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SAM.A.  
Fund

10 DOWNING STREET  
LONDON SW1A 2AA

*From the Private Secretary*

15 September 1989

**CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE BOARD OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND**

The Prime Minister has considered the Northern Ireland Secretary's minute of 13 September proposing Mr J B McGuckian to be Chairman of the Board of the International Fund for Ireland, with an enhanced remuneration of £15,000 per annum. The Prime Minister is content with this.

I am copying this letter to the Private Secretary to the Foreign and Commonwealth Secretary and to Sir Robin Butler.

**CHARLES POWELL**

Stephen Leach Esq  
Northern Ireland Office

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

VLB

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Rine Austin

PRIME MINISTER

Agree to this  
appointment?  
CAB

Yes or no

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE BOARD OF THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR IRELAND

14/11

As you know, one of the most useful by-products of the Anglo-Irish Agreement was the establishment in December 1986, by agreement between ourselves and the Irish, of the International Fund for Ireland (IFI). The Fund has been a very useful channel for the efforts of those Irish Americans who wish to work constructively for peace, stability and reconciliation, and the American money, supported by contributions from Canada, New Zealand and more recently the European Community, has made possible a wide range of useful activity (approximately three-quarters of it in Northern Ireland) which has produced good employment and other effects in some of the most disadvantaged areas.

Since its inception, the Chairman of the Board has been the Belfast Solicitor Mr C E B Brett. He has been thorough, conscientious and notably independent. The position is quite an exposed one, since the Fund receives far more applications for assistance than it can hope to meet, and as a consequence often faces quite strong political pressures to aid projects which may not meet its strict and objective criteria. Disappointed applicants (some of them associated with paramilitary influences) attempt to stir up political controversy, both locally and in the United States. It is in the handling of this highly politicised reaction to the Fund's work that Mr Brett has on some occasions been less sure-footed than we would have wished. Mainly for this reason my predecessor and Brian Lenihan (then Minister for Foreign Affairs in Dublin) came to the conclusion earlier this year that Mr Brett should not be reappointed, and he himself is in any case not very keen to serve a further term.

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE



The Irish have not pressed that a Chairman from the North should be followed by one from the South; but my predecessor considered (and I share this view) that there would be advantages in looking this time for a Chairman from the Northern minority, who would have the necessary degree of acumen, independence and political skill. The process of discussion with the Irish has been greatly delayed by the general election in the Republic and the subsequent difficulties in forming a Government there but I can now tell you that the candidature of Mr J B McGuckian, on whom I attach a brief biographical note, has the support both of Irish Ministers and myself. If you agree he would be appointed for a term of three years beginning 1 October 1989 and at a remuneration of £15,000 per annum. Charles Brett has been receiving only £2,000 per annum, but both we and the Irish consider that this does not reflect the burden of work and responsibility attaching to the position. What we now propose would be in line with the remuneration of part-time posts of similar weight in the public sector here.

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In the ordinary way I would have wished to see this appointment cleared first at official level before putting it to you, but the prolonged delay in obtaining a clear view from the Irish has left us short of time. In the circumstances, I hope you will feel able to approve my proposal.

I am copying this minute to John Major and to Sir Robin Butler.

P.B.

PB

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13 September 1989

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

JB/SOFS/685

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

JOHN B McGUCKIAN, BSc (Econ)  
Aged 49 Ballymena, Co Antrim

Non-executive Chairman of a family-owned clothing business,  
Cloughmills Manufacturing Ltd.

Extensive farming interests in Co Fermanagh.

Chairman of the Northern Ireland Area Board of Allied Irish Banks  
plc.

Deputy Chairman of Ulster Television plc.

Non-Executive Director of various manufacturing and other companies  
in Britain, Ireland and the United States.

A Director of Aer Lingus 1980-83.

A Pro-Chancellor of Queen's University, Belfast.

A former member of the Londonderry Development Commission and of the  
NI Economic Council.

A former Chairman of the NI Branch of the Institute of Directors.

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

JOHN B. McELROY, 1880-1950 (Cont.)

