

Dermot Nally Papers

UCDA P254/99

Timeline 1993

Wednesday 13 January 1993

Dick Spring, the Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), promised that there would be "openness and flexibility" in any future political talks.

Friday 22 January 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, travelled to Dublin for informal talks with Dick Spring, the Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs). Mayhew agreed to informal discussions with the Irish government in advance of any new political talks in Northern Ireland.

Wednesday 3 February 1993

The Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (AIIC) held a meeting in London and decided to issue invitations to the political parties to attend bilateral talks.

Wednesday 10 February 1993

Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), nominated Gordon Wilson to become a member of the Irish Senate (the upper house of the Irish Parliament). [Gordon Wilson had been injured, and his daughter killed, in the Enniskillen bomb on 8 November 1987.]

Tuesday 16 February 1993

Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), gave an interview to the *Irish News* (a Northern Ireland newspaper) in which he called for "inclusive dialogue" and a new Irish-British agreement that would bring an end to partition.

Wednesday 24 February 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, held a meeting with Bill Clinton, then President of the United States of America (USA), in Washington, USA. Major later stated that he found Clinton's proposal of a 'peace envoy' to be unhelpful, but was in favour of a representative undertaking a "fact-finding" visit to Northern Ireland.

Sunday 28 February 1993

Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), gave an interview to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in which he stated that Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution were not "cast in bronze".

Tuesday 2 March 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, gave a speech in Bangor, County Down, in which he said that Britain was "neutral" with regard to

Paul McGarry 8/Taoiseach
(given to me by Frank Murray on
2/6/08 at UCD seminar on Downing
St. Declaration (John Lashley
chaired)
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3/6/08

Northern Ireland's position within the United Kingdom (UK). Mayhew stressed that the union between Britain and Northern Ireland would only be changed if a majority of the population voted for some new constitutional arrangement.

Friday 5 March 1993

Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), gave a speech at a meeting of the Irish Association in which he acknowledged that changes to the Irish Constitution would be required in any future settlement.

Monday 8 March 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, welcomed the speech made by Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), on 5 March 1993. Mayhew said that Spring was someone he could "do business with".

Friday 12 March 1993

The European Parliament backed a proposal to consider how institutions of the European Community could provide assistance in Northern Ireland to try to resolve the conflict. The initiative was led by John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) and MEP.

Saturday 20 March 1993

Warrington Bombs

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) exploded two small bombs in litter bins in Bridge Street, Warrington, England, killing Johnathan Ball aged 3 years and mortally wounding Timothy Parrry aged 12 years who died on 25 March 1993. [The IRA had provided inadequate warnings which resulted in the deaths and the 56 injuries. The killings of the two boys led to public protests in England and in the Republic of Ireland against paramilitary violence. The killings also led to the establishment of Initiative '93.]

Sunday 28 March 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), suggested that the two governments might impose a blueprint for a political settlement in Northern Ireland backed by a referendum. The *Sunday Telegraph* (a British newspaper) published details of a poll of the opinions of a sample of people living in England on the Northern Ireland issue. Of those questioned 56 per cent said that they no longer wanted the region to remain in the United Kingdom (UK). //

Tuesday 30 March 1993

Radio Telefís Éireann (RTE) lost its appeal against a High Court decision that its

blanket ban on broadcasting interviews with members of Sinn Féin (SF) was wrong and that Section 31 of the Broadcasting Act was being misinterpreted by the station. The five-judge Supreme Court unanimously upheld the High Court decision. [In the High Court in July 1992, Mr. Justice O'Hanlon found that RTE, in deciding that no SF member should be permitted by reason of that membership to broadcast on any matter or topic, had misinterpreted the provisions of the ministerial order. In its appeal, RTE argued that the purpose of the order was to prevent its broadcasting system being used for the purpose of subverting or undermining the authority of the state.]

Thursday 1 April 1993

Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), gave a speech in the Dáil about the prospects for peace in Northern Ireland. Reynolds defended the Irish Constitution and called for a new framework to help take the gun out of politics on the island. The *News Letter* (a Northern Ireland newspaper) published a poll of its readers which showed that, of those who took part, 42 per cent agreed with Loyalist paramilitary violence.

Wednesday 7 April 1993

Gordon Wilson met with representatives of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) to try to persuade them to stop their military campaign. [Gordon Wilson had been injured, and his daughter killed, in the Enniskillen bombing on 8 November 1987. Following the meeting he said that he was saddened by the outcome.]

Saturday 10 April 1993

Hume Meets Adams

Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), was seen visiting the home of John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), in Derry. The two men met for "extensive discussions" in their capacities as leaders of their respective parties.

Sunday 11 April 1993

The secret talks held between John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), became public knowledge follow a report in the *Sunday Tribune*. [The talks were criticised by a number of parties and individuals.]

