

# FOIA MARKER

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**Folder Title:**

[Ireland]-London Bombing-US Government Statement, February 9, 1996

**Staff Office-Individual:**

Staff Director-Soderberg, Nancy

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| 001. letter              | Taoiseach to John Major (7 pages) | 02/11/1996 | P1/b(1) KGH 6/14/2023 |

### COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records  
National Security Council  
Staff Director (Nancy Soderberg)  
OA/Box Number: 1397

### FOLDER TITLE:

Ireland-London Bombing-U.S. Government Statement, February 9, 1996

2011-0355-F  
rs1683

### RESTRICTION CODES

#### Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

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RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

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- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

## **GUIDANCE ON BOMB IN LONDON**

**Q:** Comment on the explosion in London April 17?

**Background:** A bomb exploded in an empty house in the Earl's Court district of London late April 17. The explosion came half an hour after a warning call to a news agency using an IRA codeword. There are no reports that anyone was injured.

**A:** I am outraged by and strongly condemn the explosion of a bomb in London yesterday, apparently by the IRA. There can be no excuse for violence, for endangering lives and destroying property. I hope those responsible will be caught and prosecuted.

Talks on the future of Northern Ireland are set to start in less than 8 weeks, on June 10. That is the path to a just and lasting settlement and that is the path the overwhelming majority of the people have chosen. The few men of violence have no right to deny the people the peaceful future they deserve.

I will continue to do all that I can to help bring about a lasting peace in Northern Ireland. I urge all those who are committed to the peaceful path to redouble their efforts and seize the opportunity presented by the upcoming talks to create a future of hope and promise for themselves and their children.

TO: TL

FROM: NES  
MAP

Attached are points for the President to use on the bomb in London April 17. If he does not get the chance to make them to the press, we recommend that you issue the points as a statement.

## NORTHERN IRELAND/LONDON BOMBING

- Strongly condemn this attack. Hope those responsible brought to justice swiftly.
- Sympathy and prayers go out to victims and their families.
- Deeply concerned that IRA has announced end to cease-fire and taken responsibility for bombing. People of Northern Ireland clearly want peace. No one has right to deny them that.
- Cannot allow terrorists to derail a peace process so overwhelmingly supported by the people of Northern Ireland.
- Will do everything we can to assist the two governments in continuing their search for peace.

Will you revoke Adams' visa? Fundraising?

- It's premature to speculate on the implications of this event. First task is to identify and bring to justice those responsible.

Will you join the Irish and British Governments in refusing to meet with Adams until the cease-fire is restored?

- We are continuing to talk to all parties.
- No current meetings are planned with Adams.

Why did Adams call Lake? Did Lake have advance warning?

- He alerted us to disturbing rumors he was hearing, but nothing specific.
- Call came shortly before the bomb went off.

Do you have any regrets about issuing Adams a visa or your involvement in the peace process?

- No regrets about support we have given and will continue to give to search for lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

Is Adams in control of the IRA? Will you take sides against the IRA now?

- Really too soon to speculate on all the implications of this.

Does this mean there is a split in the IRA or that Adams knew about the blast?

- Simply do not know implications at this stage.

Will you press Adams to condemn bombing?

- We have condemned the bombing and believe everyone should. The most urgent task at hand is to get the cease-fire restored.

Does this mean IRA would have to decommission its weapons before all-party talks could begin?

- Premature to speculate or comment on what the eventual implications will be for the peace process.

Is cease-fire over?

- IRA issued a statement to that effect. The cease-fire must be restored. We will work to see but we hope the peace process back on track.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON NORTHERN IRELAND

Q: What is Administration response to the bombing?

A: President condemned it in strongest terms. Expressed sympathy to victims and families. Also stressed that terrorists cannot be allowed to derail a peace process so overwhelmingly supported by the people of Northern Ireland.

Q: Will Administration yank Adams' visa and his permission to raise funds?

A: Our first goal is to get the cease-fire restored and the peace process back on track. That is where our efforts are focused.

Q: But if the cease-fire is not restored soon, will you then revoke Adams' visa and remove his ability to raise funds?

A: Premature to write off the peace process or the chance to get it back on track. The goal now is to get the cease-fire restored and find a way forward to negotiations.

Q: Are you in touch with Adams?

A: We remain in contact with all parties in an effort to get things back on track. We have no current plans to meet with Adams or anyone else from Sinn Fein. Would note that British and Irish governments have said no *ministerial-level* meetings until cease-fire is restored, but some channels remain open.

Q: What about other Sinn Fein members who require waivers? Are any of them here now? Are they raising funds?

