



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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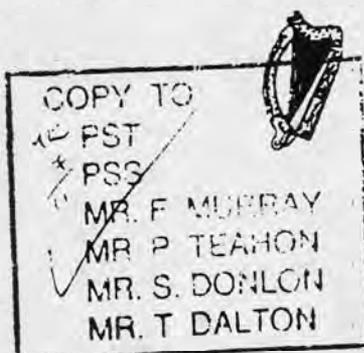
AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN

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16 November 1995



EMBASSY OF IRELAND

2234 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

cc'd Mr. S. Donlon  
12/11CONVERSATION WITH NIAL O'DOWD

Dear Secretary

1. You will wish to be aware of the following points, arising from a long conversation yesterday with Niall O'Dowd on the discussions which he and Bruce Morrison, Bill Flynn and Joe Jamison had with Gerry Adams in New York earlier in the week:
  - (a) Adams was "quite desperate" and felt the situation was getting out of hand; he said he could not hold out much longer and, worryingly, tended "to slip into the past tense" when discussing the peace process;
  - (b) Adams emphasised that he had no more cards left - they were all face up on the table; he added that John Hume had telephoned him the previous night to say, likewise, that he "had nothing more to give". The reality, Adams argued, was that he had moved the IRA from opposition to neutrality on the International Body, and had with great difficulty secured agreement that Sinn Féin would speak authoritatively on IRA arms;
  - (c) against this bleak background, Adams said it was critical that the President have a clear and early sense of how bad the situation was;
  - (d) Adams also seemed particularly concerned about possible British efforts to

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isolate him. In this regard, he made the point that, as he could not sign off on the Taoiseach's letter to John Major, what possible hope could he have when, as he presumed, the British came back with a watered down version of these proposals?;

(e) overall, O'Dowd's view is that a return to violence is dangerously close, adding that only the President's visit may have kept it from happening before now.

2. Finally, I should mention that I received an equally gloomy assessment to-day from Conor O'Clery of the Irish Times who had dinner with Adams last night. The Adams' mood was summed up for O'Clery by his saying, as they left the restaurant, that "I should have brought a camera as I mightn't be back here".

Yours sincerely



Dermot Gallagher  
Ambassador

cc: Mr Brendan Scannell

Seán Ó hUiginn Uas  
Secretary  
Anglo-Irish Division  
Department of Foreign Affairs

Shas to Paddy  
Teahon.

To:  Taoiseach  
From: Roy Dooney  
Date: Thursday, November 16, 1995  
Subject: Conversation with Neill O'Dowd

Log, give copies to  
SEEN BY Paddy (27)  
Teahon.  
Gerry  
16/11

I had a telephone call from Neil O'Dowd in New York this afternoon.

As you know, I know him reasonably well through mutual friends and a shared interest in running.

Neil spent three hours with Gerry Adams yesterday and the following are the points he made:

Things are pretty worrying, Adams has a lot less room for manoeuvre than he thought.

Adams has told the IRA he would get them to the table and that if they are not at the table soon the skids will be on. After 15 months they think it reasonable that they should get to the table.

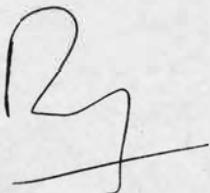
The message Adams gave him (O'Dowd) was a lot less hopeful than he expected.

This is a key time.

The British are fundamentally misreading the situation about a possible return to violence. They are not correct in thinking there is no threat.

If things continue in their negative way it really comes down to the importance of the Clinton visit.

I told Neil that you had followed up his suggestion and were hoping to speak to Clinton on the phone shortly.



**MEMO**

Roy, give copies to  
SEEN BY  
Taoiseach  
Friday 27  
John.  
Gee  
16/11

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