Saturday 17 April 1993

Douglas Hurd, then British Foreign Secretary, said that the Republic of Ireland had a "crucial role" in any new talks. He also stated that the Republic's willingness to consider changes to the Irish Constitution provided a "positive context".

Tuesday 20 April 1993

James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), presented a set of proposals entitled 'Blueprint for Stability' to John Major, then British Prime Minister, while on a visit to London.

Wednesday 21 April 1993

Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), travelled to the United States of America (USA). While in Boston he said that the suggestion of a 'peace envoy' was "not appropriate at present".

Friday 23 April 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), held another meeting. Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, made a major speech on Northern Ireland to an audience at the Institute of Irish Studies in Liverpool. Mayhew stated that the British government was against the notion of "joint sovereignty" but did want to see a devolved government with wide powers.

Saturday 24 April 1993

Bishopsgate Bomb

The Irish Republican Army (IRA) exploded a large bomb, estimated at over a ton of home-made explosives, at Bishopsgate in London. One person was killed and over 30 people injured in the explosion. [Later estimates put the cost of repair at £350 million (some reported estimates were as high as £1,000 million).] John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), held their second meeting in a fortnight and issued a first joint *statement*.

Tuesday 27 April 1993

James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), stated that he would not enter new political talks while the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) was in talks with Sinn Féin (SF).

Wednesday 28 April 1993

Ian Paisley, then leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), said that he would not enter new political talks.

Wednesday 5 May 1993

Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), was refused a visitor's visa to enter the United States of America (USA). 

Monday 10 May 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, promised proposals

for new political talks.

Thursday 27 May 1993

Queen Meets President

Mary Robinson, then President of the Republic of Ireland, travelled to London to attend a meeting with Queen Elizabeth at Buckingham Palace. [The meeting was the first official contact between an Irish president and a British monarch.]

Michael Ancram replaced Jeremy Hanley at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) to become the Political Development Minister.

Tuesday 8 June 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, held a meeting with James Molyneux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), in London.

This was the start of a fresh set of bilateral talks.

Thursday 10 June 1993

It was confirmed that Jean Kennedy Smith, sister of the late President John F. Kennedy, would be the next American Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland.

Friday 11 June 1993

Queen Elizabeth paid a visit to Northern Ireland. John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), held another meeting with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF). Amnesty International criticised certain aspects of emergence powers in Northern Ireland.

Wednesday 16 June 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, and Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), held a meeting in London and both called for talks between the Northern Ireland political parties to be resumed.

Friday 18 June 1993

President Shakes Adams' Hand

Mary Robinson, then President of the Republic of Ireland, paid an unofficial visit to community groups in Belfast. The visit went ahead against the wishes of the British government and the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). During the visit Robinson met Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), and shook his hand. [This gesture provoked a lot of criticism amongst Unionists.] Robinson also visited Coalisland, in County Tyrone.

Saturday 26 June 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, began a two-day visit to Northern Ireland. Major called for a resumption of political talks between the constitutional parties.

Monday 28 June 1993

It was disclosed that the British Labour Party had produced a discussion document in 1992 on the future of Northern Ireland. The document contained a proposal that, in the absence of agreement between the political parties, there should be joint authority, between Britain and the Republic of Ireland, over Northern Ireland for a period of 20 years. [The proposals were welcomed by Nationalists but were rejected by Unionists.]

Sunday 4 July 1993

The *Sunday Tribune* carried an interview with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF). Adams was reported as stating that Republicans might accept joint authority as "part of the process towards an end to partition".

Thursday 8 July 1993

The *Guardian* (a British newspaper) published an interview with Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs). In the interview Spring suggested that the two governments draw up a framework settlement and then put the proposal directly to the public by means of a referendum. There was a meeting of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (AIIC).

Sunday 11 July 1993

James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), claimed that the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) had presented the Irish Republican Army (IRA) with peace proposals at the end of 1992.

Friday 23 July 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, told the House of Commons that there was no truth in the rumour that he had entered into a deal with the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) in return for support during the debate on the 'Social Chapter' of the Maastricht Treaty. [Martin Smyth (Rev), then a UUP Member of Parliament (MP), stated that he expected a Select Committee on Northern Ireland to be established in the near future.]

Thursday 19 August 1993

Jean Kennedy Smith, then American Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, paid an unofficial two-day visit to Derry and Fermanagh.

