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10 DOWNING STREET
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From the Private Secretary

27 January 1994

Dear Jonathan,

USA/GERRY ADAMS

Tony Lake telephoned at 1345 today to say that a decision had been taken to grant Adams a visa on the basis of the conditions which he described to me on 22 January (my letter of 23 January to you), with the amendment that the Joint Declaration would be described as "the basis", rather than "a basis" for negotiations.

I argued vigorously against Lake's formula, and mentioned our agreed fall-back. He reluctantly agreed to reconsider. At 1455, he telephoned back with a much improved formula, which we did not have time to discuss in detail. Further improvements were made as a result of a conversation between the Foreign Secretary and Warren Christopher.

As of 1930 this evening, the Americans appear to have decided on the following:

- instructions are issuing (I think to Dublin rather than Belfast) that the Consul General is to invite Adams to a meeting on the morning of Friday 28 January;
- Adams will be asked to say in a public statement that:
 - he personally renounces violence and will work to that end;
 - Sinn Fein and the IRA are committed to ending the conflict in Northern Ireland on the basis of the Joint Declaration.

Adams will be told that if he accepts this formula it will help the US Government's decision over his visa.

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The State Department then hope to be in a position to announce at their noon (i.e. 1700 UK time) press conference on 28 February the outcome to the visa application. In making their announcement, they will explain the conditions. The visa will be limited to the period of the New York conference.

The State Department will also reiterate US support for the Joint Declaration at tomorrow's press conference (or beforehand).

We shall need to react to the American decision as soon as it is announced. I attach a press line which I have discussed with John Chilcot. I should be grateful if any comments on it could be fed to Christopher Meyer as soon as possible.

We may discover that news of the American decision leaks during this evening. I attach a suggested contingency line for unattributable use ahead of the formal announcement.

I am copying this letter to John Sawers (Foreign and Commonwealth Office), Joan MacNaughton (Home Office), Melanie Leech (Cabinet Office) and by fax to Peter Bean at the US Embassy in Washington.

Yours ever,
Roderic

RODERIC LYNE

Jonathan Stephens Esq
Northern Ireland Office

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PRESS LINE ON US DECISION TO GRANT A VISA TO GERRY ADAMS

We welcome the strong support given by the United States government to the Joint Declaration, which they have reiterated today. Decisions over visas for the United States are, of course, a matter for the US government. The United States have required Gerry Adams to renounce violence and to say that Sinn Fein and the IRA are committed to ending the conflict in Northern Ireland on the basis of the Joint Declaration. We too have been asking Mr. Adams to take * [precisely] these steps. We hope that he will now unequivocally declare an end to violence for good.

* No 10 acted to remove this word, or, preferably, to reword the sentence: These words would be welcome, but what matters is deeds.

Q&A

Do you agree with the terms of the American decision?

The position taken by the United States on the Joint Declaration is the same as that of the British and Irish governments. We all believe that there must be an immediate end to violence, and that the Joint Declaration produces a fair and balanced basis for this. Once there has been a permanent cessation of violence, the way will be open for Sinn Fein to enter democratic life.

Was the British Government consulted over this?

We keep in very close touch with the US government and have given our views.

[If pressed] I cannot give details of our private exchanges. The important thing is that the United States are requiring a very significant commitment from Gerry Adams.

Gerry Adams agrees, will it mean that Sinn Fein have accepted the Joint Declaration?

We trust that this will mean that Sinn Fein and the Provisionals are now declaring a permanent end to violence. It will be deeds as well as words that count.

Does this mean the British Government will lift the Exclusion Order against Gerry Adams?

The British Government's Exclusion Order is a separate question. We are looking for a permanent end to violence.

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**NATTRIBUTABLE CONTINGENCY PRESS LINE ON US DECISION
TO MAKE A CONDITIONAL VISA OFFER TO GERRY ADAMS**

The decision on whether or not to offer a US visa to Gerry Adams is of course a matter for the US Government.

However, we hope that the Americans will use this opportunity to increase pressure on Adams to renounce violence and commit Sinn Fein and the IRA to accept the Joint Declaration. We and the Irish Government have of course been waiting for such a commitment since the Joint Declaration was launched.

Adams has prevaricated, and used unconvincing pretexts to avoid declaring his position. It would be very helpful if he was now obliged to show where he stands.

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