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SINN FEIN LEADER GERRY ADAMS DELIVERS REMARKS AT THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

SEPTEMBER 3, 1997

SPEAKERS: GERRY ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF SINN FEIN AND MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

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ADAMS: Well, thank you, Peter. It is, as Maria has said, very good to be back here at the National Press Club. And wherever I speak, I always like to say some few words in my language, so...

(FOREIGN LANGUAGE)

Next week, I think, will be seen -- as the whole process evolves in Ireland -- will be seen as a very defining and critical moment in Anglo-Irish relationships.

And it's no accident that Sinn Fein's entry into those talks starts here, in the U.S.A. I think Maria King (ph) has given you a brief outline of the consistency of Sinn Fein's approach in relation to trying to build an international dimension into the conflict resolution process, because in our view, wherever there have been successful conflict resolutions processes, there has been an active, proactive, intelligent and informed international dimension to that.

ADAMS: And as Irish people, on looking to the U.S., not just as the most powerful nation in the world, but also because of the number of Irish people, the number of people who have come from Ireland into this country over the centuries because of famine, because of economic situation, because of repression, we want to not just thank those people and they have been in political leadership, in the labor movement, in the broad business and corporate America, and community groups, right across the whole U.S.A. -- we want to thank them for their efforts, for keeping faith, for their campaigning activities, and so on. But we also want to appeal to them to intensify their efforts and their interest and their involvement in the period ahead.

The economic (ph), the historic and political reality of the dynamic of the relationship between Ireland and Britain is because of all sorts of reasons. Britain is more powerful. Ireland is but a small island. We are only five million people. We don't have a history of imperialism or colonialism, and we do need others throughout the world to help us, to help the British, to encourage both governments to make necessary progress. And therefore President Clinton should be commended for the way he opened the lid on all of this over the last number of years.

When you think -- and I see people here who have been active on the Irish issue and on justice issues -- think of the efforts you were making, perhaps in a marginalized way, in all of the years before this. And apart from huge watersheds like the hunger strikes, or perhaps internment or Bloody Sunday or maybe the Joe Doherty campaign, people were working very, very much against the grain. And now, because of the president giving U.S. citizens the right to receive information, opinion here is becoming increasingly informed.

Sinn Fein is an all-Ireland party. Achock Ditala (ph) is a member of parliament to the Irish Parliament, and that's what Caoimhghin O Caolain represents. We're an Irish Republican party.

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I always say when we come to the U S A. that we come here both as Democrats and as Republicans. We want the people of our island to work out our own future. We believe that the Unionists have as much right to be on the island as we have. We have no right to ask the Unionists to leave. We don't want them to leave. It's their island; it's our island. It's the property and the legacy and the inheritance of all of the people who live there.

We are five million people. We have been beset by division, by occupation, by militarism, by all of the difficulties and tragedies and injustices that could be visited upon one country by another. Next week begins another stage in the process of undoing all of that.

ADAMS: As Irish Republicans, we want to see an end to British jurisdiction. Tony Blair says there will not be a united Ireland in the lifetime of people in Ireland. We say the exact opposite. There will be and there should be and there can be a united Ireland in our lifetime.

And we want to talk to other parties about that. We want the Irish government to take up that position. We want the British government to face up its responsibilities also.

So when the talks, which which start, we will go in with our analysis, and in a broad sweep way we are talking about fundamental political and constitutional change, because to tackle conflict you have to tackle the root causes.

We want substantive negotiations which deal with the core issues. We want to see the whole issue of equality factored in, and we don't believe these should even be matters for negotiation. Either people have the right to equality or they don't. And the British government has already signed up over the decades with the Irish government to measures to bring an end to discrimination.

Catholics are still over two times more likely to be unemployed because of discrimination than anyone else. That needs to be rectified. Democratic rights are denied us. A normal, democratic practice as it exists here are denied people in the North of Ireland. So we want to see equality in all of its manifestations in the economics factor and the cultural factor and the political element. In all of its manifestations we want to see equality factored in. And we want to see a total demilitarization of the situation.

All of the guns, all of the armies, all of the apparatus of war, all of the repressive legislation, all of the mechanisms of war dismantled, decommissioned and done away with as part of the necessary agreement. And that's what we are facing up to.