Monday 23 August 1993

Both the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) and Republican sources denied a report on 22 August 1993 in the *Sunday Times* (a British newspaper) that the British

Government and army had drawn up a secret peace strategy towards the end of 1992 involving contacts and eventual talks with the IRA. [A similar claim was made by James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), on 11 July 1993.] The newspaper claimed that the strategy involved a 60-point blueprint for reducing violence. The NIO reiterated the British government's position that "there cannot be talks or negotiations with people who use or threaten violence to advance their arguments." [Details of a series of secret talks were revealed on 28 November 1993.] ✓

Saturday 4 September 1993 to Saturday 11 September 1993

There was a suspension in Irish Republican Army (IRA) attacks for one week. Commentators believed this was done to coincide with a visit by an Irish-American fact-finding group to Ireland led by Bruce Morrison (former United States Democratic congressman). The group requested a meeting with Sinn Féin (SF). The meeting with SF was considered important by the Irish-American group, which had talks over 3 days with political leaders in Dublin and Belfast. The group believed that SF's inclusion in the peace process was essential to bring about an end to violence. [This was the second temporary ceasefire during 1993 - the first in May coincided with the visit of the then co-chairman of the Irish group, former mayor of Boston, but fizzled out according to Republican sources when his expected meeting with SF failed to take place.] \

Sunday 12 September 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, gave a speech to the British Irish Association. Mayhew called for flexibility on the part of the political parties. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) published a policy document entitled *'Breaking the Log-Jam'*.

Tuesday 14 September 1993

Jean Kennedy Smith, then USA Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, began a week-long fact-finding visit to Northern Ireland.

Thursday 16 September 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), travelled to Downing Street, London, for a meeting with John Major, then British Prime Minister. Following the meeting Hume stated that he did not "give two balls of roasted snow" for those who were criticising his continuing talks with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF).

Friday 17 September 1993

Ian Paisley, then leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), travelled to Downing Street, London, for a meeting with John Major, then British Prime Minister. In an interview following the meeting Paisley criticised John Hume, then

leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), as being the voice of "pan-Nationalism".

Saturday 18 September 1993

An interview with Martin McGuinness, then Vice-President of Sinn Féin (SF), was published in the *Guardian* (a British newspaper). McGuinness stated that any political settlement should be decided by the people of Ireland and spoke of the "right to self-determination of the Irish people".

Tuesday 21 September 1993

The Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a cover name (pseudonym) used by the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), placed bombs at the homes of four Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) councillors. No one was injured in the attacks. Senior members of the SDLP expressed support for the 'Hume-Adams' talks.

Wednesday 22 September 1993

David Trimble, then a Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) MP, criticised the Hume-Adams Initiative as: "misconceived and bound to fail".

Thursday 23 September 1993


The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) held a meeting with Michael Ancram, then Political Development Minister at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), to discuss the possibility of future political talks. The Campaign for Labour Representation in Northern Ireland (CLRNI), which was established in 1977 to try to persuade the British Labour Party to stand for elections in Northern Ireland, was dissolved without achieving its central aim.

Saturday 25 September 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), issued a second joint *statement*. The statement outlined the Hume-Adams Initiative which "aimed at the creation of a peace process". The document was believed to have been forwarded to the Irish government. [The full text of the *Hume-Adams Initiative* has never been published.] The Ulster Defence Association (UDA) issued a statement.

Monday 27 September 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), and Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), suspended their talks while a report from them (the *Hume-Adams Initiative*) was being considered by the British and Irish Governments. A report in the *Irish Times* claimed that the Hume-Adams Initiative asked the British government to state that it no long-term interest in



Northern Ireland and that it would use its influence to persuade Unionists that their best interest lay in a united Ireland.


Wednesday 29 September 1993

In a speech, Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, asserted the right of "self-determination of the people living in Northern Ireland". Mayhew also stated that Sinn Féin (SF) could only join political talks when Irish Republican Army (IRA) violence had ended "for real".




Friday 1 October 1993

Representatives of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) held a meeting with Michael Ancram, then Political Development Minister at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO). The DUP members refused to discuss their latest policy document '*Breaking the Log-Jam*' unless Ancram undertook to ignore the Hume-Adams Initiative.

Monday 4 October 1993

The IRA issued a *statement* welcoming the Hume-Adams Initiative. 

Wednesday 6 October 1993

The Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a cover name (pseudonym) used by the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), carried out a gun attack on a pub in Twinbrook, Belfast, and killed one Catholic civilian and injured two others. The UFF later claimed that the attack was carried out because of the Hume-Adams Initiative and the pan-Nationalist front. The Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) exploded a bomb outside a Sinn Féin (SF) office on the Falls Road, Belfast. James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), made a speech at a fringe meeting of the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool, England. Molyneaux stated that the Hume-Adams Initiative had wrecked any prospect of future inter-party talks. Ian Paisley, then leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), wrote a letter to John Major, then British Prime Minister, in which he stated that the Hume-Adams Initiative was "aimed at Ulster's destruction". Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), stated that if there was an overall political settlement then Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution could be changed by a referendum.   

Thursday 7 October 1993

Hume Meets Taoiseach

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), travelled to Dublin to meet Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), and Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs). Hume gave them a report on the meetings he had held with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF). Adams, who was also in Dublin,

said that a declaration by the British government on the right of Irish self-determination would lead to an end of the campaign of violence by the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Friday 8 October 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, delivered a speech to the Conservative Party conference in Blackpool, England. Major stated that the only message he wanted from the Irish Republican Army (IRA) was one indicating that the organisation was finished with its campaign of violence for good. Robin Eames (Dr), then Church of Ireland Primate, condemned the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) threat to the Catholic community. [Ten Catholic civilians had been killed since 8 August 1993 by the UFF and the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF).]

