

## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

*World Political Innovators* profiles some of the most innovative political leaders from around the world. The individuals have been selected for their dedication to their country. By studying the lives of these influential individuals, researchers will gain new points of reference and a deeper understanding for how each of them changed history, for better or worse.

### SCOPE OF COVERAGE

*World Political Innovators* features 183 biographies of individuals who have had a significant influence on the global political landscape since the 1940s. Biographies represent a strong multi-ethnic, cross-gender focus. In addition to historical significance, leadership skills, and patriotism, you will discover that many of the profiled political leaders demonstrated new and different ways of thinking for the time in which they lived, often impacting today's political landscape. Our criteria also included the individual's appeal to high school and undergraduate students, as well as general readers.

### ESSAY LENGTH AND FORMAT

Each biographical essay averages 4,000 words in length and offers standard reference top matter:

- The name by which the individual is best known;
- Birth and death dates, followed by locations of those events as available;
- Political party(s) or group(s) that the individual has been affiliated with;
- Synopsis of the individual's historical political importance, and why he or she should be studied today.

The text of the essays is divided into the following:

- **Early Life** provides facts about the individual's upbringing and historical context;
- **Life's Work**, the heart of the article, consists of a straightforward, generally chronological, account of how the individual gained recognition, emphasizing their most significant endeavors, achievements, and failures;
- **Sidebars** explore a specific political party or group that the individual identified with;
- **Personal Life** includes post-achievement activities or positions, family life, and topics of general interest;
- **Further Reading** provides a starting point for additional research.

### SPECIAL FEATURES

Several features distinguish this series from other biographical reference works. The back matter includes the following aids, appendices, and indexes:

- **Annotated Timeline** presents a comprehensive list of milestone events in the evolution of politics since the 1940s;
- **Party Website Directory** for major political parties;
- **Geographical Index** lists political innovators by the country where they had the most impact;
- **Index** provides a detailed A-Z list of political figures, parties, etc.

Salem Press would like to extend its appreciation to all involved in the development and production of this work.

