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Folder Title:

[Ireland]-Adams Visa (Fundraising and Visa), March 1995

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GERRY ADAMS VISA

[BACKGROUND ONLY: Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams applied February 22 in Dublin for a visitor's visa to the United States, indicating that he planned to visit in March and that he wanted to raise funds. Under our immigration law, Adams and a number of other Northern Irish republican and loyalist figures are ineligible for visas because of terrorist and/or criminal records. The Attorney General must grant a waiver of this ineligibility in order for a visa to be issued. In December he was granted a 3 month visa with a no direct or indirect fundraising restriction. He was, however, permitted to raise funds to cover the cost of his travel.]

POINTS TO MAKE:

- Gerry Adams applied for a visa February 22 and asked for permission to fundraise.
- Adams had previously not been allowed to fundraise because of concerns we had related to disarmament and other issues.
- Progress has been made since Adams' last visit. In particular, we welcome as a step forward Sinn Fein's announcement today that it is prepared to engage in discussions on decommissioning and other issues in its talks with the British.
- On the basis of the progress made so far, the President has decided to permit Gerry Adams to engage in fundraising activities during his proposed upcoming trip to the U.S. He will be issued a 3 month-multiple-entry visa which will permit fundraising. We have made clear our expectation that any and all funds raised will be used for legitimate political party activities which serve to reinforce Sinn Fein's commitment to the peace process.
- The President is hosting a reception on March 17 in honor of Irish Prime Minister John Bruton. In recognition of the extraordinary opportunity for peace and political progress which now exists in Northern Ireland, the President is inviting to the reception leaders of Northern Ireland's political parties who are committed to peace, including Mr. Adams.
- We will continue to work to advance the peace process and to encourage all parties to build on the progress made to date.

Q: Why the change on fundraising? Weren't you insisting the IRA give up some arms first? They haven't, have they?

A: -- Sinn Fein may raise funds in the United States as permitted by U.S. law.

-- In the case of Mr. Adams and a number of other republican and loyalist leaders who require visa waivers for travel to the U.S., we discussed with them several issues of concern related to fundraising. In the case of Mr. Adams, we have resolved those concerns sufficiently to permit him to raise funds.

-- While we do not take a position on the details of how and when decommissioning might be achieved, it is clearly one of a number of issues on which we hope progress will be made. We are encouraged by Mr. Adams' statement March 8 that his party is prepared to engage in serious discussions on this and other issues with the British.

Q: Is Adams going to be invited to the White House on this trip?

A: -- When Mr. Adams visited the U.S. last December, he met with National Security Advisor Tony Lake. He may do so again on this visit.

-- I am hosting a reception on St. Patrick's Day in honor of Irish Prime Minister John Bruton. Leaders of Northern Ireland's other political parties, including Mr. Adams representing Sinn Fein, have been invited.

IF ASKED:

-- Specifically, those to be invited include:
 John Hume, SDLP
 James Molyneaux, UUP
 Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein
 John Alderdice, Alliance Party
 Ian Paisley, DUP
 David Ervine, PUP
 Gary McMichael, UDP



Sinn Féin

...news release...

The following is the text of a statement issued to our office 8 March 1995.

Responding to media speculation that British Ministers will meet with Sinn Féin, party President Gerry Adams said:

1. "It is accepted that the most urgent and important issue facing us all is to remove the causes of conflict, overcome the legacy of history and to heal the divisions which have resulted; to achieve a lasting peace through a negotiated settlement. Considerable progress has been made so far. This progress must be consolidated. Everyone concerned to achieve a lasting peace must apply themselves to this task, which can only be accomplished by dialogue; through inclusive discussions and negotiations involving all parties with an electoral mandate. Everyone must be at the table and every issue must be on the table. All parties must be accorded equality of treatment. The British government must uphold, not undermine the democratic rights of all sections of the electorate.

2. "It is in this context that progress can be made on the whole range of relevant issues - justice, discrimination in employment, prisoners, political and constitutional matters and demilitarisation. Demilitarisation requires movement on a range of issues including repressive legislation, prisoners, and the decommissioning of weapons.

3. "The Taoiseach, Mr. Bruton, has correctly stated that there cannot be a single issue agenda and the Tanaiste, Mr. Spring, in a recent timely intervention, warned that to make the decommissioning of weapons a precondition was 'a formula for disaster'.

4. "This is my position also. At the same time, Sinn Féin has consistently argued for the permanent removal of all guns from Irish politics.

5. "We have consistently stated, over a protracted period, that we seek a complete demilitarisation of the situation - that is the removal of all guns - British, unionist, loyalist and republican - from Irish politics.

6. "Everyone has an influence over the present situation. The collective application of that influence can transform the political climate and put an end to the failures of the past.

7. "Our position on this matter is transparent. We wish to use our influence on all matters, in a positive way and with the aim of advancing the peace process.

8. "I welcome therefore the suggestion that the British ministerial ban on contact with Sinn Féin may be ended.

9. "Sinn Féin representatives will enter into discussions with British Ministers on all the matters outlined in paragraph 2 and on the basis of our mandate and our analysis. There cannot be a single issue agenda and no issue, including decommissioning should be excluded from these discussions. We look forward to discussing all matters with a view to their resolution."

DRAFT TALKING POINTS ON GERRY ADAMS DECISION:

- Gerry Adams applied for a visa February 22 and asked for permission to fundraise.
- Adams had previously not been allowed to fundraise because of concerns we had related to disarmament and other issues.
- Progress has been made in both these areas since Adams' last visit. In particular, we welcome Sinn Fein's announcement today that it is prepared to engage in discussions on decommissioning and other issues in its talks with the British.
- On the basis of the progress made so far, the President has decided to permit Gerry Adams to engage in fundraising activities during his proposed upcoming trip to the U.S. He will be issued a 3 month-multiple-entry visa which will permit fundraising. We have made clear our expectation that any and all funds raised will be used for legitimate political party activities which serve to reinforce Sinn Fein's commitment to the peace process.
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- We will continue to work to advance the peace process and to encourage all parties to build on the progress made to date.

PRESS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

GERRY ADAMS VISA

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Q: Any decision on Adams' latest visa application and his request to raise funds?

A: -- Adams will be issued a three-month, multiple-entry visa for travel to the United States. He will be permitted to raise funds with the stipulation that they be used entirely for legitimate political activities in compliance with relevant U.S., British and Irish law.

Q: Why the change on fundraising? Weren't you insisting the IRA give up some arms first? They haven't, have they?

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