Saturday 9 October 1993

John Taylor, then Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) Member of Parliament (MP), called on Loyalist paramilitaries to end their campaign of violence.

Sunday 10 October 1993

Martin Smyth (Rev.), then Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) Member of Parliament (MP) and Grand Master of the Orange Lodge, gave an interview to the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). In the interview he stated that Sinn Féin (SF) could be included in political talks on what was best for "Northern Ireland within the United Kingdom" if they ended their support for the Irish Republican Army (IRA). [Smyth was criticised by some UUP members and other Unionists for this statement.] The *Sunday Independent* published the results of a poll of opinion in the Republic of Ireland. The result showed that, of those questioned, 72 per cent supported the talks that led to the Hume-Adams Initiative. Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), held a meeting in Dublin with Nelson Mandela, then leader of the African National Congress. Mandela gave his endorsement to the Hume-Adams Initiative.

Wednesday 13 October 1993

In the Dáil Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), declined opposition requests for a debate on Northern Ireland. The reason given was the matter was at a delicate stage. Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), stated that peace in Northern Ireland would come about as a result of "total demilitarisation" and was not a "prerequisite" for a peace process.

Saturday 16 October 1993

James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), addressed the UUP annual conference in Craigavon, County Armagh. He repeated his criticism of the Hume-Adams Initiative. He also stated that there would have to be a lengthy period of "quarantine" following the end of violence before representatives of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) could be included in political

talks.

Tuesday 19 October 1993

James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), held a meeting in London with John Major, then British Prime Minister, and repeated his party's opposition to the Hume-Adams Initiative. Major told the House of Commons that he "knew nothing" of the details of the Hume-Adams Initiative. Michael Howard, then British Home Secretary, signed an 'exclusion order' which banned Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), from entering Britain. Adams had been invited by Tony Benn, then a Member of Parliament (MP), to address a meeting at Westminster, London.

Wednesday 20 October 1993

John Alderdice, then leader of the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland (APNI), said that the Hume-Adams Initiative had cast a shadow over efforts to get political talks going again. The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) published a report that advocated shared, or joint, authority as a political solution to the conflict. M

Thursday 21 October 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, informed the House of Commons that bilateral talks were taking place with the political parties.

Friday 22 October 1993

While addressing the House of Commons at Westminster, John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), said that he thought the Hume-Adams Initiative was the best chance of achieving peace that he had seen in 20 years. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) issued threats against the staff of five firms that were undertaking building work on behalf of the security forces.

Saturday 23 October 1993

Shankill Road Bombing

Ten people were killed when a bomb being planted by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) exploded prematurely as it was being planted in a fish shop on the Shankill Road, Belfast. With the exception of one of the bombers who was also killed, the rest of those who died were Protestant civilians. The bombing represented the greatest loss of life in Northern Ireland in a single incident since the Enniskillen bombing on 8 November 1987. A further 57 people were injured in the attack. There was a wave of condemnations of the attack. Loyalist paramilitaries reacted immediately shooting two Catholic men one of whom died later from his wounds. [Over the next week Loyalist paramilitaries killed a total of 12 Catholic civilians. The IRA later claimed that the intended target of the bomb was a meeting of Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF) members that was believed to be taking place in X

the former Ulster Defence Association (UDA) office above the fish shop.]

Saturday 23 October 1993

It was announced that the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference (AIIC) meeting planned for 27 October would be postponed as a mark of respect following the Shankill Road bombing. The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) in Belfast City Council decided not to engage with the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) until the Hume-Adams Initiative had ended.

At the funeral service of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) member killed in the Shankill Road Bombing on 23 October 1993, Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), helped carry the coffin.

Wednesday 27 October 1993

Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), speaking in the Dáil outlined proposals for sustainable peace that involved six "democratic principles". Peace rallies were held at a number of venues in the Republic of Ireland including Dublin and Galway.

Friday 29 October 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, and Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), issued a joint *statement* from a meeting they held in Brussels. The statement contained six points and outlined the governments' determination that there would be no secret deals with the paramilitary groups. However the statement also made clear that if there were an end to violence then the governments would respond imaginatively. The governments stated that they would not adopt or endorse the proposals contained in the Hume-Adams Initiative.

