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WASHINGTON, D. C. 20008

SECURE FAX NO: 85

4 OCTOBER 1994

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON

FOR A/SEC O HUIGINN FROM MICHAEL COLLINS

RE: ADAMS MEETING WITH U.S ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS

cc
 PST
 PSS
 Mr F Murray
 Dr M Munnell
 Mr T. Dalton
 SDC
 5/10

1. Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams met this afternoon by arrangement in the State Department with officials from the NSC, the State Department and the Vice President's office. Those attending on the US side included Senior Deputy Assistant Secretary John Kornblum, Mr Leon Fuerth, National Security Adviser to the Vice President, Ms Nancy Soderberg, Staff Director at the NSC and other NSC and State Department personnel. Adams was accompanied by three or four colleagues as well as by Niall O'Dowd. A State Department statement on the meeting, which lasted an hour and a quarter, is attached.

2. Adams arrived in the Department four minutes after President Mandela had left. Apparently the State Department had gone to quite some lengths to ensure that the arrival and departure did not coincide.

Atmosphere

3. Contacts in the White House and the State Department described the meeting as positive, business-like and productive. They saw the occasion as the beginning of-a dialogue. They suggested that throughout the meeting Adams was "vigorous, impressive and focussed".

Submission to President Clinton

4. At the conclusion of the meeting Adams handed over a submission to President Clinton, a copy of which is attached. (The cover sheet of this submission would suggest that Sinn Fein now have an office address in New York). In the submission Sinn Fein asked for the United States to encourage the British Government "to positively engage by initiating immediate peace talks". They also referred to other areas where the US can help including: i) allowing unrestricted access to the United States for Adams in the future, including "access to the same level of the Administration as is available to other party leaders"; ii) economic assistance and the encouragement of investment. They suggest that "any aid programme should be administered by a new all-Ireland body that is representative of the deprived communities where the aid is needed most"; and iii) prisoners held in the US. The submission suggests that these prisoners should be released as part of the peace process - "as an interim step Irish prisoners serving in the US should have the option of serving their time in Ireland".

Adams Visa

5. A seemingly inordinate amount of time was taken up at the meeting on the visa question. Adams complained about the way that the visa and fundraising issues had been handled and the way they had been played out in the press. He particularly objected to being "shipped out" on 7 October - "how can we build peace if this is the way I am being treated". Adams insisted that he had to have something to show his supporters back in Ireland to give them confidence and pressed very hard for agreement to unrestricted access in the future.

6. The US felt that Adams was being somewhat naive in, apparently, expecting the visa issue to be solved there and then. However, they did seek to reassure him that the matter will be handled sympathetically on the next occasion when they expected to be able issue a three month visa. On the question of an unrestricted visa the US insisted that they had examined this matter exhaustively but they were limited by law on what they could do given that Adams' name is on the so-called visa "look out" list and could not be removed, even by the President.

Fundraising

7. On the fund-raising issue, Adams was told that the US Justice Department were not ready to move yet and would not be able to do so as long as Sinn Fein was engaged in "extra legal activities". The Americans urged him not to see this or the visa issue in negative terms and to take away a positive sense from the meeting that all of these things would resolve themselves in time. Adams was told that he should build on his success. The fact that he was in the State Department today was a success in itself and he should take one step at a time.

Talks

8. Adams said that Sinn Fein should have equality of status with other political parties. Sinn Fein's preferred solution was a unitary state with de-centralised economic and political structures. However, they accepted that others might have different views. It would be necessary to have unionist consent but no-one should have a veto. Regarding the prospects of talks, Adams levelled heavy criticism on the British Government. If the Republic could set up a Forum "what's keeping the British"? The fact that they were not now talking to Sinn Fein was "bizarre".

The peace process was not under threat from Republicans. The only threat was coming from PM Major who was "squandering and allowing the opportunity to evaporate".

Sinn Fein Priorities

9. As he has done elsewhere Adams referred to three priority areas for Sinn Fein viz: 1) constitutional change, 2) demilitarisation and democratic rights. He acknowledged that constitutional change might take time. However, there could be immediate movement on demilitarisation and democratic rights (including prisoners rights).

The Permanence Issue

10. There was some discussion on the permanence issue with the US wondering whether there was any way that Adams could be helpful. Adams dismissed the controversy which he said was "contrived" and "a fiction". The Taoiseach had responded correctly to the cease-fire. He had also told them that they had done enough.

Economic Issues

11. On economic issues he said that investment must be based on non-discrimination principles. He made some reference to the MacBride Principles. He was supportive of the Springvale project on which he said that Sinn Fein had made several suggestions.

Further Talks/Visit

12. Adams enquired about when the next meeting with the US Administration might be. The Americans referred to the possibilities of engaging with the US Consulate in Belfast and the

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Embassy in Dublin. However, the possibility of a further visit to the US by Adams later in the year was left open.

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