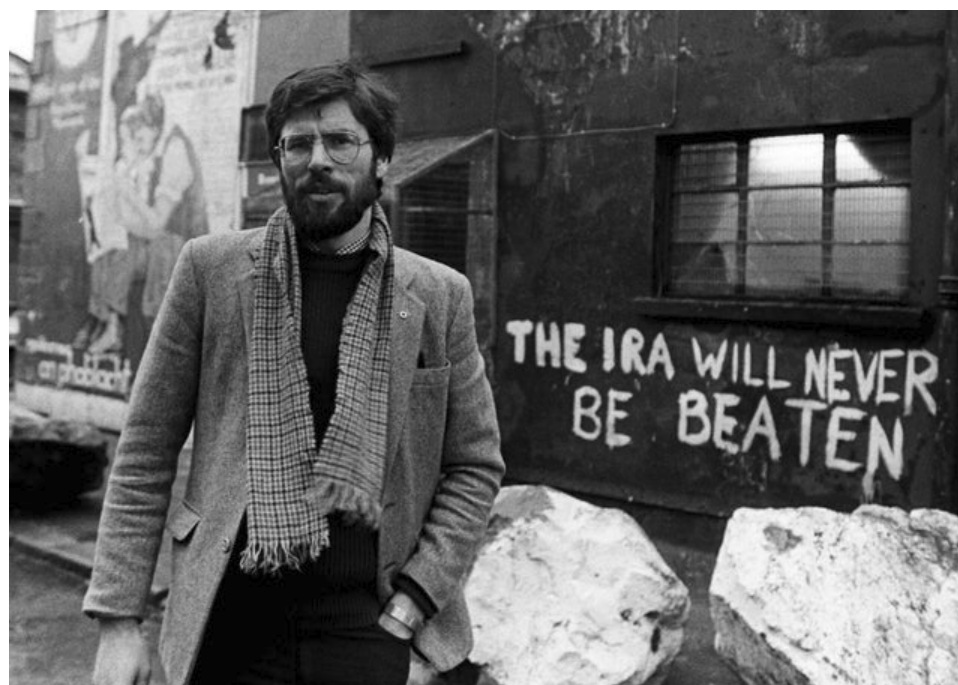


[newsletter.co.uk](https://www.newsletter.co.uk)

Confidential document reveals top Troubles solicitor said Gerry Adams had ‘firm grip’ on the IRA

4-5 minutes



Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams pictured outside the party's HQ on the Falls Road in January 1984

The revelation is contained in a newly-revealed internal communiqué, detailing a conversation between Irish official Brendan McMahon and Belfast solicitor Paddy “PJ” McGrory – the father of Barra McGrory, NI’s erstwhile director of public prosecutions.

The internal Irish government communiqué is dated June 29, 1988, and marked “confidential”.

It is just one of hundreds of Irish government documents published last week the University of Ulster’s CAIN (Conflict Archive on the Internet).

Mr McMahon spoke with Mr McGrory about “recent developments within Sinn Fein”.

READ MORE:

The communiqué about their meeting reads: “He [PJ McGrory] still sees the Sinn Fein/IRA as being controlled by a hardcore of old Republican families, many of whom have been involved in the Republican movement for up to three generations.

“Gerry Adams is very much of that tradition. An essential element among these hardcore Republican families is the tradition of physical force. He felt for them it would always be an option...

“His own feeling is that Adams is very much in control of the movement. The way in which he disposed of the Old Guard of O’Bradaigh etc., demonstrates to McGrory’s mind, Adams firm grip on Sinn Fein and the IRA.

“While there may be elements within the IRA to some degree hostile to Adams, McGrory feels that these are very much in the minority. Adams comes from the IRA, knows the IRA and is respected by them.”

Mr Adams has always denied being a member of the IRA (but has said that he “never disassociated myself from the IRA and I never will”).

Another document, detailing an earlier meeting between Mr McMahon and Mr McGrory on April 20, 1988, deals with the pending inquest of three would-be IRA bombers, who were shot dead by the SAS on Gibraltar on March 6, 1988.

The account of this meeting shows Mr McGrory tried to get the IRA to claim that no people in Gibraltar had been at risk from the Provo team, in order to make the inquest jury look upon the dead trio more favourably.

The communique of this meeting reads: “He [PJ McGrory] is very concerned at the likely ‘loyalist’ [that is, pro-British] make-up of any inquest jury in Gibraltar.

“In order to minimise the problems which he may encounter in this regard, he has already suggested to Sinn Fein that they suggest to

the IRA that they provide clarifications as to what precisely was the target in Gibraltar...

“He feels that a clarification on this – ie, that there was no threat to the people of Gibraltar – could help in alleviating (to whatever limited degree) the likely hostility of a Gibraltar jury.”

READ MORE:

A message from the Editor:

Thank you for reading this story on our website. While I have your attention, I also have an important request to make of you.

With the coronavirus lockdown having a major impact on many of our advertisers — and consequently the revenue we receive — we are more reliant than ever on you taking out a digital subscription.

Subscribe to [newsletter.co.uk](https://www.newsletter.co.uk) and enjoy unlimited access to the best Northern Ireland and UK news and information online and on our app. With a digital subscription, you can read more than 5 articles, see fewer ads, enjoy faster load times, and get access to exclusive newsletters and content. Visit

<https://www.newsletter.co.uk/subscriptions> now to sign up.

Our journalism costs money and we rely on advertising, print and digital revenues to help to support them. By supporting us, we are able to support you in providing trusted, fact-checked content for this website.

Alistair Bushe

Editor