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Folder Title:

[Ireland]-Adams, Gerry/Soderberg Call, October 1994

Staff Office-Individual:

Staff Director-Soderberg, Nancy

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1397

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Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. telcon	re: Telephone Call Between Nancy Soderberg and Gerry Adams (6 pages)	10/03/1994	P1/b(1) KBN 6/14/2023

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
National Security Council
Staff Director (Nancy Soderberg)
OA/Box Number: 1397

FOLDER TITLE:

[Ireland]-Adams, Gerry/Soerberg Call, October 1994

2011-0533-F
rs1652

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

October 3, 1994

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

FROM: BROOKE DARBY

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Conversation: Telephone Call Between
Nancy Soderberg and Gerry Adams (1st Official
Contact Between U.S. Official and Sinn Fein
Representative)

3:25 - 4:15 P.M., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1994

- Hi, Nancy Soderberg here.
- Yeah, nice to meet you by phone.
- Likewise, how's the trip going?
- Who do you think was behind the murder attempt and other....?
- When was that?
- Yeah, it's something I've been following for a long time when I was with Senator Kennedy's Office -- plastic bullets and shoot to kill. It's something people here have a long standing issue with the British over.
- Yeah, he told me about it.
- OK, I'll pass that on.
- I think he has every intention of continuing to do that.
- This is a very naughty thing.
- Let me tell you where we are on your trip to D.C. I know you've been talking to Niall (O'Dowd) -- who has been great. He's really first class and can keep things to himself -- which is all too rare.

I think he's filled you in on where we are on the meeting. It's problematic. What we trying to do is balance your needs with those of the British and the Unionists so we can push all sides to move forward to help those who have taken courageous steps, including yourself.

-- This should have been handled differently.

You got some misinformation in the beginning.

-- We didn't get into the process until your trip was already planned. It was important for you to keep to your original itinerary but it was not the best timing for us.

-- It is hard for you to understand our nuances of bureaucracy.

-- We wanted to try to keep our strong support of you and our good relations with the Unionists and British to allow us to push them forward.

-- What was important was that you maintained your timeframe and we appreciated the political sensitivities of the British and Unionists given the short timeframe between timing since the ceasefire.

To keep the British from going off the deep end, we needed you to come and to calibrate the reciprocity of who you'd see in D.C. with the distance from the ceasefire -- the longer away you get from the ceasefire, the higher level the visit. You would be received at a level commensurate with how long it is away from the ceasefire.

For you to come for 2 weeks with your itinerary, be received by Members of Congress, meet with people at State and from the White House, announce the lifting of the ban.....

-- The President's goal is to support you strongly and keep us in a position to push the British when we need to.

-- I appreciate that.

-- That's true, right.

-- That's why we were thinking your visit would be further down the road so we could work it out ahead of time.

-- I would have wanted to avoid this situation.

-- The context of how the people here view the situation -- that's the fundamental problem and why we want to put distance at receiving at this level. There needs to be a time lag between coming to the White House and renouncing violence.

-- . Let me tell you the politics.

- There is a strong culture in the U.S. against those involved in violence.

It was two years from the time the PLO announced violence that they came here.

- It was a major heavy lift to get the visa.
- That's not how people look at it here.
- Yes, you've done what we asked and made a courageous step forward.
- Here, the ultimate prestige presence is the prestige of walking through the White House doors needs to be calibrated as part of a process we're getting moving.
- We've done a lot getting you here, lifting the ban, getting you meetings with Administration officials. We support you politically and are sending strong support and visible acceptance.
- This is part of a process. First you get received officially. We went through this with the President last night. He said we can do more next time -- that this is part of a process.
- We know the problem is with the Unionists and with Hume having met with the President. But the Unionists are seen as not involved in violence.
- I said we should have had this done 3 weeks ago and told people that we wanted to avoid this kind of discussion.
- There are a couple of ways to look at this. Part of it is how the press is playing it up because we haven't been able to say what we're doing.
- I think this situation is unfortunate but we are where we are. We spend about six hours yesterday on this. None of us are comfortable on this but we're trying to make the best of it.
- Niall has been extraordinarily helpful.
- With respect to how we play this -- I want to announce the ban is lifted on talking to Sinn Fein and the meeting with you at the State Department in a White House press release. They'll be regular meetings in Belfast and Dublin and dialogues with you directly. You'll be able to present your

