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Guidance on  
Adams.

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FM FCO

TO ROUTINE OTTAWA

TELNO 33

OF 081517Z FEBRUARY 94

AND TO ROUTINE CANBERRA, EC POSTS, WASHINGTON

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SINN FEIN PRESIDENT S VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES

1. The decision of the US Administration to grant a temporary visa to Gerry Adams to attend a conference in New York organised by the National Committee on American Foreign Policy received wide public attention.
2. During the visit Adams tried to put across a picture of Sinn Fein and himself as committed to the pursuit of peace. He notably failed to make any commitment about ending violence or to endorsing the Joint Declaration of 15 December 1993.
3. It seems possible that Sinn Fein will try to repeat elsewhere what they undoubtedly regard as a successful international publicity coup.
4. In any discussions about the Adams visit to the United States posts should be guided by the following paragraphs on which they may draw freely.
5. (For Ottawa, Canberra, UKRep Brussels, Brussels). You should take action at an appropriately senior level to ensure that those who may be involved in considering future approaches from Sinn Fein for visas, or agreement to meetings have not been misled by press reporting on what happened during the Adams New York visit. They should be left in no doubt that we hope that Adams will not have further opportunities for publicity seeking visits. There is no sign at present that the New York visit has in any way contributed to efforts to achieve peace. It could have diminished the prospects for a successful outcome.

LINE TO TAKE

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6. Mr Adams presented himself in New York as the "man of peace". But he said nothing to advance the prospects for peace in Northern Ireland. He evaded suggestions that he might renounce violence relying on statements like "we need to get the violence ended" and denied his own responsibility for or involvement in IRA operations.

7. We do not judge that he said anything that suggests a more forthcoming attitude to the Joint Declaration, which he did not endorse.

8. In a New York Post interview he is reported to have said "I think in circumstances where there is a military occupation that it is legitimate for people to exercise resistance". This is a reprise of an interview given in Dublin on 20 January in which he is reported to have said "...Irish citizens, in our view, have the right to exercise armed resistance to counter British armed occupation".

9. Sinn Fein calls for clarification of the Joint Declaration appear to be a smokescreen for prevarication. They have failed to define what aspects of the Joint Declaration they want clarified. They are in reality trying to negotiate without first renouncing violence.

10. The intense media coverage of Adams' visit to the USA may have created misleading impressions of Sinn Fein's and his significance in Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein have never obtained more than 12 percent of the popular vote in free democratic elections in Northern Ireland. This represents a clear minority even of the nationalist community, the great majority of whom support the SDLP, who are committed exclusively to peaceful, democratic methods. In the Republic of Ireland, Sinn Fein's support is derisory - less than 2 percent at the last general election.

11. Since the Joint Declaration was issued on 15 December 1993, Sinn Fein have claimed to be engaging in a protracted exercise of consulting their members and others about its terms. But there has been no let-up in PIRA terrorism, except for a brief respite over Christmas. Attacks have continued both on the security forces and on civilian targets - the latter involving principally firebombs in commercial premises. Only the vigilance of the security forces and an element of luck have prevented

serious civilian casualties. In media interviews Adams has claimed that "armed resistance" is justified because of the continued "occupation" of a part of Ireland by British forces.

12. The statements made by Mr Adams while in the USA have done nothing to advance the cause of peace in Northern Ireland. They show that enhancing Adams' international stature will not improve the prospects of persuading the IRA to abandon violence. It will merely reinforce those who believe that they can wring concessions out of HMG by failing to respond to the Joint Declaration while continuing to perpetrate acts of terrorism.

13. President Clinton has made it very clear that he fully supports the Joint Declaration and the continuing efforts of the British and Irish Governments to work towards a lasting peaceful settlement in Northern Ireland. He has called on Mr Adams to give his backing to the Declaration.

14. If Mr Adams or his supporters seek to make similar visits elsewhere, we hope governments will respond robustly, making it clear that as long as Sinn Fein continue to act as apologists for terrorism they cannot expect to participate in the democratic process or to gain international acceptance.

15. Mr Adams and his supporters know what they must do in response to the Joint Declaration. If they renounce violence for good, and demonstrate that they are sincere, dialogue can begin over arrangements to allow them to take part in the political process. Until they take that step there can be no place for them in any talks or negotiations.

16. The British and Irish Governments agreed at the Inter-Governmental Conference in Dublin on 28 January to intensify their efforts to achieve an overall settlement based on the three stranded approach pursued since 1991. This will involve both the two Governments and the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein can join in this process once they have demonstrated that they have renounced violence for good. They will not be allowed to hold up progress.

#### DEFENSIVE POINTS

17. Q: WHY NOT GIVE SINN FEIN THE CLARIFICATION THEY DEMAND?

A: Sinn Fein know what they need to do - renounce violence definitively. The Joint Declaration is a clear framework for progress in Northern Ireland. Sinn Fein are trying to enter negotiations before they have committed themselves to democratic methods. We will not allow this. It is unacceptable to negotiate with people who seek to reserve the right to resort to violence if they don't get what they want.

18. Q: HAVE THE GOVERNMENT NOT ALREADY BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH THE IRA?

A: The contacts with the IRA revealed by the Government in November last year were in no sense talks or negotiations. The Government had a duty to respond to indications that the IRA wanted to abandon violence by telling them what would be required. No negotiation took place.

19. Q: WHY NOT ALLOW ADAMS TO ENTER GREAT BRITAIN?

A: The Home Secretary issued an Exclusion Order preventing Mr Adams from entering Great Britain because he is satisfied that Mr Adams is closely connected with a terrorist organisation.

20. Q: WHY MAINTAIN BROADCASTING RESTRICTIONS ON SINN FEIN?

A: Restrictions were introduced because the Government believe it is wrong that supporters of terrorist violence should have unrestricted access to the media. There is no reason to change that view.

21. Q: WHY NOT DEMILITARISE THE NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION?

A: HMG would welcome more than anyone the opportunity to demilitarise Northern Ireland. British troops are deployed in support of the police in response to terrorist acts. Once terrorism ceases, the military presence will be scaled down accordingly.

22. Q: WHY DO HMG ALLOW UNIONISTS A VETO OVER THE FUTURE OF NORTHERN IRELAND?

A: There is no question of any group having a veto. HMG are committed to respecting and defending the wishes of the majority of the people of Northern Ireland. The Irish Government

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have also explicitly recognised that change in the constitutional status of Northern Ireland can come about only with the freely given consent of the majority of its people.

23. Q: WAS IT A MISTAKE TO ALLOW ADAMS TO VISIT THE UNITED STATES?

A: That is a question for the US authorities to answer. The decision to grant Adams a visa was one entirely for them.

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ADDITIONAL 46

NORTHERN IRELAND

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