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AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN  
TELEPHONE: (202) 462-3939  
FAX: (202) 232-5993



EMBASSY OF IRELAND  
2234 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

16 February 1995

Dear Secretary

1. I had a long discussion this afternoon with Nancy Soderberg at the White House in which I took the opportunity to brief her on the present status of the Framework Document discussions, and also on the Document's overall thrust. She was very encouraged by the progress being achieved by the Tánaiste and the Secretary of State, and asked to be given as much advance notice as possible on the timing of its publication. This would facilitate the National Security Adviser, Tony Lake, and herself in preparing a helpful, welcoming statement; we will be able to have an input into this, about the substance of which we might have a word nearer the time.

St Patrick's Day period

2. The President is looking forward to meeting the Taoiseach and to welcoming him to the White House. In the light of our various discussions, plans for the Taoiseach's programme are well advanced and should be finalised early next week. We will, of course, convey the details immediately these are finalised.

Adams' fundraising

3. We also discussed in detail the thorny issue of the Administration's policy on Gerry Adams being allowed to fundraise during visits to the U.S. In this regard, Soderberg said that they were at present reviewing the position, a process which would take at least another two weeks. In the meantime, it would be helpful if Adams took a more reasonable approach and, in addition, did not apply for a visa until the

review had been completed. She asked if we could convey this latter point to him (apparently he intends to apply for a renewal of his visa on Monday).

4. In response to my query, Soderberg said that the Sinn Féin leader had recently written two "nasty letters" to Tony Lake. The first complained that Lake, having set out a timetable at their December meeting within which the fundraising issue would be resolved, had failed to deliver on this. The second criticised the lack of a reply to this first communication. Soderberg was insistent that no time-table, other than a general wish to resolve the issue early in the New Year, had been given to Adams.
5. Soderberg also referred to the campaign on the Hill to influence the White House, and said this would have little impact. She additionally mentioned that Jean Kennedy-Smith was pushing for a pro-Adams decision, and had suggested to Seán Donlon that he telephone the White House direct on the matter. (Soderberg had in fact returned Mr Donlon's call this morning, but he was in London at the Liaison Group meeting).

#### Impasse

6. Soderberg agreed that the U.S. position, in the light of Adams' right to fundraise in Britain and Ireland, is illogical. However, it is a fixed policy, agreed interdepartmentally last year, and one which requires "substantial progress" on decommissioning to be made before Adams will be allowed to fundraise. As against that, and on the helpful side, Soderberg said that she had succeeded in having the meaning of substantial progress left "purposely vague".

#### Possible way forward?

7. Soderberg strongly wishes to find a way out of the impasse, and asked for our "creative help" in trying to resolve the issue. She wondered if we might consider talking directly to the British about it, and suggested also that a solution might be found within a framework which would embrace

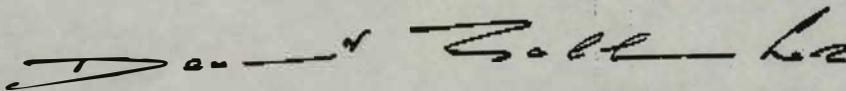
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decommissioning by both Loyalist and Republican paramilitaries at some future time.

8. In taking the above approach, Soderberg, as I said, accepts the overall logic of our line, and even agrees on specifics. She realises also that the core issue will only be nailed down in the context of an overall settlement, though she emphasised that she is fighting a battle against people who want to see a "cache of arms" handed over now. However, her priority at present is to find some solution before the St Patrick's Day period, and so prevent what she called the "train going off the tracks".
9. On reflection on this and previous discussions with the White House, it seems to me that a way forward might just possibly be found in the context of the publication of the Framework Document and Adams' response to it. If the Adams statement on that occasion were to be reasonably positive and forward-looking and, in particular, referred to the decommissioning issue - emphasising that it would have to be an integral part of any agreement while, in the meantime, being a proper subject for discussion in the ongoing talks - this could only be helpful. We would, at the least, have a basis for going back to the White House and, in the light of Soderberg's request, seeking a modification of policy with some justification.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely



Dermot Gallagher  
Ambassador

Seán Ó hUiginn Uas  
Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs