



GERRY ADAMS

President of Sinn Féin

51/55 Bóthar na bhFál, Béal Feirste BT12 4PD

7/1/94.

Mr Major, a Chara,

I am taking the unusual step of writing to you directly regarding the potentially historic opportunity to achieve peace in Ireland which currently exists and, specifically to urge you to take the necessary steps to realise this opportunity.

In joint statements with the leader of the SDLP John Hume and in my own public statements I have repeatedly asserted my sincere belief that if all parties to the conflict, but most critically your government, are prepared to demonstrate courage and imagination, an effective peace process can be established at this point.

It is my belief that the position put to you in June by the Irish Government has the potential to move us out of conflict and towards a negotiated settlement based on the internationally recognised democratic principle of national self-determination.

The leadership of the Irish Republican Army has also made its position clear. In a statement on October 3rd they said, "The leadership of Oglagh na hEireann welcomes this (the Hume/Adams) initiative.

We are informed of the broad principles involved which will be for consideration by the Dublin and London Governments.

It is unfortunate that the British Government reaction to this initiative so far, has been negative and has fuelled unionist reaction. Nonetheless, if the political will exists or can be created. It could provide the basis for peace".

Your public response to this was an absolute rejection. Additionally the text of the Declaration signed by you and the Taoiseach, Albert Reynolds, on December 15 is substantially different in key areas to the Irish position put to you in June. However, it has been asserted that these differences are no more than semantical and that the underlying politics of both documents are identical. Republicans are more than willing to examine, positively, the validity of such an assertion. However to do so effectively and accurately, full clarification on the key issues is essential.

The British Government has, from 1990, been involved in prolonged contact and dialogue with Sinn Féin. Only recently was this contact ended. Now, when you claim you have the basis of a settlement, you refuse to use these channels, an inconsistency which must increase republican doubts and suspicions.

The opportunity for a real and lasting settlement has never been more realisable—Your government holds the key in all of this. It is crucial, therefore, that you clarify these issues, urgently and effectively through direct dialogue. If peace is a realistic prospect, as you have asserted, then the opportunity should not be lost because of confusion occasioned by the absence of open and honest dialogue.

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Gerry Adams.

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