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Reference Code: 2021/47/277

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AN RÚNAÍOCHT ANGLA-ÉIREANNACH (C)

ANGLO-IRISH SECRETARIAT

BÉAL FEIRSTE

BELFAST

Interview with Sinn Fein President, Gerry Adams
on "Good Morning Ulster", Radio Ulster,
Monday, 25 October, 1993

Interviewer: Jim Dougal

Reporter: The Sinn Fein President has said that he will ask the IRA to end its violence if the proposals he and John Hume have drawn up are positively received by the Government. Well Gerry Adams also said he is confident that the IRA would respond favourably. His remarks came when our political editor Jim Dougal challenged him for his reaction to the bomb attack on the Shankill Road. Because of the Government's broadcasting restrictions, Mr. Adams' words are spoken by an actor.

Mr. Adams: I was shattered when I heard the news yesterday and my heart goes out to the families of those who have been killed, to all those who have been killed. My attitude is simply that no matter what the intention was that it was a great tragedy and devastating, a human tragedy.

Interviewer: Do you condemn it?

Mr. Adams: I am very measured in how I deal with these issues as you may know. I don't think what happened, no matter what the intentions, can be excused. I think that those who are in positions of leadership in the IRA, no matter what pressures may be on them from the Loyalist killing campaigns, that they have to be aware that how they respond to those pressures could end up as it did yesterday.

Interviewer: Are you saying it was wrong?

Mr. Adams: Of course it was wrong.

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2

Reporter: Mr. Adams said Sinn Fein wanted a positive response from the British Government to the proposals which he had drawn up with John Hume Leader of the SDLP. Jim Dougal asked him how flexible he would be in the way he would approach that response.

Mr. Adams: I can be as flexible as the response permits. I am quite prepared as I have said before to go to the IRA with a mind to making proposals about how they conduct their campaign, I obviously want that to be a worthwhile prospect. I don't want to be going back and forth and making meaningless statements or gestures or requests and I want to be in a position to make a definitive proposal to the IRA which will allow us to move forward. That is the type of response I am waiting for and let me say I will be quite satisfied despite all that Mayhew was saying and all that Major was saying that they know, more or less, I would be very disappointed if they didn't know precisely what was required here and I agree totally with Mr. Hume when he stood up in the British House of Commons the other day and called upon the British Government to hurry up and give a detailed response to this.

Interviewer: What I mean is how flexible would you be in how the process if they accepted it, would be constructed?

Mr. Adams: Well, as I have said before, I can't double guess and I won't attempt a second guess as flexible as I can be, I am quite prepared to be as flexible as I can. I want to bring all of those Republican activists and the broad Republican base, and the broad Nationalist base with me and moving us all forward in a way which improves the situation as opposed to disapproving it.

Interviewer: Are you saying to me that if the Governments' accepted the proposals which you and John Hume have put to them, that you could find yourself in a position where you could advise the IRA or suggest to them even, that their campaign could end?

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3

Mr. Adams: Well, without telling you the detail of what has been agreed, I could tell you that if the British Government responded to those positively, that I would be quite pleased to go to the IRA and make that proposition.

Interviewer: And tell them, advise them to stop?

Mr. Adams: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Would they accept that?

Mr. Adams: I think that is where we would get a real understanding of what my influence would do and it wouldn't be so much my influence which would carry the day in that regard. It is that Republicans have been advised by me of every step of this process with Mr. Hume and I would not have agreed with Mr. Hume and we wouldn't have made that report to Dublin if I wasn't satisfied that the IRA wouldn't accept the outcome of it.

Interviewer: You believe, therefore, that you, if the circumstances were right and the British Government accepted these proposals, could deliver the IRA?

Mr. Adams: Absolutely. I think that the process that John Hume and I have worked upon which Dublin was fully informed of, that if the British Government take on board what has been put to them that the IRA, it is my belief, would positively respond. I think that the British Government have been playing with the issue.

Interviewer: Is it possible Gerry Adams, that what could happen is that there would be another split in the Republican Party?

Mr. Adams: No, not at all, not at all.

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4

Interviewer: You don't believe that?

Mr. Adams: No, absolutely not. There will be no, I will be part of no split in Republican ranks. I have worked out with Mr. Hume an agreement and I have to stress that Dublin is fully informed of this which I am satisfied have the support of the IRA and I have said repeatedly that I will not mislead people about the IRA and neither will I mislead the IRA.

Interviewer: Can I just get this right again. The British Government accept those proposals, you could go to the IRA and advise them and suggest that they stop...

Mr. Adams: Yes, absolutely.

Reporter: That was the Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams whose words spoken by an actor in conversation with our Political Editor Jim Dougal.