

FROM: A WOOD  
DIRECTOR, INFORMATION SERVICE  
4 JANUARY 1994



- cc PS/Michael Ancram (B&L) - B
- PS/PUS (B&L) - B
- PS/Mr Fell - B
- Mr Thomas - B
- Mr Deverell - B
- Mr Daniell - B
- Mr Templeton
- Mr McCaffrey
- Mr Millar
- Miss Jude - B

PS/Secretary of State (B&L) - B

**ADAMS' SPEECH: 3/1 94**

Mr Adams said:

I now attach a re-typed version of Adams' speech.

Recipients will be encouraged that the date would indicate that Republicans are now only a year behind the rest of the world.

(signed)  
that the issue of Irish national self-determination was the key to any forward movement and, consequently, we endeavoured to put at the centre of the Irish people to national self-determination at the centre of the political agenda.

Since the signing of the Downing Street Declaration of 15 there have been determined and politically attempted to re-define this right and how it can be exercised. None of these attempts have any validity.

The Joint Declaration does contain, for the first time ever, a recognition by the British, though heavily qualified, that the Irish people as a whole have the right to self-determination. This right has never been acknowledged before by the British and this is a potentially significant development and an indication of the strength of this democratic argument.

"SINN FEIN PRESS RELEASE

The following is the text of a statement issued to our office, 3/1/93.

National Self-determination

The Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams, in a key-note speech tonight to party activists in West Belfast has said that "if the British Government is prepared to co-operate with the Dublin government to bring about Irish national self-determination, in the shortest possible time, consistent with obtaining maximum consent to the process, and in consultation with all parties, then there is a real possibility of progress.

Mr Adams said:

"Over the past number of years Sinn Fein's efforts to develop a viable peace strategy have become our principle function as a political party. From the beginning we asserted that the issue of Irish national self-determination was the key to any forward movement and, consequently, we endeavoured to put the right of the Irish people to national self-determination at the centre of the political agenda.

Since the signing of the Downing Street Declaration of December 15 there have been determined and politically orchestrated attempts to re-define this right and how it can be exercised. None of these attempts have any validity.

The Joint Declaration does contain, for the first time ever, a recognition by the British, though heavily qualified, that the Irish people as a whole have the right to self-determination. This right has never been acknowledged before by the British and this is a potentially significant development and an indication of the strength of this democratic argument.

It is logical that if the British recognise this right that they then cannot presume to dictate how this right is exercised. Self-determination is universally accepted to mean a nation's right to exercise the political freedom to determine its own social, economic and cultural development without external inference and without partial or total disruption of the national unity or territorial integrity.

Self-determination is a fundamental rule of International Law, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in various UN Covenants and in European Community Convention.

The denial of the Irish people's right to self-determination lies at the very heart of the ongoing conflict in the 6 Counties.

It is now generally accepted that the Partition of Ireland has had a distorting and deforming effect on Irish political development and has been recognised as a grievous historical mistake. By any criteria, partition is a political failure. Even the Downing Street Declaration contains acknowledgement of that fact. The root cause of the conflict in Ireland is the undemocratic British claim to sovereignty over the six counties.

The denial of self-determination and the means deployed by the British Government to uphold that denial are the reasons for the continued conflict and instability. The right to national self-determination is inalienable, unassailable and absolute. It cannot be defined or qualified, other than by the Irish people themselves.

Self-determination is not an outmoded nor obsolete concept. It is fundamental to national democracy and international harmony. In the past ten years British and Irish politicians have sought to convince public opinion that notions like Irish freedom, Irish self-determination and Irish

nationality have become irrelevant, while in every other context they remain relevant and valid. They are, in reality, asking Irish people to forget the very idea of self-determination and freedom.

Since the Partition of Ireland, the Irish people's right to self-determination has been denied by the British Government and Parliament. Partition represents the most fundamental denial of democracy - a denial to the Irish people of the freedom to exercise self-determination. Partition was imposed by Britain under threat of war and was never intended to resolve the underlying causes of conflict.

Partitionist solutions cannot create the conditions of Peace and Democracy in Ireland. Partition was not achieved through the exercise of Irish national self-determination. It was imposed by a British Act of Parliament - the Government of Ireland Act - for which not a single Irish vote - North or South - was cast. The consent of the Irish people was never sought and it has never been freely given.

Until the issue of self-determination is resolved there can be no lasting nor viable peace on these islands. There can be no democratic progress. The deadlock has not yet been broken, but the key issue of national self-determination has at least been identified. Any initiative which truly seeks to break this deadlock must deal first with the fact that the Irish people have an absolute right to national self-determination.

1. The British government should make the exercise of Irish National Self-determination its policy objective.
2. A Dublin government should have the same policy objective.
3. Co-operation between the British and Dublin governments to bring about their joint purpose in the shortest possible time consistent with obtaining maximum consent to the process.

4. Democracy and practicality demand that this been done in consultation and co-operation with the representatives of the Irish minority, the unionists, as well as all the other parties, in effect the beginning of a process of national reconciliation.

If the British government is prepared to join in such a process then there is the real possibility of progress.

It is not enough to repeat the tired and failed policies of the past. Partition and continued support for the loyalist veto are a recipe for ongoing conflict. Unionists will remain locked into their no change mind-set. There will be no incentive, no motivation, no reason to move towards a democratic accommodation with the rest of the Irish people.

Genuine peace in Ireland depends upon the recognition by the British Government of the right of the Irish people to determine our own future, in our own interests and on our own terms to secure without outside interference, an agreed accommodation democratically and peacefully. Such an initiative would take us out of the present impasse. It would begin a process of national reconciliation and would move us decisively in the direction of a real and lasting peace in Ireland."