, daughter of a prominent Anglo Irish family settled in Co Cork from the mid 13th century.
- his ambition to become Sec of State for NI has long been an open secret, his name regularly featuring in speculation in all re-shuffles since his appointment as A Gen in 1987. It has always been said here that he would have preferred a more political career path than that offered by the posts of Solicitor General, followed by A Gen - a route that generally leads in time to the Lord Chancellorship.
- he has always made much of his Irish roots and his interest in Ireland. He makes a point of attending Embassy functions and is as you know also well disposed to the BIA.
- ever since the "Ryan affair" he has also worked at maintaining a good relationship with our A Gen. He had regular informal contact with the previous A Gen travelling for example to Dublin with his principal legal assistant, Juliette Wheldon, for dinner at the Kings Inns. He met the present AG and his wife (accompanied by Matt Russell) in London in early Dec 1991.
- the following CV may be helpful;

he was born on 11 September 1929 in Cookham, Berkshire.

Educated at Balliol College, Oxford (President of the Oxford Union in 1952) and called to the Bar (Middle Temple) in 1955 specialising in industrial law.

Married 1963 Shelia Gurney. Four sons - Barnabas, Henry, Tristram and Jerome.

Unsuccessfully contested Dulwich in June 1970. Elected MP for Tunbridge Wells in 1974. In May 1979 Thatcher appointed him Under Secretary for Employment. In July 1979 he voted to restore hanging. In January 1981 was made Minister of State at the Home Office.

John Major appointed his Parliamentary Private Secretary - a job Major held until 1983.

Steered the Criminal Justice Bill through the Commons in 1982. Voted against capital punishment in May 1982. Up to the 1983 General Election he was responsible for the first version of the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill.

In June 1983 he was appointed Solicitor General and knighted. In July 1983 he again voted against capital punishment. In 1986 voted for abolition of caning in schools. In Feb 1987 he told the Commons he could not recommend incorporating the European Convention on Human Rights into British law because it would thrust judges into the arena of political controversy.

Prior to 1987 Election there was open speculation about Mayhew's wish to be appointed Sec of State for NI. (At all subsequent cabinet reshuffles rumours have persisted about his wish to have the NI job.) Following the 1987 election he followed the predictable road for previous incumbents in the office of Solicitor General and was appointed Attorney General.

In July 1987 he brought proceedings against the "Sunday Times" for publishing extracts from "Spycatcher".

In early 1988, he announced that there would be no further prosecutions in the Stalker/Sampeon affair, citing reasons of national security. In February 1988, he told the Commons that Stalker would not be prosecuted under the Official Secrets Act for revealing MI5 and RUC surveillance operations. The same month he deplored Stalker's memoirs as "a breach of confidence". Later that year he was condemned by the European Parliament for failing to prosecute RUC officers for their alleged shoot to kill offences. In January 1990, he sought to overturn a ruling by NI Court of Appeal requiring three police officers to give evidence at a "shoot to kill" inquest.

In Nov/ Dec 1988 he was heavily involved in the "Ryan Case" when the media described him as "incandescent with fury" with the failure to have Ryan extradited. His private approach however, in contacts with the Embassy, was that he "very much regretted present difficulties". Since then he has sought to develop and maintain a good personal and working relationship with his opposite number in Dublin.

Earlier this year, he decided to personally appeal a magistrate's decision that three police officers should not face prosecution over their perjurious evidence at the trial of the Guildford Four in 1975. Our information is that his decision to pursue this personally, an unusual course for an Attorney General, was taken against the advice of his officials.

He has also hinted privately that it was his decision to press ahead with proceedings in the Nelson case.