## GERRY ADAMS

### Irish Political Leader

**Born:** October 6, 1948; Belfast, Ireland

**Group Affiliation:** Sinn Féin Political Party

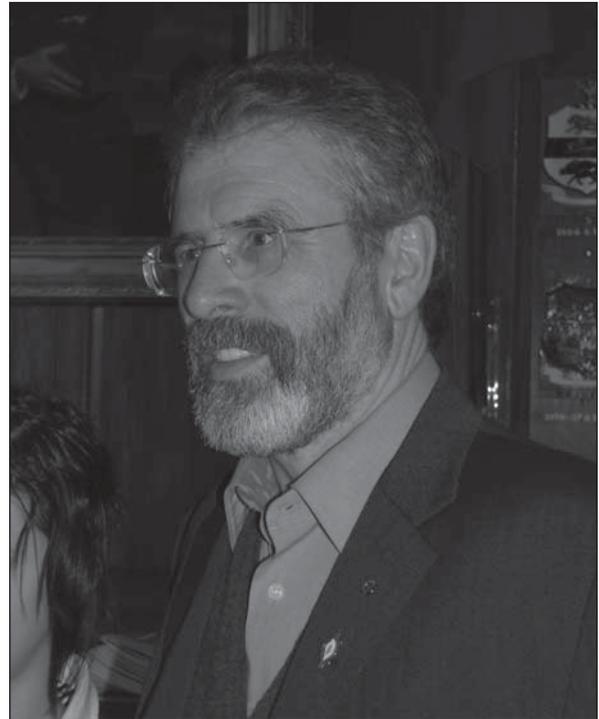
#### INTRODUCTION

*The Irish Republican Army and its political wing, Sinn Féin (“Ourselves Alone” in Irish), which led the Republic of Ireland to its independence from Great Britain earlier in the century, were reborn as the Provisional IRA (an illegal entity) and Provisional Sinn Féin (now legal) in Northern Ireland, or Ulster, when the current phase of “the Troubles” began in that province of the United Kingdom in 1969. Gerry Adams, who was born into republican activism in Belfast, spent several years during the 1970s interned without trial in the cause of an Ireland united and free of British colonialism. Toward the end of that decade, he and other young northern Provisionals began to displace the older Provo leadership, which had come chiefly from the Republic, to the south. In the early 1980s Adams moved from the vice-presidency to the presidency of the party, which he still holds. From 1982 to 1992 he was the member of Parliament for West Belfast without ever actually taking his seat in the House of Commons at Westminster, in keeping with the republican refusal to swear an oath of loyalty to the British Crown.*

*As the most visible of the implacable foes of the British presence in Northern Ireland, Adams is regarded in some quarters as an apologist for terrorism, even though his influence within republicanism apparently weighs in favor of political solutions and against dependence on military activity alone. In addition to his controversial political reputation, he has earned recognition for the writing that he does, in his words, “just as a hobby.” He has published five books, including *Pathway to Peace* (1988), the memoirs *Falls Memories* (1982) and *Cage Eleven* (1990), and *The Street and Other Stories* (1992). His stories are warm and homey portraits, often verging on the sentimental, of the people of West Belfast, in which he tries to show how those people have endured a long national ordeal with “a fair amount of dignity and good humor.”*

#### EARLY LIFE

Gerry Adams was born Gerard Adams on October 6, 1948 in West Belfast, the working-class Catholic ghetto



*Gerry Adams.*

in Belfast, the capital of County Antrim and of Northern Ireland itself. Northern Ireland is also known as Ulster, although it comprises only six (Antrim, Armagh, Down, Fermanagh, Tyrone, and Londonderry, called Derry by republicans) of the nine counties making up the historic province of Ulster. Irish history (which for Adams begins with the rise of Celtic civilization in the fourth and following centuries), and especially the historical background of the Troubles in Northern Ireland, fills several chapters of Adams’s autobiographically focused *Falls Memories*. “In 1177 the [predominantly Celtic] province of Ulster was granted to John de Courcy by the English monarch on condition that he conquer it . . .,” he wrote. “Belfast [became] the scene of many pitched battles between the dispossessed Irish and the English [until] Hugh O’Neill [the Ulster Irish chieftain also known as the Earl of Tyrone] was forced to surrender in 1603. . . . The power of the Ulster chiefs was broken and their lands, the last in Ireland to be conquered, were now open to the English. . . . In 1607 the Flight of the Earls

saw the final collapse of the Ulster chieftains and the way was cleared for wholesale plantation.” The Ulster “plantation” was the British Crown’s systematic confiscation of Irish land in what is now Northern Ireland in the seventeenth century and the resettlement of that land by Protestants from England and Scotland. The loyalist hegemony in Ulster remained unaffected by the Anglo-Irish treaty of 1921, which created the Irish Free State, the predecessor of the Republic, in the south and at the same time partitioned north from south.

Adams was one of thirteen children, three of whom died at or soon after birth. His father, Gerry Sr., a day laborer and IRA member, had been shot and imprisoned by the Royal Ulster Constabulary. His mother, Annie, was a Hannaway, a near-legendary name in the annals of Irish nationalism, going back in the Fenian movement to the 1860s. Her father was William Hannaway, a labor leader and a friend of the martyred socialist revolutionary James Connolly and of Eamon de Valera, the revolutionary who became the most prominent Irish statesman of the twentieth century. Adams’s uncle Dominic Adams was IRA chief of staff during World War II, and his uncle Alfie Hannaway was a republican activist. Gerry Adams’s brother Patrick is also involved in the nationalist movement.

