



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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# Sinn Féin

Nuacht raiteas/News release

For immediate release:  
8/12/95

## Adams comments on IRA statement

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams commenting on last night's IRA statement said:

"Sinn Féin's position is unchanged by the IRA statement which in many ways is restating the obvious and the widely acknowledged reality of the current situation.

Everyone, including Mr Major and especially Mr Trimble and Mr Paisley, knows that none of the armed groups is prepared to disarm at this time.

Despite this the British government has constantly reiterated its demand for an IRA surrender as a precondition for all party talks.

The Taoiseach John Bruton has made it clear that a twin-track approach is useless unless it removes the preconditions.

That is Sinn Féin's view also. Our party will continue with its consistently positive contribution to the search for peace in our engagement with the twin-track approach.

The British government's position flies in the face of the international experience of conflict resolution. Mr Major needs to stop making propaganda and start making peace."

Mr Adams also challenged MR Trimble and Mr Paisley to stop "vying with each other for the narrow negative ground of unionist intransigence.

Instead of refusing to engage in the peace process they should be leading their supporters in the search for agreement about all the issues which affect the people of this island".

Secretary of State, Patrick Mayhew, last spring. The other conditions were that the IRA would give a commitment to decommissioning weapons and the methods would be used.

Washington 3 condition seem to the Government as obstacle to advancing the process to the stage of giving Sinn Féin into full political talks. At the time of the IRA ceasefire in August 1994, the then Government under Albert Reynolds, believed that the political rivalry could begin after a suitable agreement without any pre-conditions.

The British government and unionist parties in Northern Ire-

land, the decommissioning of IRA arms can be part of the negotiations. However, Sinn Féin has always said that this should be part of a "demilitarisation" of the North which would include the removal of arms held by the security forces and the thousands of legally held arms by the largely Protestant population.

It was to get around this impasse that the Taoiseach, Mr Bruton, and the British Prime Minister, Mr Major, agreed at the EU Summit in Cannes last June to adopt a "twin track" process. This meant that a body or agency would be set up to allow a discussion of decommissioning while

Sinn Féin has indicated that it would talk with a body representing the IRA to the decommissioning body, if a way can be found around Washington 3.

The Anglo-Irish summit of last week produced a compromise whereby the British stick to their demand but the body under Senator George Mitchell can make an independent report which the Government and Sinn Féin hope can come up with an alternative to Washington 3 that will be acceptable to the British government and the unionists.

It appeared early this morning that Sinn Féin will co-operate with the body in spite of the strong IRA statement.

Mr Maskey then drove off.

### Flood damage test case fails

A compensation test case for households and businesses which lost millions of pounds during the 1987 Strabane floods failed in the High Court, Belfast, yesterday.

Dismissing an action against the Department of Agriculture, Mr Justice Pringle held that while the department had the power to construct and repair flood protection walls, it was not under a duty to do so.

The test case was brought by the owner of Johnston Insurance Services, of Railway Road, who claimed £2,425 for damage caused when the river Mourne burst through a wall and flooded parts of Strabane to a depth of nine feet.

### Man used forged scratch card

Wilson Blair (59), of Kenmare Park, Coleraine, tried to get £25,000 with a forged National Lottery scratch card, the Magistrates Court in Belfast heard yesterday.

Blair pleaded guilty to using the forged card with the intention of obtaining £25,000. Magistrate John Clery imposed a six-month jail sentence, suspended for two years.

### Garda dies in road accident

An off-duty garda died after being hit by a car near Ballinacree, Co Roscommon, yesterday. He was in his 40s, and had been standing by the roadside when he was "clipped by a car". He was based at Oldcastle, Co Meath.

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## Trimble accuses UK of double standard

from Rachel Borrill, London

SECURITY force weapons would not be decommissioned, nor would the issue be examined by an international body, the Northern Ireland Secretary stressed repeatedly in the House of Commons yesterday.

Sir Patrick Mayhew's comments followed the announcement that the international body on weapons, set up by the British and Irish governments as part of their twin-track approach to further the peace process, would have a series of meetings next week.

During Northern Ireland questions, Sir Patrick told MPs: "The arms and armaments which will be the subject of study and advice by the commission relate to those held illegally by paramilitary organisations and do not include constitutionally held arms either North or South of the Border."

The leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Mr David Trimble, accused the British government of "double standards" by declaring that it stood "four-square" behind Scotland and the Union.

"How then do you reconcile your position of disinterested neutrality and your close co-operation with a foreign government that is subject to a constitutional imperative to destroy that Union?" he asked.

Sir Patrick accused Mr Trimble, however, of failing to appreciate the Joint Framework Document in which the Taoiseach had agreed to hold a referendum on Articles 2 and 3.

The Downing Street Declaration had made clear that Northern Ireland would remain within the UK for as long as the majority of the people wished, he added.

After President Clinton's "extraordinary and moving" visit, Sir Patrick noted the lull in the punishment beatings.

"It is significant that there was an intermission in punishment beatings at a time when it would have been politically inexpedient for those who carry them out for political purposes to have continued them when President Clinton was there."

## IRA statement

"IN August 1994, in recognition of the potential which then existed, and in order to enhance the democratic peace process, the leadership of Ogligh na h-Eireann took the initiative and announced a complete cessation of military operations.

"We noted then that a solution to the conflict would only be found as a result of inclusive negotiations. Our initiative was aimed at creating a climate which would encourage this. We also noted that others, not least the British government, had a duty to face up to their responsibilities.

"It is a matter of profound regret that rather than fulfilling its responsibilities, the British government, presented with this historic opportunity, has sought only to frustrate movement into inclusive negotiations and has erected an absolute barrier to progress with its untenable and unattainable demand for an IRA surrender.

"This demand which has been elevated into a precondition for the commencement of all-party political negotiations, blocks the inclusive dialogue essential if the causes of conflict are to be

removed. It is also a demand which the British government has strictly and repeatedly made, even over the course of the last week.

"We noted that British Prime Minister, John Major, at the press conference to announce the twin-track approach, actually rejected it as a means of removing preconditions. It is also obvious that Mr Major is actively encouraging the unionist proposition of a return to Stormont and actively reinforces the unionist leadership's refusal to engage meaningfully in the search for a negotiated settlement.

"British bad faith and unionist intransigence have raised a huge question mark over the potential of the twin-track approach.

"As we stated on September 29th, there is no question of Ogligh na h-Eireann meeting the ludicrous demand for a surrender of IRA weapons either through the front or the back doors.

Signed:  
P. O'Neill,  
Irish Republican  
Publicity Bureau,  
Dublin

## VALUE-ADDED TAX

### Changes in the VAT treatment of golf and other sporting activities.

The 1995 Finance Act introduced changes in the VAT treatment of golf and other sporting activities. These changes will come into effect on 1st January, 1996.

The principal change is that liability for VAT will arise where the total annual green-fee and other golf turnover in a member-owned or local authority golf course exceeds £20,000. Individual membership subscriptions for member-owned golf clubs continue to be exempt.

A statement of practice which sets out details of these changes has been prepared for the benefit of those concerned.

Copies of the statement of practice are available on request from:

The Office of the Revenue Commissioners,  
Indirect Taxes Division (VAT Administration),  
Stamping Building,  
Dublin Cards,  
Dublin 2.

(Tel. 01-6792777  
ext. 4858, 4859, 4861, 4862).



*Passer, 1/1/96*