Martin McGuinness is our chief negotiator. He will lead our team in there. We will engage with everyone there on the basis of not just

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putting our views but of listening to theirs.

And we especially want to see the Unionists there. We want to see David Trimble, who is consulting with sections of his supporters who are telling us that they want him in those talks. We want to see him accepting that challenge. And we want to see the British government accepting its challenges, and the Irish government and the other parties accepting their challenges. Sinn Fein stands poised to accept any challenge placed before us and to come to it in a thoughtful, constructive, positive and generous way.

So there you are. As Peter has said, all of our panel from Maria through Martin and Kweving (ph) and myself will take any questions you have. Thank you for your attention.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I think a certain amount can be accomplished by the two governments governing, by the two governments doing what they were elected to do. On the issue of equality, for example, that should be dealt with as a matter of course. On the issue of progress, on demilitarization, that should be dealt with as a matter of course. And then all the other political, institutional and constitutional issues, at least some progress should be made.

Now, having said that, we want the Unionists there. Before Sinn Fein's entry into talks was secured, we were threatened that the train was going to leave the station, and if we weren't there, it was going to go on without us. We don't that to happen to the Unionists.

ADAMS: We will say to them the door is open, your seat is here, come and join us. If you can't do it on the 15th of September, do it as quickly as possible.

In conclusion, let me also say it's my view that David Trimble will be there. He should be there. That's what he's been advised to do by those who he is consulting with. I would also like to see Ian Paisley there, but that's their choice. Sinn Fein wants them there, accepting the challenges and looking to the future.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I think Senator Mitchell, both in terms of his own persona, his experience, his personality, and the way he has conducted himself and his team, has -- I think -- induced and created a certain amount of confidence among all of the participants.

I think we will see as we move through these talks -- and there will be difficulties, and it will be, I think, problematic -- that we will see the value of having someone from outside the frame (ph) in that situation. And I think that Senator Mitchell is eminently equipped to deal with all of those difficulties and problems.

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QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, that's in the hands of our lawyers in Australia at this time. I don't know precisely what stage it is at, and I presume that the changed situation in Ireland will mean a change also in the government and Australia's position. But I don't know. I can't say that with any -- with any certainty.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE) and how does your position differ from the majority (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, we let the Social Democratic and Labour Party speak for itself. Their deputy leader said that he wanted to see an end to British jurisdiction also, but that's a matter for them to elaborate on that.

We are prepared to negotiate about how this is brought about, but we have a very clear political goal. And our political goal is to see the people of Ireland living in peace and in harmony without the interference of the British government.

And that sometimes is misrepresented when we talk about ending the British presence, or that we want to end the presence in Ireland of those who have a pro-British position or those who feel themselves to be British subjects or those who are British subjects. That isn't the case.

It's jurisdiction which we want to end, and we see it, as I've said before, the Unionist section of our people having the same rights as we have. Long (ph) said (ph) that political (OFF-MIKE) we have a primary goal at this time, a primary strategic end, and that is for a democratic peace settlement.

And we want as much as possible for the democratic peace settlement to go as far along the road towards our political objective our as possible. But that is a matter for agreement. That is a matter for negotiation and for honest dialogue.

Should we go in there armed only with our mandate, with our confidence in ourselves, with our sense of the justness of our position? And we will do our best to convince others of the validity of our view. And we do so on the knowledge that others have a totally opposite view. That's why we have to listen; that's also why they have to listen also.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I think, in the best of all possible worlds, if you look at how other interest groups or ethnic groups here have organized themselves -- look at those who organized around the whole issue of peace resolution in the Middle East. Look at the strength of the

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lobbies of South Africa in the past and of other lobbies. What we want to see here is an intensification and the mobilization and all its manifestations of Irish America.

We want to see that reaching out to other democratic elements and progressive elements in the U.S.A., people who understand that in these situations that small nations like ours have a right to national self-determination.

And I think in all of this we need to get people information. We need to be informing U.S. opinion at political level through the broad popular media and through all organized sectors, whether they're labor movements, women's organizations, and all other sectors. And essentially, I think in a world which is so much a global village, essentially saying to people here you can play a direct role, a very direct role in what is happening in Ireland. And you can influence directly the thinking of the British prime minister at Number Ten Downing Street by encouraging the thinking of the Congress and the Senate and the White House here in the U.S.A.