The Falls Road intersects the heart of the working-class neighborhoods comprising West Belfast, where most of Belfast’s Catholics live. Among those neighborhoods is Ballymurphy, where Adams grew up and where he attended schools run by the Christian Brothers, receiving his primary education at St. Finian’s School and his secondary education at St. Mary’s. “In the turbulent years before the winning of independence for twenty-six of Ireland’s thirty-two counties, the minority Catholic population in Belfast had been under siege from the majority Protestant one,” Colm Keena write in *A Biography of Gerry Adams* (1990). “The sectarian violence all but disappeared but the fear remained. The Catholic working-class population resigned themselves to a life of discrimination and disadvantage in a statelet where the leaders of the ruling Unionist party made little effort to conceal the importance they gave to ensuring continuing Protestant dominance. For the entire Catholic population of the six counties, but especially for the outnumbered residents in West Belfast who lived so close to similar Protestant areas, fear lay at the bottom of their political relationship with the state.”

A childhood peer, as quoted in the *Economist* (February 4, 1989), has remembered Adams as a boy who

“was always eager to be Irish, to learn Irish, to play the Irish sports.” Adams himself has recalled that he and the Protestants of his age with whom he sometimes socialized when he was growing up “never discussed politics or religion except in a joking or bantering fashion.” Adams (who calls himself an “Irish Catholic,” rather than a Roman Catholic), like other republicans, has always perceived the Protestant/Catholic/Dissenter polarization as, at root, more explicable in terms of class, economics, politics, and British colonialism than of religion—a sectarianism deliberately seeded by the British in the Ulster plantation and solidified in the partition of 1921. In *Falls Memories* he wrote: “Belfast Presbyterians [once] fought alongside their Catholic neighbors for national independence and political democracy. ... Yet within two generations the majority of Presbyterians had abandoned their revolutionary principles, embraced the politics of the Tories, and developed a deep-rooted antipathy towards their Catholic neighbors. This transformation is one of the most disturbing facts in Irish history. It was caused directly by the forces of reaction, supported by the wealthy landlord class, who feared the union of Catholic, Protestant, and Dissenter. As Hugh Boulter, Lord Chief Justice, warned the London government in the eighteenth century, such a union would mean ‘farewell to the English influence in this country.’”

When still in his teens, Adams worked as a bartender at the Ark Bar, a pub on Old Lodge Road in Belfast with a largely working-class Protestant clientele. “The crack [banter] was always good,” he recalled in *Falls Memories*. “Politics were seldom discussed, and sectarianism only raised its head openly as the twelfth of July drew near.” Later he worked at the Duke of York, a pub on Donegal Street in downtown Belfast frequented by politicians and journalists. According to David Remnick, writing in the *New Yorker* (April 25, 1994), patrons of the Duke of York remember Adams as “friendly, smart, happy to talk politics.”

During the years preceding and following Adams’s birth, the Catholic population of Belfast grew not only by reason of birthrate but also by migration of Catholics from rural villages, who were attracted by jobs in textile manufacturing and shipbuilding. (Protestants still outnumber Catholics by about five to three in the overall Northern Ireland population.) When boom turned to bust in those industries, the fragile civil stability began to break. Adams became politically active during the Divis Street riots of 1964, when the display of the forbidden Irish republican tricolor outside a shop on Divis Street

along the Falls Road led to clashes between the Royal Ulster Constabulary and local residents. At around the same time, Adams joined Sinn Féin, the political party, then outlawed, that had been formed in the south in 1895 with the aim of winning Irish independence from Britain. After the twenty-six southern counties comprising four-fifths of the island of Ireland developed into an independent Eire beginning in the 1920s, Sinn Féin had a continuing reason for being: to work toward the merger of Eire and Ulster into an independent, united Ireland comprising all thirty-two counties.

