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Confidential

**Australian Government reaction to possible application  
by Gerry Adams for visa to visit Australia**

The Australian Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Eddie Stevens, called on me this morning, at his request, to discuss the Australian Government's response to a possible request from Gerry Adams for a visa to visit Australia.

The Ambassador informed me that the "Foreign Affairs Bureau" of Sinn Féin had requested application forms from the Embassy for business visas for Gerry Adams and Richard McCauley to visit Australia in mid-November to promote Adams' autobiography.

While completed applications had not as yet been received, the Ambassador gave me to understand that the Australian authorities would not grant Adams a visa in the present circumstances. He showed me the text of a draft PQ prepared for the Australian Foreign Minister according to which the Minister would note that Adams had failed to condemn the Lisburn and other bombings and would make clear that, while Australia would welcome those who were committed to resolving the situation in Northern Ireland by exclusively peaceful means, this did not apply to those who, either explicitly or implicitly, condoned violence.

Asked by the Ambassador for my reaction, I replied that while the Irish Government would, in principal, wish Irish passport holders to be granted the greatest possible freedom of movement, the question of whether to grant a visa to enter Australia was a matter for the Australian authorities. However, I noted, that notwithstanding the fact that the Government had adopted a ban on Ministerial contact with Sinn Féin representatives, Adams was able to travel freely within Ireland, Britain and the Member States of the European Union. I recalled that he had recently launched his book in Germany.

The Ambassador asked me if the Government would be concerned that a refusal to grant Adams a visa could have direct implications for efforts to restore the ceasefire. I replied that since the stated purpose of Adams intended visit to Australia was to promote his autobiography, it was hard to imagine that this would be the case.

As he was leaving, the Ambassador suggested that a refusal to grant Adams a visa would help to bring home the message that the international community were losing patience with republican violence. He also mentioned that London had been informed in similar terms of the Australian Government's likely reaction to an application by Adams for a visa.

*David Cooney*

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cc. PST, PSS, Second Secretary, Counsellors A-I, Ambassadors, Canberra, London and Washington, Joint Secretary Belfast, Messrs. Teahon, Donlon, and Dalton