QUESTION: I have two questions. One, (OFF-MIKE) the U.S. administration to back your cause (OFF-MIKE)? The second question (OFF-MIKE). You said the (OFF-MIKE) question (OFF-MIKE) Sinn Fein is whether it is prepared to accept a (OFF-MIKE) conference (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, first of all, to quote the document agreed by the Irish and British governments, "Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed." So let's go in with a view to getting agreement on everything. And let us not define consent as some mathematical pseudonym for veto or based on some mathematical or geographical equation.

Let us see consent as agreement, people seeking the consent of nationalist, the consent of Unionist, working for it, negotiating for it and seeking to win it.

In the context of all of that there are challenges for everyone. And the big point has to be made that even though this British government has taken a more enlightened view than the last British government, it isn't a referee, it isn't a facilitator. It is a player in this, and it has to accept its responsibility in the same way as I have to accept my responsibilities.

People talk about the unions sitting down with Sinn Fein. People talking about the British sitting down with Sinn Fein. The British have killed hundreds of our people, have killed friends and associates and colleagues of mine.

I am prepared to sit down with them. The Unionists and the Loyalists have done exactly the same thing. So there are challenges for everyone in this situation. Having said all of that, too, I can't remember your first question.

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QUESTION: My first question was would you be asking for (OFF-MIKE)?

ADAMS: Well, we will be certainly telling the White House in detail of our view and arguing the legitimacy of that view. But we don't expect the White House to take up a position around any particular political party.

We understand the dynamic in the relationship which the White House has with Britain, a historic relationship with that government and people. And we understand also the relationship which it has with Ireland, which is also historical.

But what we want to stress -- and this gentleman here talked about his grandchild being 2 year old.

ADAMS: When Mr. Blair came to Belfast, he said there will not be a united Ireland in the lifetime even of the youngest person in this audience. That gentleman's grandchild will live to see a united Ireland. And we would put that case, and we would expect that case to be given the same legitimacy of those who hold the opposite view.

We're looking for a balance from the White House. We're looking for a measured approach from the White House. And we're looking for support for an agreement based upon the right of the people of our island to national self-determination.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, our view is wedded totally in our commitment to our peace strategy. We're not the IRA. We don't speak for the IRA. We don't profess or pretend to be the IRA.

What we accept when the IRA calls a complete cessation of military operations that it is a complete cessation of military operations. That then puts an enormous onus upon all of those in political leadership to consolidate that opportunity and to build upon it.

As I left Ireland, the Loyalists shot a person. As I left Ireland, I was stopped by the British army at a road block. As I left Ireland, young people were being harassed by British troops and RUC people, especially in the rural parts of the six counties. As I left Ireland, the map of the north of Ireland remained basically as it was before -- that is, a military garrison. As I left Ireland, people in Garvaghy Road were dusting themselves down and cleaning the blood of their wounds.

So the other elements in this conflict, whether (ph) the British, have not gone on a complete military cessation. And the Loyalists have not gone on a complete military cessation.

I would expect the IRA to be much more disciplined than that.

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And from Sinn Fein's point of view, we want to see a complete end. Cessations aren't peace. Cessations are absence of violence. Peace demands change and change demands justice.

That's what we will be arguing for and intensifying our efforts and seeking to get others to take up the same position.

QUESTION: Yes. I have two questions also. I was wondering if you could talk about (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, The Boston Globe reporter asked me exactly the same question yesterday. I hope my answer is in today's paper. And can I commend it to you? And you can read it.

(LAUGHTER)

I treat with complete derision the fantasy stories that the IRA were going to try and kill the British princess, Diana. There has been no evidence or suggestion of any real kind to back up that type of assertion. And yesterday, I made it quite clear that Sinn Fein both as a party and as individuals obviously has an affinity with the families of all of those who were killed in that accident.

On the more serious, I suppose, question of the Mitchell principles, I made it quite clear some two years ago that in a situation of all-party talks, where both governments and all of the parties were signing up for the Mitchell principles, that Sinn Fein would do the same thing.