“By the end of 1964,” Adams recalled in *Falls Memories*, “I was . . . an interested part of a small group which gathered in a dingy room in a Cyprus Street G.A.A. Club to learn about Fenians and Fenianism, colonialism, neocolonialism, partition, and British imperialism. Sinn Féin, then an illegal organization, was beginning to expand [in the north, whereas previously its strength had been chiefly in the south], and I was happy to be part of this new expansion. The Special Powers Act [a martial-law measure, dating from 1920, allowing imprisonment without trial], the ban on Sinn Féin and on the *United Irishman* newspaper, the lack of adult suffrage, discrimination in jobs and housing, the gerrymandering of local government boundaries, and the sectarian divisions which were built into the Stormont [provisional government] structures all became real and deeply felt grievances.” In the late 1960s Adams helped organize the West Belfast Housing Action Committee, the West Belfast Unemployment Action Committee, the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association, and the Central Citizens’ Defence Committee. In 1968 various groups began to mount demonstrations in Belfast and Londonderry against flagrant and demonstrable inequities in housing, employment, voting, and government services. The civil rights demonstrators were often threatened by violent “Orange” opposition on the part of organized paramilitaries and ad hoc vigilantes, and the Royal Ulster Constabulary was conspicuous in its failure to protect them. When the violence escalated into urban warfare in 1969, Adams joined the self-defense teams protecting the Catholic ghettos against invasions by unionist mobs. At the same time, the Irish Republican Army, which, along with Sinn Féin, had all but disappeared in Ulster, re-emerged, originally under leadership transplanted from Dublin, under schismatic circumstances.

In the mid-1960s the Dublin leadership had become dominated by the influence of the Communist Party of Ireland, which advocated political tactics to

### **Affiliation: Sinn Féin Political Party**

Sinn Féin is an Irish Republican political party and is considered left-wing. The phrase “Sinn Féin” is Irish for “ourselves.” The goal of the party is to be united and independent from Britain. The party backs the 1998 Good Friday Agreement and through its leadership maintains its goal of peace as part of its agenda for change.

Sinn Féin is the leading nationalist party. It supports the creation of a “Minister for Europe” and is supportive of the Palestinians in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Other key political agendas include legal same-sex marriage and a national health plan. Gerry Adams has been president of the party since 1983. Most of the party’s supporters are relatively young.

the exclusion of armed struggle. Those opposing that policy broke off from the “Official” IRA, calling themselves “Provisionals” and moving into the fray in Belfast with a spirit reminiscent of the IRA’s 1919-21 war of independence against Britain. On the other hand, British army troops dispatched to Northern Ireland as peacekeepers soon found themselves mired for the long term in a situation in which they were, and still are, perceived by republicans as the occupying force of a foreign power. That perception solidified on “Bloody Sunday,” January 30, 1972, when British paratroopers killed thirteen unarmed Catholic protesters and injured 150 in Londonderry. In March 1972 the British government suspended the Ulster constitution and the parliament at Stormont and imposed direct rule of the province from London.

### **LIFE’S WORK**

Adams has never admitted to membership in the Irish Republican Army, but British intelligence sources believe that he was the commander of the IRA’s Belfast brigade in the early 1970s and later a member of the Army Council and chief of staff. Whatever his relationship to the IRA, it was obvious that he favored a more aggressive republican strategy. During much of the 1970s he was either on the run or in custody. Arrested and interned without trial under the Special Powers Act, he was held in a succession of facilities, including the prison ship H.M.S. *Maidstone*, berthed in Belfast harbor, and Long Kesh, a prison camp near

Belfast. “Those who knew Adams during his stints at Long Kesh remember him as the promoter of discussion sessions—the jailhouse professor who talked for hours about the Cause, about strategy, about Irish history and the perfidy of the British,” David Remnick wrote in his *New Yorker* article. “He was inclined toward Marxist thought in those days and was an avid reader of the prison diaries of Ho Chi Minh.” Among the positive uses of his prison time was the improvement of his ability to speak Irish.

