

Mr Archer, RID

Northern Ireland : Visa for Gerry Adams

The Secretary of State made clear to the American Ambassador when he called this afternoon that the question of a possible visa for Gerry Adams to visit the United States was a matter of great concern to him. The Secretary of State said he knew that attempts were being made to find a formula which could be offered to Adams. The fact was Adams had to renounce violence. Granting him favours before then would be completely wrong in Northern Ireland terms and also dangerous in terms of the US/UK relationship.

Seitz said the question of a visa for Adams was before the President. There was a great deal of pressure on him. It was likely to be an issue when the Secretary of State visited Washington next week. The question could not be drawn out indefinitely as the basis for the application was for Adams to attend a Conference in New York. The Conference was quite high profile. There was a plan to involve the Unionists though they would not, of course, attend if Adams turned up.

Comment

The Secretary of State would welcome more information about the New York Conference, and the Unionists who are planning to take part. He will need a well-tuned brief for his visit to America, including advice on who in particular he should target.

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(R J Sawers)

cc : PS
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