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14

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to Anglo-Irish
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June 9, 1993

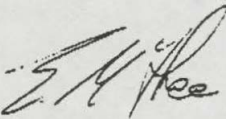
Appointment of Ms Jean Kennedy Smith

Senate Confirmation Hearing

1. The Senate Confirmation Hearing on the appointment of Ms Jean Kennedy Smith as Ambassador to Ireland was held this afternoon on Capitol Hill. Senators Biden, Kennedy, Pell, Sarbanes, Dodd, Kerry, and Lugar attended. Traditionally, it is the practice that the nominee is introduced by the home Senator, in this case Senator Moynihan. Senator Moynihan, however, was unable to attend because of urgent negotiations with the White House on the budget.
2. The hearing, which lasted just over half an hour, was conducted in a very friendly atmosphere with each Senator prefacing his contribution by warmly welcoming Ms Kennedy Smith's nomination. Questioning was polite and constructive and Ms Kennedy Smith's replies were well honed and precise. (Indeed, given Ms Kennedy Smith's thorough preparation for the hearing, her presentation might have benefited from a more rigorous examination.)
3. Senator Biden enquired about President Clinton's approach to Northern Ireland and the envoy issue. Ms Kennedy Smith said that the President wanted to play a constructive role and that his priority was to support efforts to restart the talks process. The appointment of an envoy was a matter for the future. Senator Biden responded that he hoped that the envoy proposal would not be shelved. Senator Sarbanes asked about her work, particularly with Very Special Arts. In response to Senator Lugar on the economic situation in Ireland, she said that she hoped to encourage further investment in Ireland and cited the work of the International Fund for Ireland and the good use to which the U.S. contribution was being put. President Robinson and the new coalition Government signaled an exciting and fruitful time in Ireland, she said. She concurred with Senator Dodd's point that peace in Ireland would be greatly encouraged through greater exchanges and interplay between the North and South.

- 2 -

4. Overall, the confirmation hearing was best summed up when in the course of his contribution, Senator Dodd failed to address a question to the nominee. When this was pointed out by Biden to the amusement of those present, Senator Dodd replied, "I make no bones about it - I'm for this nomination", a comment that could equally have been said by each Senator present.
5. Replies to written questions (including one from Senator Jesse Helms on abortion; the reply will state that it is a matter for the Irish people to decide) will be submitted to the Committee tomorrow. The nomination will go before the full Foreign Relations Committee shortly, before being tabled on the floor of the Senate. Both of these procedures are normally pro forma. Senator Kennedy's staff are aiming for a swearing-in ceremony on 18 June with a departure for Ireland on 21 June.
6. Conor O'Clerigh was present and will no doubt report on the hearing in the Irish Times.



Eamonn McKee
Third Secretary

END

*c.c. Ambassadors
all officers
D. Brangan, W.Y.*