During a break in his incarceration, in 1972, he was flown secretly to London to participate in cease-fire talks. Articles written by Adams at Long Kesh between August 1975 and February 1977 were the basis of his book *Cage Eleven*, of which Paddy Ilyard wrote in the *London Times Literary Supplement* (August 31-September 6, 1990): “[Adams] presents a number of evocative and often witty cameos of prison life. . . . The compound regime emerges as almost humane in comparison with the cellular regimes endured by the Guildford Four and the Maguires. *Cage Eleven*, however, goes much further than being a description of life in prison. It is also a portrait of militant republicanism. The men do not see themselves as criminals, but as prisoners of war; the enemy are ‘The Brits.’ Their families share the same attitudes. This is an important book for understanding that tradition.” Other reviewers of *Cage Eleven* described Adams as “a natural storyteller with a warm and agile wit” and the book as “by turns wry, humorous, passionate, and self-mocking.”

When Adams was interned during the 1970s, the dominant figures in Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland remained Daithi O Conaill and others with southern roots. O Conaill rejected the slogan “United Ireland” and went to extraordinary lengths to win loyalists over to his vision of “a New Ulster creating a New Ireland,” a federal state in which the four historic provinces would have their own parliaments. During the same period, the mid-1970s, the Provisional IRA sometimes seemed out of control in making reprisals against Protestants for terrorist attacks on Catholics by the unionist paramilitary groups, the chief of which were the Ulster Volunteer Force and the Ulster Defence Association.

In the late 1970s, after his release from prison, Adams took the lead in countermanding O Conaill’s influence in Provisional Sinn Fein. (The “traditionalist” and “federalist” faction headed by O Conaill and Ruari O Bradaigh, outvoted on a key issue, 429-161, in a

convention in Dublin in 1986, would break off into the republican Sinn Fein. The Provisional IRA, previously structured into brigades, battalions, and companies on a geographical basis, was reorganized into a more tightly controlled and yet more elusive organization, structured cellularly.) At the same time, however, Adams and his associates put greater emphasis on politics than on military activity. Adams was elected vice-president of Provisional Sinn Fein in 1978, and he assumed the presidency five years later. Martin McGuinness became vice-president. When the government of the United Kingdom lifted the suspension of home parliamentary rule in Ulster in 1982, Adams was elected to a seat in the Northern Ireland Assembly.

The strength of Sinn Fein in Northern Ireland grew gradually from 1969 to 1981, when the propaganda effect of the deaths of ten imprisoned hunger strikers sparked a quantum leap in the movement’s growth. Within three years the Catholic sympathies in Northern Ireland were roughly divided, in one sampling, between 150,000 for the constitutionalist Socialist and Democratic Labour Party and 91,000 for Sinn Fein. When British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher called for a general election on June 9, 1983, Sinn Fein took a solid 13.4 percent of the overall vote in Northern Ireland; in a three-way race in West Belfast, Adams, with 16,379 votes, defeated the independent long-term incumbent Gerry Fitt (10,326 votes) and the Social Democratic and Labour Party candidate (10,934). In keeping with Sinn Fein custom, he declined to take his seat in Westminster. “Even as he justified one ruthless act of terrorism after another,” David Remnick observed in the *New Yorker*, “his rhetoric now had to become softer, more statesmanlike. His colleagues, however, were not similarly hamstrung.” Remnick quoted Martin McGuinness: “We recognize the value and limitations of electoral success. We recognize that only disciplined revolutionary armed struggle by the IRA will ever end British rule. . . . Without the IRA, we are on our knees . . . , we are slaves.” After being severely wounded in an assassination attempt by three unionist gunmen in broad daylight on a Belfast street in 1984, Adams, who had already been curtailing his freedom of movement for some dozen years, became even more a captive of security measures.

