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18/1/94

17 JANUARY 1994

TO HQ FROM WASHINGTON

FOR ASST SECRETARY O HUIGINN FROM MICHAEL COLLINS

RE: ADAMS VISA

1. As you are aware, the Ambassador spoke to Nancy Soderberg, Special Assistant to the President and NSC Staff Director, on Friday.
2. For your information, I also had a conversation this morning with Ms Soderberg. Unlike last week where she had a clear desire to resolve the matter in the early part of this week, her view now is that unless there is an early decision to reject the visa application, the matter is unlikely to resolve itself for some time more.
3. As previously, despite weekend support for a visa from prominent Senators, there is every indication that the application continues to face serious problems. Soderberg insisted that the visa was "going to be very difficult to do". Speaker Foley, for example, was in direct contact with the White House, also over the weekend, voicing his opposition. There is a lot of resistance and the problem remained that Adams has not come forward in a way that would help his application. She discounted the idea of applying restrictions to the visa saying that, if admitted, there was no way that the Administration could prevent Adams from fund-raising, for example, if he should decide to do so. An early rejection of the visa was, therefore, a possibility.
4. A precipitous denial of the visa is something, however, that Ms Soderberg is anxious to avoid. As indicated in earlier conversations, she very much favours reaching out in "some public fashion" to Adams and would wish to come up with some

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way to do this. Thus, the possibility of talking to Adams in the context of his visa application and the Joint Declaration is something which she very much favours, even if there is likely to be resistance to this at the level of the State Department. Her view is that such a dialogue could be helpful in enticing Adams to move forward and would help the Administration establish how serious he is and whether therefore a visa might be issued. Soderberg recognised that such a dialogue with Adams would be a dramatic enough step, ending as it would a 20 year ban on contact. She wondered how the Unionists might react and whether the the US should also open dialogue with them, if they were agreeable. In terms of timing - if her approach is approved (it may not be, of course) - Soderberg spoke of initiating contact with Adams, perhaps next Monday, thus giving a full week for them to satisfy themselves as to whether a visa might be issued.

5. Soderberg said that she hoped over the next day or so to clarify their own internal thinking and if her approach prevailed to come back to us, and indeed the British, in mid-week to seek our views on what they envisage.

END

Confidential.

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PSS; E. H. King
E. H. King
M. Marlowe
T. Dalton
J. Lee
Amb. Long
Amb. Hasting


Adams visa application

Jim Glenn of the U. S. Embassy rang me this morning to say that Gerry Adams had just applied for a visa at the Embassy. He followed the normal procedure, filling out an application form and dropping it into a box along with his passport. He did not talk to any Embassy officials.

The Embassy will send a cable to the State Department later today asking for guidance in this case (as Adams is ineligible under one section of the U. S. Immigration Act).

It is usual for cables in such cases to contain a recommendation one way or the other from the Ambassador. Glenn told me in confidence that Ambassador Kennedy Smith will be recommending in favour of the waiver being granted. However, it should not be assumed from this that a positive decision will be taken in Washington.

I thanked Glenn for letting us know of the application. He said that he would keep us informed of all developments.


David Donoghue
14 January 1994