ADAMS: And on Tuesday I intend to do that. And Sinn Fein is wedded to democratic means, to peaceful means, and to a democratic peace settlement in our country.

We're Irish Republicans. We understand where violence comes from. We have been victims of violence. We're not selective. We don't see this merely as being the monopoly or the property of one faction.

The biggest army in the situation is the British army. Those with most of the guns in the situation are the British forces. But we don't just zero in on that; we want to see all of the paraphernalia of war totally and permanently dismantled.

And it's a matter of, I think, of our good faith. We're prepared to set aside all of the baggage which we have in the context of our victimization in order to try and make a real effort to reach out to others and to put all of this behind us.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, that's absolute nonsense. And don't take my word for it. Go and check the record, because the accounting of whatever funds we raise is transparent. And I read about it regularly in

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newspapers, including your newspaper. I read what money we have collected. I read where it has gone.

And the bulk of the money which we raised starts here in the U.S.A. I mean, it's a considerable amount of it starts here in the U.S.A. because we have a consistency of approach and an outreach.

Secondly, let the UUP come here and raise money themselves. Let all of the other parties -- parties have been coming here from Ireland for a very long time to raise money.

And then, finally, I don't have an estimate of how much money we hope to raise this time. I think our most significant fundraiser will be in the Waldorf Astoria in New York. I think all of the other functions wouldn't be properly described as fundraisers.

There are fewer, far more sensible Irish, who will come to functions and events where it's just a nominal fee to cover the costs of the venue. So our big event will be in the Waldorf Astoria.

But you'll be able to check that out quite easily.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: I don't. Maria may have.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Lots.

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION: Recently her majesty (OFF-MIKE) in Northern Ireland wrote -- and I quote -- "Because I believe the restoration of the IRA cease-fire is (OFF-MIKE), I'm also inviting Sinn Fein to take part in the Northern Ireland (OFF-MIKE)." (OFF-MIKE). That's fair enough, but to an outside observer, it seems that in coming to the table Sinn Fein (OFF-MIKE) past 25 years.

MODERATOR: What is your question.

QUESTION: What is your reaction to that?

QUESTION: Fair play (OFF-MIKE) on Sinn Fein, and the IRA (OFF-MIKE).

MODERATOR: Stop and let him answer, or I'm going to have you taken out.

ADAMS: Yes.

(LAUGHTER)

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Yes, of course. And Sinn Fein should have been involved in these talks long since. John Major first said some years ago that he would establish an election which would provide a route direct and automatic into talks for all parties which received the mandate. We contested that election. We received a mandate, and we should have been involved in those talks from that point, alongside all of the other parties.

Since then, I have been re-elected as MP. Martin McGuinness has been elected as an MP. Caoimhghin O Caolain has been elected as a TD. And we have refreshed our mandate in the north and the south in three other elections. So the sense of what you're saying is clearly yes, that Sinn Fein should have been there some long time ago. And yes, we are making a leap of faith.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I think everyone who has studied the situation knows that the cessation broke down because the very premise on which it was established, that there would be negotiations, that there would be a proper substantive talks process, not only didn't happen but that new preconditions were put in place to stop it from happening. And the Irish Taoiseach, the Irish prime minister at that time, who, of course, is opposed to the IRA, made it quite clear that when you get people to make that leap of faith, you cannot present them with a vacuum.

Now, many individuals, and I suppose collectively, many people thought we wouldn't get another chance. And we got another a chance because Sinn Fein never stopped. We never faltered. We kept working. We worked against the background of Garvaghy Road. We worked against the background of provocation. We worked against the background of attacks by all of the main armed groups, persistently, consistently working away. And we have another chance. And it should not be allowed to be frittered away.

And in fairness to Tony Blair, let me say to him, and about him, that he has dealt in a dynamic way, in a decisive way, at least so far, in clearing away the obstacles that the last government put up. So his stand (ph) is different. Though we disagree fundamentally on the issue of the union, we see no reason why this process cannot be consolidated and why it cannot be an end forever of violence in our country.

That isn't just our responsibility. That's the shared responsibility of government, of both governments, of the international community, and of course of all political leaders in Ireland and Britain.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I have ~~a fear~~ faith that we will be able to build out of this opportunity of permanent peace. But that can't be wished, and

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the players, it cannot be, you know, rhetorically broaden the players. That's why I appealed to activists here in the USA.

The struggle isn't over. Keep working. Keep moving it forward. Keep building and consolidating and broadening and restructuring and always don't neglect it. That's crucially important. We live there. That's crucially important this opportunity isn't allowed to fail the way the last one was.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, the six-county statelet is under a permanent state of emergency. And it has been under a state of emergency since the state was established. That means that the state, and in particular the police, have the right to arrest, to raid, to detain, to interrogate and so on.

ADAMS: Normal judicial systems do not exist. The state has the right to hold people without trial, has the right to -- when there is a trial to have a trial without jury. There are special rules which allow robust interrogation of detainees or interviewees or all of that.

There was -- there are 400 cases -- 400 cases -- of Irish people killed by British forces who have been denied proper inquest. As I left Ireland, three people who were killed by the British troops, their families walked out of court because years later they still have been denied an inquest.

The Irish language has no status. Caoimhghin O Caolain -- and some of us might find it difficult to pronounce his name -- he was saying he didn't really mean that. The big difference he found coming to the states that nobody asks him what that means in English.

But he is stopped by British troops in the North of Ireland, he is asked to give his name in English. If his name was Jack, he wouldn't be asked the same thing. If his name was Helmut, he wouldn't be asked the same thing. Children do not have the right to be educated through the medium of Irish on the same basis as those who want to be educated through the medium of English.

The economic sector is closed off to many people because they happen to be Catholics. Catholics are two times more likely to be unemployed, and those who are in employment have their way blocked in terms of managerial or other promotion. And I could go on.

But you represent The Independent from London. It's a short distance, at least an in our minds, from London to Belfast. That's (OFF-MIKE), and I give you. And you can pick all of this information for yourself.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

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ADAMS: Well, I have made it clear in all of this that we will abide by whatever we agree to, and we will sell (ph) whatever we would agree to. But don't expect us -- and no one should expect us -- to lower our expectations, or to in any way dilute or diminish our very legitimate goals even before we go into negotiations.

Secondly, it isn't just for Sinn Fein. Isn't the Irish government constitutionally bound to seek Irish reunification? Don't all of the parties in the 26 counties have as their primary political objective the reunification of the island of Ireland.

So this is question which is much wider and deeper than one which has to be put just to Sinn Fein.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I think how you persuade people to come away from armed actions, whatever spectrum they come from, is by building confidence, and by building alternatives, and by building a society and the institutions and the climate which people can have confidence in.

The reason why there is conflict in Ireland is because none of those things exist at this time. And I am absolutely satisfied that, for example, when the Nazi occupation of France ended, the French resistance faded. They went back to their lives as students, as workmen, as teachers, as housewives, as whatever they happened to be.

And I think the same thing will happen from whatever -- from whatever spectrum, Loyalists or Republican -- and of course the British, and of course, always bring their troops home.

ADAMS: So I would have some confidence that if we get political agreement on the way ahead, then all of these other matters, which are symptoms, would be dealt with also. So let's deal with the causes of the conflict, and that itself will resolve the conflict.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Let me take that first, if I may. First of all, our commitment to a negotiated settlement is forever. It isn't a whim. It isn't temporary. It is forever.

We are totally and absolutely committed to our peace strategy, and we will persist with it until it concludes in a democratic peace settlement.

We did argue for a time frame. I think that was sensible, because a time frame brings about a dynamic. And we have seen the type of dynamic which has been created by the British government and the Irish government setting out that time frame.

At the same time, we don't, you know, deal in deadlines or

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ultimatums. So let's work within that time frame. If progress has been made by that point and if it takes more time, then of course everyone should be open to that.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Yes. Compromise, compromise, compromise.

(LAUGHTER)

Those who use the English language sometimes, you know, use it in a provocative way. We go to these talks on the basis of generosity of spirit.

I mean, I have listened to Irish Republicans articulating their position. And whether they are people (OFF-MIKE) who are in positions of leadership nationally, or whether they are people who simply support our position, we want to make peace.

Now what is peace? It is justice. And how do you get justice? You bring about change. We're also human enough to understand that we don't have all the answers, that other people have a view.

