



**An Chartlann Náisiúnta**  
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**Reference Code:** 2021/96/28

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Talks between John Hume and Gerry Adams last week

The following account was given to me by the usual third party.

Adams was pragmatic about the form clarification might take. The main points he needed clarification on were:

1. What does self-determination mean? How will London legislate for it?
2. What are the exploratory talks about?
3. What is the programme for advancing and developing the talks (facilitate, encourage and enable), and what is to stop the Unionists refusing to engage in the peace process? Are London proactive or reactive?
4. What is the next stage of the process?

Hume emphasised the importance of the Forum and the massive economic dividend of peace. (He mentioned a big Californian firm, poised to invest in West Belfast, if peace is established).

Adams stressed they should not lose sight of what they had put together. There was the question of to what extent the Joint Declaration measured up to that.

Despite their deep distrust of the British, Sinn Féin intended to develop their own peace process, and unarmed forms of struggle. He was positive about the Forum.

Hume claimed Sinn Féin did not have to trust the British. It was the broad project, not the narrow negotiations with London, that mattered. They should focus on the potential of the whole process.

Adams said Sinn Féin did not want to get into unilateral political talks with London. Obviously, the IRA would have to talk to London re demilitarisation.

Adams claimed the Nationalists could run rings round the Unionists and the British. They wanted a broad front of Nationalists and progressive forces in Ireland. Sinn Féin needed to maintain a bold face to London, otherwise things would unravel, and all would be losers. They felt London may not want this to work. He then said both Governments should agree the Irish people had the right to self-determination, and work for agreement within a time framework.

He emphasised that it was not consultation, but lack of clarification, that was holding the process up.

Hume raised the question of a temporary IRA suspension. Adams referred to the very bad experience of the unofficial ceasefire last May for 2/3 weeks. The British never responded, and the credibility of Adams and McGuinness who had promised real negotiations correspondingly suffered. They needed to go to the IRA with a package. In internal dialogue so far, a majority were not happy with the Joint Declaration. Nevertheless, the Joint Declaration was a positive staging point. Adams was coming round to the view that clarification was most likely to come from Dublin (as, for example, in recent public statements).

RS 807

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18th January, 1994

PS

Gerry Adams knew nothing about Brian Lenihan's contacts. He claimed Rita O'Hare and companions had merely listened to what he had to say and had said nothing. He deprecated the publicity.