case at the State Department. It will be useful for you to develop a dialogue with the State Department who does the diplomacy (not just with me).

- My only rebuttal is that I understand the situation. But this is the beginning of the relationship and of a process. You have the support of the White House and we are pushing the other parties.
- We got jammed on your planning your trip before we could work it.
- Tony Lake negotiated with Major on how to keep them on board. It is important to coordinate your trip with making decisions on where and by whom you'd be received. To go back against the British will undercut us in going back to the British on some of the things you may need.
- They're in a bind.
- This should have been worked out well before you got on a plane.
- I did. I was pretty clear.
- I heard the Belfast thing didn't go too well. Niall mentioned that, which is unfortunate.
- In Val's defense, that was State's formal instructions -- he had no choice.
- We wanted to clearly work out the fundraising issue before you got here.
- My best advice is -- this is a bad situation. It's unfortunate and should have been avoided. But now you have 2 choices: to agree to a meeting or not.

If you agree, we can talk to the Unionists and Major and keep Alderdice away. We can make a big deal of lifting the ban and the meeting with White House and State people, including the Vice President's National Security Advisor.

The Vice President has been very helpful. Without him, you wouldn't have gotten the visa in February.

- It is a worse negative to have no meeting. They can say they've won -- that there's friction between us.

- Or we can say this is part of a process. We can get our press operation to make this a big deal.
- You don't want to minimize the magnitude of your walking in the doors of the State Department and letting our press operation work it.
- I recommend announcing this as soon as possible. I can't say anything now. I don't want to say anything until you've agreed.
- The difference is and this is where you have credibility -- they have had a dialogue with us for some time, so they have meetings with us at a higher level.

But this is a first step and we can the press to spin this. This is the first time we've talked to you in 25 years. That's no minor action.

- I understand the problems with the Unionist access.
- You're beginning to change perceptions. This is the first stage in a process that will continue.

The President said yesterday that we will do more next time and I think he means it. You have a friend in moving forward.

- You shouldn't minimize the fact that we want a chip for going back to the British --- to say that we've held up our end and now you do your part.
- I was very straightforward with Niall on this and I was hopeful we could change this.

But the reality is that everything was set in stone when...

- He is from the same hometown as Tony Lake -- he's been very helpful in talking to Tony about this.
- We aren't going to do anything until you're comfortable with it.
- Saturday.
- All I would say -- let me leave you with -- let's start it on Monday and we can build from there.
- I think we can do that with this meeting: lifting the ban and make clear that's exactly what we're doing.

- Likewise.
- You should talk to me later and I'll fill him in.
- You should know that we spent a lot of time going back and forth on this.
- I've been formally prohibited from talking to you until today.
- OK.
- Let me give you a number for this evening if you want to talk again (gave home number). I'll be here 'til 6:00 and then home.
- We can talk later tonight or tomorrow morning.
- I'm going to talk to him right now.
- I called you.
- Do you want to set a time to talk again, or just when you're ready?
- I'll leave it with you and let me know what you want to do.
- If you want to do it tomorrow, it would be helpful to formally announce whatever we agree on.
- Do you mean to lift the ban without addressing the meeting?
- We announce....
- It would be helpful for you if we announced the ban without addressing the meeting.
- OK, let me see if we can do that.
- Is there someone I can talk to while you're at the reception?
- Historic first contact.
- I'll let him know either way -- I'll go talk about it right now.