Adams kept his Westminster seat in the general election of June 12, 1987. He was instrumental in launching Sinn Fein’s current peace strategy with the publication in 1987 of the discussion document “Scenario

for Peace,” which was reinforced with the document “Towards a Lasting Peace in Ireland” (1992). During 1988 he and John Hume, the leader of SDLP, the major Ulster Catholic party, in attempted secrecy (because they were so uncompromisingly at odds in their public positions) held the first round in a series of peace-directed discussions that have continued to the present. Commenting on a somewhat cryptic statement made by Adams regarding the subject of the talks, David Hearst wrote in the *Guardian* (September 4, 1988): “Decoded, this means that if Britain came to deal with . . . the Irish prime minister and with John Hume . . . about a hand-over of the North into a new status, which included the withdrawal of British troops, and a new form of sovereignty, then everything would be changed.”

The Hume/Adams talks led to a protracted dialogue involving in some way John Major, the British prime minister, Albert Reynolds, the prime minister of the Republic of Ireland, and representatives of the republican movement, led by Martin McGuinness. News of the circumspect discussions surfaced in November 1993, and the following month Prime Minister Major issued the Downing Street Declaration, a public declaration of willingness to engage in peace negotiations on condition that the leaders of Sinn Fein and the IRA permanently renounce violence. In April 1994 Adams said that he had faxed Major a letter asking him to authorize a representative of his government to contact Sinn Fein. “Let him do that and then all of these things will become easier to resolve.”

Little progress was made on the peace front throughout the better part of 1994. The nadir appeared to come on July 24, at a convention over which Gerry Adams presided, when Sinn Fein formally rejected key points of the Downing Street Declaration, including the requirement that the IRA renounce violence as a precondition to its being invited to participate in peace talks. Paraphrasing the reactions of officials and analysts in Ireland and Northern Ireland, James F. Clarity observed in *The New York Times* (July 25, 1994) that Sinn Fein’s response was “tantamount to total rejection and a serious setback for efforts to end the campaign of violence.” It thus came as something of a surprise when, on August 31, the IRA announced a ceasefire, though it never endorsed the declaration. Seven days later, following a historic meeting attended by Adams, Albert Reynolds, and John Hume, the three men issued a joint statement that read, “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.”

Meanwhile, in the general election held on April 9, 1992, Adams, with 16,826 votes, or 42.1 percent of the total, lost his Westminster seat to Dr. Joe Hendron of SDLP, with 17,415 votes, or 43.6 percent. Fred Cobain of the Ulster Unionist Party finished third, with 11.0 percent, and the extreme left-wing Workers Party candidate trailed a distant fourth, with only 750 votes. Adams’s loss was attributed to Protestant voting strategy, not demographic change or Sinn Fein defections. Knowing that it was the practical way to hurt Adams, a large number of Protestants voted for the Catholic Hendron instead of their own Fred Cobain.

Under pressure from the British government, the American government had denied Adams’s requests for permission to visit the United States eight times over a period of eleven years, beginning in 1983. Finally, on January 30, 1994, the Department of Justice, implementing a decision by President Bill Clinton, issued Adams a two-day visa, effective from the evening of January 31 to the evening of February 2, so that he might speak at a foreign-policy conference in New York City on February 1. The brief visit provided Adams with a publicity bonanza, through high-saturation print coverage and radio and television appearances, including an interview on CNN’s *Larry King Show*. Such appearances have been virtually impossible in his homeland. On October 19, 1988 the British Home Office had issued a decree, which was in operation until the fall of 1994, restricting broadcast interviews not only with members of outlawed Irish paramilitary groups, including the Irish Republican Army, but also with officials of the legal Sinn Fein party, including Adams. Under those restrictions, Adams’s words could be heard verbatim but only indirectly on radio or television broadcasts. When a tape of him being interviewed was played on television, for example, his words were heard in a voice-over done by an anonymous reader.

Reviewing *The Street and Other Stories* (1992), in the London Times *Literary Supplement*, Ronan Bennett wrote: “Running off the Falls [Road] are endless narrow streets of small terrace houses. Any one of them could be the Street of Adams’s second collection of short stories. . . . He is concerned with the people of the Street and their tribulations, about which he writes convincingly and with compassion. [Theirs is] a small world, but a rich one, and lovingly re-created by Adams in small-scale, understated, and domestic stories. It is,

however, also a world of tension. . . . The book's political subtext is clear. . . . If Adams has anything to learn as a writer, rather than as a politician, it is to give his opponents better lines. . . . About all the stories there is a certain elegiac quality, a sense that something is slipping away, being lost."