Saturday 30 October 1993

Greysteel Killings

The Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), a cover name (pseudonym) used by the Ulster Defence Association (UDA), killed six Catholics civilians and one Protestant civilian in an attack on the 'Rising Sun' bar in Greysteel, County Derry. A further 13 people were injured in the attack one of whom later died of his injuries on 14 April 1994. [One of the gunmen was hear to say "trick or treat" before he fired into the crowded bar. This was a reference to the Halloween celebration that was taking place. There was widespread condemnation of the attack. The UFF later claimed that it had attacked the "Nationalist electorate" in revenge for the Shankill Road Bombing on 23 October 1993. The killings brought the total number of deaths during October to 27 making it the worst month for casualties in 17 years.]

Monday 1 November 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, told John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), that the proposals contained in the Hume-Adams Initiative were "not the right way to proceed". In reply to another member of the House of Commons Major said that to "sit down and talk with Mr Adams and the Provisional IRA ... would turn my stomach". [It was revealed on 28 November 1993 that the British government had a channel of communication with the Republican movement for three years and had been in regular contact since February.]

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chop chop?

Tuesday 2 November 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, proposed a series of bilateral meetings with the leaders of the four main (constitutional) political parties to try to start a talks process. The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) said that the parties would not talk to the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) until the Hume-Adams Initiative was ended.

Thursday 4 November 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), had a meeting with John Major, then British Prime Minister, in London. Hume later stated that there could be peace within a week if his proposals were adopted. Gordon Wilson revealed that he, along with two other people, had held a meeting with three leaders of Loyalist paramilitaries. The meeting took place earlier in the week.

Saturday 6 November 1993

Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), rejected the six principles proposed by Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), as "the basis for a peace process". [Spring had outlined the principles on 27 October 1993.] Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), told the Fianna Fáil (FF) Ard Fheis (annual conference) that peace could begin by the end of the year.

Thursday 11 November 1993

Michael Ancram, then Political Development Minister at the Northern Ireland Office (NIO), held a meeting in London with representatives of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP). This completed a series of bilateral meetings with the main political parties. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) published its proposals for the future of Northern Ireland in a document entitled *Breaking the Log-Jam*.

Monday 15 November 1993

The *Belfast Telegraph* (a Northern Ireland newspaper) carried a report that Sinn Féin (SF) had held face-to-face meetings with senior British Government officials and exchanged documents about how to end IRA violence. One source described

the talks as 'protracted' but that they were ended by June. SF refused to deny the claims, but the British Government flatly rejected them. [Confirmation of the secret talks broke in the United Kingdom (UK) media on 28 November 1993.] John Major, then British Prime Minister, made a keynote speech on Northern Ireland to an audience at the Guildhall in London. He said that the opportunity for peace in Northern Ireland was better than at any time for many years.

Friday 19 November 1993

The *Irish Press* carried a report of a secret plan drawn up by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs on the future of Northern Ireland.

Saturday 20 November 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), held another meeting with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF). The two leaders issued a third joint statement.

Sunday 21 November 1993

A rally in support of the Hume-Adams Initiative was held on the Falls Road in west Belfast. Approximately 2,000 attended the event.

Monday 22 November 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, gave a speech at the Queen's University of Belfast in which he stated that the British government would not talk with Sinn Féin (SF) until the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had ended its campaign of violence. The Combined Loyalist Military Command (CLMC) stated that it was earnestly seeking peace. The CLMC also warned that the Loyalist paramilitary groups were preparing for war in case peace was "bought at any price". [An insight into these preparation was obtained on 24 November 1993.]

Saturday 27 November 1993

The Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) held its annual conference in Cookstown, County Tyrone. In his address John Hume, then leader of the SDLP, stated that John Major, then British Prime Minister, held "the key to peace". The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) held its annual conference at Castlereagh in Belfast. Ian Paisley, then leader of the DUP, told delegates that Northern Ireland faced "the greatest threat to the Union since the Home Rule Crisis".

Sunday 28 November 1993

Secret Talks Between British and Republicans

The nature and extent of a series of secret talks between the British Government and the Republican Movement was revealed by the *Observer* (a British Newspaper). The report indicated that a secret channel of communication had

existed between the British government and the Irish Republican Army (IRA) for three years and the two sides had been in regular contact since February 1993. Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, claimed that the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had initiated the contacts with an oral message on 22 February 1993 that stated: "The conflict is over but we need your advice on how to bring it to a close. We wish to have an unannounced cease-fire in order to hold dialogue leading to peace." [Sinn Féin (SF) denied that it had sent the message. The Observer carried a report on 28 June 1998 in which it claimed that Denis Bradley, a former Catholic priest, had acted as a means of contact between the Republican movement and the British and Irish governments over a 20 year period. The report also claimed that Bradley was responsible for the message of 22 February 1993.]

Monday 29 November 1993

Sinn Féin (SF) publicly released a number of documents that provided details of the party's secret talks with the British government. Martin McGuinness, then Vice-President of Sinn Féin (SF), stated that the message of the 22 February 1993 was a fake and he accused the British of "counterfeiting their own documents to meet their current needs". Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, speaking in the House of Commons gave the British version of the secret contacts with the Republican Movement. [There were differences between the two sets of accounts. On 1 December 1993 Mayhew admitted there were 22 errors in the documents he had presented.] Ian Paisley, then leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), was ordered to leave the Commons after he had accused Mayhew of telling a lie.

