



# An Chartlann Náisiúnta National Archives

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Mr McLoughlin  
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12-11-95  
Conversation with Gerry Adams

1. Gerry Adams, accompanied by Martin McGuinness, raised a number of issues with Ministers Smith and O'Donnell and the undersigned in Belfast on Monday.

#### Visit to Talks and to West Belfast

2. Adams is especially keen that the Taoiseach should pay an early visit to Castle Buildings, to balance that of the Prime Minister last month. At that time, he said it would also be very valuable if Mr. Ahern could visit West Belfast. He added that it would likewise be helpful to the present process if other Ministers could also take on engagements in the near future in nationalist areas.
3. We responded by saying that the Taoiseach intended to call to the Talks at an early date, and that we were working on a suitable time. At that stage also, Mr. Ahern would probably take on some other engagements in Belfast and in Derry.

#### Heads of Parties meeting with Taoiseach

4. Mr. Adams referred to the agreement last July that the Taoiseach would invite the Heads of the Northern political parties to a meeting in Dublin, and urged that there should be some movement on this. We said that ideally this should follow the planned meeting of the Forum, a date for which had now been set. We would, of course, convey his wish to the Taoiseach for an early meeting with the Heads of Northern parties.

Security situation on the ground

5. Mr. Adams went on at length and with passion (as both he and Martin McGuinness have done on a number of occasions recently) about the continuing difficult security situation on the ground in nationalist areas. He was very unhappy about his meeting recently with the Northern Security Minister, Adam Ingram, who he said seemed completely in the hands of his security advisers. (The Minister for Foreign Affairs made much the same assessment at the Conference in Belfast on Wednesday.)
6. Adams argued that the essential problem was that ordinary people in nationalist areas saw little or no benefit from the peace process occurring on the ground. The Divis Towers observation post, for instance, was being made more secure at present, while a new £5m RUC station was also being built in West Belfast. It was clear likewise that the reduction in the level of British army patrolling, which the British were claiming credit for, was only occurring in non-nationalist areas. The army were in fact still saturating West Belfast, and this inevitably led to tension and incidents, especially with young people. All this made life extremely difficult for the party leadership.
7. The Irish side promised to continue taking up these issues through every possible avenue. They also emphasised that they had been taken up very forcefully on a number of occasions recently, in particular by the Minister for Foreign Affairs at Wednesday's Anglo-Irish Conference.

Dermot Gallagher

11 November 1997