Adams won a seat in the Northern Ireland Assembly in 1998 and served for more than ten years. In 2011 he won a seat on the Irish Republic's House of Representatives. In 2009 Adams attended the inauguration of President Obama as the guest of a US congressman and in 2015 shook hands with Prince Charles, which was described as a symbolic gesture.

#### PERSONAL LIFE

Gerry Adams is tall, lean, black bearded, well groomed, and bespectacled. During his recent visit to the United States, one New York journalist described him as "reminiscent of Clint Eastwood," the rough-hewn American movie idol. His neat wardrobe ranges from tweed to corduroy and denim and includes a bullet-proof vest. Interviewers have described him as witty but "very serious," "quiet spoken with an analytical care that allows not a jot of the risin'-o'-the-moon bluster," as interested in talking about literature as about politics—and as a smoker of small cigars. Married to the former Colette

McArdle since 1971, Adams has three children. His family life, while dear to him, must be adapted to the exigencies of security, such as the necessity of constantly changing his abode. (His family home was the target of a terrorist bomb in 1993.) He travels outside nationalist areas only rarely, and then with great care and as much secrecy as possible. "But watching Adams in nationalist Belfast," Ronan Bennett observed in the *Guardian* (February 7, 1994), "one sees a different man: relaxed, warm, humorous . . . loved, even revered. There is no other way to describe it, and to say anything less would give a misleading—though comforting to some—impression of the man and the community that sustains him."

#### FURTHER READING

*Guardian* p7+ D 4 '93, pl+ F 2 '94 por; *N Y Daily News* p10+ Mr 17 '85 pors, p5+ F 2 '94 pors; *The New York Times* A p14 D 1 '93; *New Statesman* 6:13 Je 18 '93; *New Yorker* 70:58+ Ap 25 '94 por; Adams, Gerry. *Falls Memories* (1982), *Cage Eleven* (1990); *Cambridge Biographical Dictionary* (1990); Keena, Colm. *A Biography of Gerry Adams* (1990); White, Robert W. *Provisional Irish Republicans: An Oral and Interpretive History* (1993).

---

## AHMAD BIN YAHYA

### King and Imam of Yemen

**Born:** June 18, 1891; Alohnom, Ottoman Empire

**Died:** September 19, 1962; Yemen

#### INTRODUCTION

*The land of the Biblical Queen of Sheba—Yemen—at the southern tip of the Arabian peninsula, on the Red Sea, was ruled by King Ahmad, the Imam (leader of the Zeidi Sect of Moslems), an absolute monarch. Ahmad succeeded to the throne in March 1948 after the assassination of his father, the Imam Yahya. In April 1955 an Army revolt and the demand that Ahmad abdicate in favor of his brother Abdullah, was repulsed.*

*Despite overtures from Soviet leaders, and a renewal of a treaty with the U.S.S.R., it was announced on November 22, 1955 that Yemen had granted the first*

*exclusive oil and mineral concession in its history to an American company, the Yemen Development Corporation of Washington, D.C., which will share all net profits on a fifty-fifty basis with Yemen.*

*The ruling family of Yemen has held the imamah for over 1,000 years and traces its ancestry from the pre-Islamic Himyarite dynasty, rulers of Arabia Felix in the second to sixth centuries B.C. Mohammed's nephew Ali converted the Yemenis to the Moslem religion in the seventh century A.D. The country was controlled by the Ottoman Empire from 1536 to 1630. After a period of practical independence Turkey again seized control of Yemen in 1872. During World War I the Yemenis revolted against Turkey. In 1934 Yemen signed a treaty with Great Britain which recognized the Imam Yahya as King.*