Wednesday 1 December 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, stated that there had been 22 errors in the documents he released on secret talks between the British government and the Republican Movement. [The documents had been released by Mayhew on 29 November 1993.]

Thursday 2 December 1993

Sinn Féin (SF) publicly released more information on the secret talks between the British government and the Republican Movement. Martin McGuinness, the Vice-President of Sinn Féin (SF), claimed that the British government had begun the contacts in 1990.

Friday 10 December 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, held a meeting with Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), at a European Community summit in Brussels. John Smith, then leader of the Labour Party, paid a visit to Derry during which he said that Sinn Féin (SF) could enter all-party talks after the Irish

*3rd December meeting between
AR & JM in Dublin Castle?*

Republican Army (IRA) had ended its campaign of violence.

Tuesday 14 December 1993

Patrick Mayhew, then Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, revealed that he had offered to resign over the errors in the documents dealing with the British government's contacts with the Republican movement. [The documents were released on 29 November 1993.]

Wednesday 15 December 1993

Downing Street Declaration

John Major, then British Prime Minister, and Albert Reynolds, then Taoiseach (Irish Prime Minister), issued a joint Declaration from 10 Downing Street, London (the document became known as the *Downing Street Declaration*). The main aim of the two leaders was stated as: "to foster agreement and reconciliation, leading to a new political framework founded on consent and encompassing arrangements within Northern Ireland, for the whole island, and between these islands". Later in the House of Commons Major tried to address Unionist concerns about the Declaration by drawing attention to the matters that were not in the document: "What is not in the Declaration is any suggestion that the British government should join the ranks of the persuaders of the value or legitimacy of a united Ireland". Speaking in the Dáil (the Irish parliament) Dick Spring, then Tánaiste (deputy Irish Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs), said that paramilitary groups would have to hand over their weapons following the end of violence.

Saturday 18 December 1993

Ian Paisley, then leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), announced that he would organise a series of rallies against the *Downing Street Declaration*.

Monday 20 December 1993

John Hume, then leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), held a meeting with Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), and decided to meet again when SF had considered its response to the Downing Street Declaration. James Molyneaux, then leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), gave a radio interview in which he argued that the Downing Street Declaration was not a "sell out" of Unionists.

Tuesday 21 December 1993

Gerry Adams, then President of Sinn Féin (SF), called for "direct and unconditional dialogue" with the two governments. Adams also stated that the Downing Street Declaration needed to be clarified. [The matter of clarification was one that was to resurface frequently during 1994.]

Wednesday 22 December 1993

John Major, then British Prime Minister, travelled to Northern Ireland and held a series of meetings with the leaders of the main constitutional parties. Ulster Marketing Surveys carried out a poll of opinion in Northern Ireland on the Downing Street Declaration. The poll was conducted on behalf of Independent Television News (ITN). Of those questioned 56 per cent said that they were in favour of the declaration.

The Joint Declaration of 15 December 1993 (Downing St. Declaration)

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNMENT

This Joint Declaration is a charter for peace and reconciliation in Ireland. Peace is a very simple, but also a very powerful idea, whose time has come. The Joint Declaration provides from everyone's point of view a noble means of establishing the first step towards lasting peace with justice in Ireland. The central idea behind the Peace Declaration is that the problems of Northern Ireland, however deep and intractable, however difficult to reconcile, have to be resolved exclusively by political and democratic means. Its objective is to heal the divisions among the people of Ireland. The Declaration makes it clear that it is for the people of Ireland, North and South, to achieve agreement without outside impediment. The British Government have also declared that they will encourage, enable and facilitate such agreement, and that they will endorse whatever agreement emerges and take the necessary steps to implement it. The language of the Declaration quite clearly makes both Governments persuaders for agreement between the people of Ireland. The dynamic for future progress must reside in the full use of the democratic political process, in the underlying changes in Irish society, North and South, and in our external environment. Peace is the first essential for better relationships on this island. The Joint Declaration is only the first stage in the Peace Process. There will never be a better opportunity. Peace will allow us to develop a new atmosphere of trust and co-operation and to establish a new era of dŽtente, which is the only way forward.

JOINT DECLARATION

1. The Taoiseach, Mr. Albert Reynolds, TD, and the Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Major, MP, acknowledge that the most urgent and important issue facing the people of Ireland, North and South, and the British and Irish Governments together, is to remove the causes of conflict, to overcome the legacy of history and to heal the divisions which have resulted, recognising that the absence of a lasting and satisfactory

settlement of relationships between the peoples of both islands has contributed to continuing tragedy and suffering. They believe that the development of an agreed framework for peace, which has been discussed between them since early last year, and which is based on a number of key principles articulated by the two Governments over the past 20 years, together with the adaptation of other widely accepted principles, provides the starting point of a peace process designed to culminate in a political settlement.

2. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister are convinced of the inestimable value to both their peoples, and particularly for the next generation, of healing divisions in Ireland and of ending a conflict which has been so manifestly to the detriment of all. Both recognise that the ending of divisions can come about only through the agreement and co-operation of the people, North and South, representing both traditions in Ireland. They therefore make a solemn commitment to promote co-operation at all levels on the basis of the fundamental principles, undertakings, obligations under international agreements, to which they have jointly committed themselves, and the guarantees which each Government has given and now reaffirms, including Northern Ireland's statutory constitutional guarantee. It is their aim to foster agreement and reconciliation, leading to a new political framework founded on consent and encompassing arrangements within Northern Ireland, for the whole island, and between these islands.

3. They also consider that the development of Europe will, of itself, require new approaches to serve interests common to both parts of the island of Ireland, and to Ireland and the United Kingdom as partners in the European Union.

4. The Prime Minister, on behalf of the British Government, reaffirms that they will uphold the democratic wish of a greater number of the people of Northern Ireland on the issue of whether they prefer to support the Union or a sovereign united Ireland. On this basis, he reiterates, on behalf of the British Government, that they have no selfish strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland. Their primary interest is to see peace, stability and reconciliation established by agreement among all the people who inhabit the island, and they will work together with the Irish Government to achieve such an agreement, which will embrace the totality of relationships. The role of the British Government will be to encourage, facilitate and enable the achievement of such agreement over a period through a process of dialogue and co-operation based on full respect for the rights and identities of both traditions in Ireland. They accept that such

agreement may, as of right, take the form of agreed structures for the island as a whole, including a united Ireland achieved by peaceful means on the following basis. The British Government agree that it is for the people of the island of Ireland alone, by agreement between the two parts respectively, to exercise their right of self-determination on the basis of consent, freely and concurrently given, North and South, to bring about a united Ireland, if that is their wish. They reaffirm as a binding obligation that they will, for their part, introduce the necessary legislation to give effect to this, or equally to any measure of agreement on future relationships in Ireland which the people living in Ireland may themselves freely so determine without external impediment. They believe that the people of Britain would wish, in friendship to all sides, to enable the people of Ireland to reach agreement on how they may live together in harmony and in partnership, with respect for their diverse traditions, and with full recognition of the special links and the unique relationship which exist between the peoples of Britain and Ireland.

5. The Taoiseach, on behalf of the Irish Government, considers that the lessons of Irish history, and especially of Northern Ireland, show that stability and well-being will not be found under any political system which is refused allegiance or rejected on grounds of identity by a significant minority of those governed by it. For this reason, it would be wrong to attempt to impose a united Ireland, in the absence of the freely given consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland. He accepts, on behalf of the Irish Government, that the democratic right of self-determination by the people of Ireland as a whole must be achieved and exercised with and subject to the agreement and consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland and must, consistent with justice and equity, respect the democratic dignity and the civil rights and religious liberties of both communities, including:

- the right of free political thought;
- the right of freedom and expression of religion;
- the right to pursue democratically national and political aspirations;
- the right to seek constitutional change by peaceful and legitimate means;
- the right to live wherever one chooses without hindrance;
- the right to equal opportunity in all social and economic activity, regardless of class, creed, sex or colour.

These would be reflected in any future political and constitutional arrangements emerging from a new and more broadly based agreement.

6. The Taoiseach however recognises the genuine difficulties and barriers to building relationships of trust either within or beyond Northern Ireland, from which both traditions suffer. He will work to create a new era of trust, in which suspicion of the motives or actions of others is removed on the part of either community. He considers that the future of the island depends on the nature of the relationship between the two main traditions that inhabit it. Every effort must be made to build a new sense of trust between those communities. In recognition of the fears of the Unionist community and as a token of his willingness to make a personal contribution to the building up of that necessary trust, the Taoiseach will examine with his colleagues any elements in the democratic life and organisation of the Irish State that can be represented to the Irish Government in the course of political dialogue as a real and substantial threat to their way of life and ethos, or that can be represented as not being fully consistent with a modern democratic and pluralist society, and undertakes to examine any possible ways of removing such obstacles. Such an examination would of course have due regard to the desire to preserve those inherited values that are largely shared throughout the island or that belong to the cultural and historical roots of the people of this island in all their diversity. The Taoiseach hopes that over time a meeting of hearts and minds will develop, which will bring all the people of Ireland together, and will work towards that objective, but he pledges in the meantime that as a result of the efforts that will be made to build mutual confidence no Northern Unionist should ever have to fear in future that this ideal will be pursued either by threat or coercion.

