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SUBJECT: EXPULSION OF SINN FEIN FROM PEACE TALKS

## SUMMARY

1. Clinton issues a statement supporting Sinn Fein's expulsion from the Talks. Adams will get his visa, but is thought unlikely to visit next week.

## DETAIL

2. On 20 February, the White House issued a statement in the President's name (which the NSC showed us in advance): "Today's decision to suspend Sinn Fein from the Northern Ireland peace talks shows that the UK and Irish governments are committed to an inclusive process, but one that reaffirms that it is unacceptable to mix politics and violence. Peace in Northern Ireland is best served if all the political leaders of Northern Ireland work to find common ground to make common cause for peace. The United States stands with those who support peace and against those extremists on both sides who will use all the means at their disposal to sabotage a peaceful settlement that the vast majority of both communities, and countries, support. I call on Sinn Fein to take the necessary steps to rejoin the talks and for all parties to reject violence and demonstrate in word and deed commitment to the Mitchell Principles that exclusively peaceful means are the only way forward".

3. In addition to the NSC and State, we have briefed editorial writers on the New York Times, Washington Post, Washington Times, Boston Globe, Los Angeles Times and the Irish ethnic press.

4. Butler (NSC) confirmed that, after final consultation with the Department of Justice and FBI, he would issue authority on 21 February to the US Embassy in Dublin to grant Adams a single entry visa. He (and Steinberg) were pretty sure that Adams would decide in the end not to visit next week. Adams knew he would not see Clinton, and his lieutenants would take a dim view of tourism during



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this crisis.

5. Butler repeated that, if the visit went ahead, Adams would be seen in the Administration only by Steinberg and himself. The two of them had discussed handling of the meeting with the President on 19 February. Clinton had instructed them to convey his personal displeasure at the two IRA murders. Because the talks worked better with Sinn Fein in than out, Adams's focus should be on getting back in. But the murders had put the President in a difficult position. If there were a repetition, there would be no way back for Sinn Fein.

6. Meanwhile the Sinn Fein section of the St Patrick's Day White House guest list has been "dropped in the deep freeze".

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