But one of the difficulties in the situation is the British government tried to put people like us on the margins, tried to exclude us, tried to demonize us.

So there are caricatures of us. People have false perceptions and false notions of what Irish Republicanism is about. And we have the perception and same perceptions of our opponents -- and if I might say so, of our enemies.

We want to go not just to talk to people, but to listen to them. And it's in that spirit of generosity and accommodation and a preparedness to come to a compromise that we will go into these talks.

Now what is compromise? Compromise is two people coming to agreement. We all do it. We do it in our relationships. We do it in our work. We do it in our business. We do it all the time. We do it politically, all the time. It means consensus.

And that's what we're looking for -- an agreement and an accommodation. And then both sides -- and in this case, we put a very big focus on the British because compromise is a two-way street.

So we go into these talks with our positions very clear, our focus very clear, our objectives very well-stated, but with a willingness to reach out and hopefully to have others reach out to us also.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: He said it.

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QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, I do think that there is a little battle that has to be fought within the British establishment. And that little battle is between those at a special level who have run the place for a very long time and those who are now in political control.

And the Tories for 20 years -- and if I may so, our British Labour government before that -- allowed the officials -- those with security agendas, those who saw all of this as the next bit of repression, whether it be interment or Bloody Sunday or special courts, who saw it all in a security climate -- a little battle between them and those who need to move the situation into a political climate and political measures.

ADAMS: And I think, if I may say so, it will be denied that the person who wrote that part of Tony Blair's speech probably wrote all of the other speeches for John Major, because I think -- and it's there as a matter of evidence -- that those who are forced to march down Garvaghy Road under Mo Mowlam -- and you may not know this. But a memo which was leaked showed that they were exactly the same people who did the same thing the year before and the year before.

So in South Africa, these people were called the security class (ph). And it was only in the South African situation when people in political leadership within the establishment decided that it was not a security problem.

This isn't a problem of terrorism, a problem of security. This is a political problem. And once you recognize that it's a political problem, then you take political measures to correct it. And that's the challenge facing Tony Blair.

So far, in the terms of creating these talks, or recognizing Sinn Fein's mandates and speedily scraping away the hurdles which were placed, he has taken the right course. It's now a matter if we try to move our way forward of him continuing in that course.

And I think once the British government accepts its responsibility to deal with this political conflict in a political way, then we will see the end and the beginning of the end of conflict on our own.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, we don't bring any implied threats. We would argue very strongly -- and I think it's quite legitimate -- that the course of our future history should not be restricted or limited to a negotiating room. That's why we're here.

We want, when Martin McGuinness leads our team into those talks, that he knows that people in the U.S. are there behind him. We want

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people who are campaigning on issues to continue to campaign on these issues. And we see the negotiations as an area of struggle for us.

So we have no implied threat. We have only the commitment and the faith in our own ability and in the good sense of the majority of people in Ireland. And I think that that has been to some degree validated, because if I had come here in 1992 or 1993 -- well, first of all, I wouldn't be allowed to come here. But if I had come here in 1992 or 1993, and been able to predict to all of you what was going to happen in '94 and '95, '96 and '97, you would have -- I think with some justification -- dismissed it as Irish Republican propaganda.

But all of those things happened. We did create a new opportunity for peace. The British government did squander it, but that created another opportunity for peace. So, that's the sense that we bring to all of this -- a commitment in making this work.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: No, he's in Martha's Vineyard, and I wouldn't expect him to come from there to here to meet me. I hope he's having a nice vacation.

QUESTION: Do you feel that (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Oh, absolutely. I actually think it's a very, very important meeting, because as you all know, Nancy Soderberg, Tony Lake and Maryanne Peters (ph) have since left since left those positions, and other people have taken over those positions. So this will be the first opportunity we will have to meet them face-to-face and to renew -- and to build a new relationship.

We have, of course, remained in constant contact with the White House, but there is a difference between doing it face-to-face. And I see it as an immensely important meeting.

QUESTION: (OFF-MIKE)...

ADAMS: Well, we will, first of all, be seeking to give him our understanding of the situation, our hope for the situation, and of our view of how it should progress. And we'll be engaging on that broad basis.

OK, thank you everyone.

(APPLAUSE)

END

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Sep 03, 1997 15:32 ET

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