7. Both Governments accept that Irish unity would be achieved only by those who favour this outcome persuading those who do not, peacefully and without coercion or violence, and that, if in the future a majority of the people of Northern Ireland are so persuaded, both Governments will support and give legislative effect to their wish. But, notwithstanding the solemn affirmation by both Governments in the Anglo-Irish Agreement that any change in the status of Northern Ireland would only come about with the consent of a majority of the people of Northern Ireland, the Taoiseach also recognises the continuing uncertainties and misgivings which dominate so much of Northern Unionist attitudes towards the rest of Ireland. He believes that we stand at a stage of our history when the genuine feelings of all traditions in the North must be recognised and acknowledged. He appeals to both traditions at this time to grasp the opportunity for a fresh start and a new beginning, which could hold such promise for all our lives and the generations to come. He asks the people of Northern Ireland to look on the people of the Republic as friends, who share their grief and shame over all the suffering of the last quarter of a

century, and who want to develop the best possible relationship with them, a relationship in which trust and new understanding can flourish and grow. The Taoiseach also acknowledges the presence in the Constitution of the Republic of elements which are deeply resented by Northern Unionists, but which at the same time reflect hopes and ideals which lie deep in the hearts of many Irish men and women North and South. But as we move towards a new era of understanding in which new relationships of trust may grow and bring peace to the island of Ireland, the Taoiseach believes that the time has come to consider together how best the hopes and identities of all can be expressed in more balanced ways, which no longer engender division and the lack of trust to which he has referred. He confirms that, in the event of an overall settlement, the Irish Government will, as part of a balanced constitutional accommodation, put forward and support proposals for change in the Irish Constitution which would fully reflect the principle of consent in Northern Ireland.

8. The Taoiseach recognises the need to engage in dialogue which would address with honesty and integrity the fears of all traditions. But that dialogue, both within the North and between the people and their representatives of both parts of Ireland, must be entered into with an acknowledgement that the future security and welfare of the people of the island will depend on an open, frank and balanced approach to all the problems which for too long have caused division.

9. The British and Irish Governments will seek, along with the Northern Ireland constitutional parties through a process of political dialogue, to create institutions and structures which, while respecting the diversity of the people of Ireland, would enable them to work together in all areas of common interest. This will help over a period to build the trust necessary to end past divisions, leading to an agreed and peaceful future. Such structures would, of course, include institutional recognition of the special links that exist between the peoples of Britain and Ireland as part of the totality of relationships, while taking account of newly forged links with the rest of Europe.

10. The British and Irish Governments reiterate that the achievement of peace must involve a permanent end to the use of, or support for, paramilitary violence. They confirm that, in these circumstances, democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process, are free to participate fully in democratic politics and to join in dialogue in due course between the Governments and the political parties on the way ahead.

11. The Irish Government would make their own arrangements within their jurisdiction to enable democratic parties to consult together and share in dialogue about the political future. The Taoiseach's intention is that these arrangements could include the establishment, in consultation with other parties, of a Forum for Peace and Reconciliation to make recommendations on ways in which agreement and trust between both traditions in Ireland can be promoted and established.

12. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister are determined to build on the fervent wish of both their peoples to see old fears and animosities replaced by a climate of peace. They believe the framework they have set out offers the people of Ireland, North and South, whatever their tradition, the basis to agree that from now on their differences can be negotiated and resolved exclusively by peaceful political means. They appeal to all concerned to grasp the opportunity for a new departure. That step would compromise no position or principle, nor prejudice the future for either community. On the contrary, it would be an incomparable gain for all. It would break decisively the cycle of violence and the intolerable suffering it entails for the people of these islands, particularly for both communities in Northern Ireland. It would allow the process of economic and social co-operation on the island to realise its full potential for prosperity and mutual understanding. It would transform the prospects for building on the progress already made in the Talks process, involving the two Governments and the constitutional parties in Northern Ireland. The Taoiseach and the Prime Minister believe that these arrangements offer an opportunity to lay the foundations for a more peaceful and harmonious future, devoid of the violence and bitter divisions which have scarred the past generation. They commit themselves and their Governments to continue to work together, unremittingly, towards that objective.

John Hume/Gerry Adams/Albert Reynolds Statement

Following the IRA's historic announcement of August 31, the Dublin government under Albert Reynolds moved quickly to consolidate this opportunity for peace and invited Gerry Adams and John Hume to government buildings on **September 6, 1994** to discuss ways of advancing the peace process.

The following is the text of a statement issued by the three men after their meeting:-

We are at the beginning of a new era in which we are all totally

and absolutely committed to democratic and peaceful methods of resolving our political problems. We reiterate that our objective is an equitable and lasting agreement that can command the allegiance of all. We see the Forum as a major instrument in that process. We reiterate that we cannot resolve this problem without the participation and agreement of the Unionist people. We call on everyone to use all their influence to bring this agreement about.