A: There is one Sinn Fein member here (Donaldson) but the purpose of his visit was keeping supporters informed, not fundraising. (Note: Howell, who also has a waiver, has told the embassy in Dublin he plans to come to NY to Thursday, stay until Sunday.)

As I said, we are focused now on getting the cease-fire restored and the peace process back on track. Our decisions on visas and other issues will depend on how that effort is going. Not going to pre-judge the outcome.

Q: Is there a split in the IRA? Is Adams in control?

A: Simply don't know answers to many of these questions. Does not appear to be a split in the IRA, but don't know how much leverage Adams has. Will have to wait and see.

Q: Did he know beforehand? What about his call to Tony Lake?

A: He did call Tony just before the bomb went off to say he had heard disturbing rumors, but no specifics. Don't know what he may have known or when.

Q: Have you pressed Adams to condemn the bombing?

A: We are focusing our efforts and influence on getting the cease-fire restored as the first order of business. We of course have condemned the bombing and believe everyone should.

Q: What about news stories that this was planned weeks or months ago, and Adams must have known?

A: Have seen those stories but don't know whether they are based on facts that we just don't have. It does appear that the truck used was stolen in Northern Ireland 3 weeks prior to the bombing, and I understand that it takes some time to prepare such an attack, but who had to know about it, and when a decision to do it was actually taken, I don't know.

Q: You say you are determined to get the peace process back on track? What exactly does that mean? Are we going to support Adams joining all-party talks as if nothing had happened?

A: We share the goal of the British and Irish governments, which is to get the process going again, with a cease-fire in place. As Prime Minister Major said to the House of Commons, yesterday, "there are ways forward to negotiations with all the parties, and these could include Sinn Fein, but only, of course, if there is an unequivocal return to the cease-fire."

We are in touch with the two governments and about how to do this. We have discussed it with party leaders, including UUP leader David Trimble earlier this week. There is wide agreement that this is the best option.

Q: Do you now support an elective process as the way forward?

A: We have always thought the elective process should be seriously considered and discussed. We have stayed away from endorsing any particular plan for getting to negotiations, but I think in the wake of the bombing there has been a lot of attention on how an elective process could be used to get back on track.

Q: But John Hume and Sinn Fein remain opposed to the idea. how can you move forward without Hume?

A: Discussions are continuing among the parties and governments. Based on everyone's desire to find a way forward, I think a way will be found. Obviously, Hume would have to agree to take part in an elective process or it would have little meaning.

Q: What about the Irish idea for proximity talks?

A: Again, we have not endorsed any particular scheme but have seen our role as encouraging everyone to keep on course. This idea is also on the table and I know the British and Irish governments are continuing to discuss it.

Q: What about decommissioning? Is it back on the table now?

A: No one has ever thought that decommissioning was not an issue. The Mitchell Report did not take it off the table; rather it recognized that the paramilitaries on both sides were not willing to decommission weapons before talks. The report suggested that decommissioning in parallel with talks should be considered as a way to deal with the issue.

Q: Does that mean parallel decommissioning will replace Washington 3 as a condition for talks?

A: No, I don't know how the issue will be dealt with, but it remains an issue and the Mitchell report suggests one way to handle it.

Q: What about the Mitchell report? Is a dead letter? Why did Major ignore it?

A: It remains very much a part of the process. It has been welcomed by governments and the parties, and contains a number of valuable ideas. We think it has made a significant contribution to the peace process.

Major did not ignore the report, in our view. Its central finding was that prior decommissioning, though desirable, was not realistic, and Major accepted that.

Q: Anything to news reports that President plans ask Senator Mitchell to go out as a special envoy?

A: Senator Mitchell already plans to be in London next week on other business. We think the British Government will want to talk to him while he is there, and I would expect him to go to Dublin for talks there too. Beyond that, there are no plans.

## Points for Use with Senator Kennedy on Libya

- I share the frustration that led you to sponsor the Libya amendment.
- It has had an impact. Both we and our Allies are focussed on the Libya problem.
- Now have first sign that the UK understands importance to us of strengthening sanctions.
- State Department is working on an initiative to get the votes for a new UN resolution that would expand sanctions.
- Don't know yet whether this will work. Will need to get Britain and France firmly on board.
- Now that your amendment has gotten peoples' attention, I ask that you give us time to get results in the Security Council.
- We stand the best chance, at this point, if the hammer of unilateral action is not about to fall on the Allies we need to make the Security Council work.
- Not suggesting you give us an unlimited amount of time; six months would be enough.
- The possibility that your amendment might reemerge will be enough to keep the UK and France focussed on the need for expanded sanctions.
- If our initiative has not succeeded in getting new sanctions against Libya, we would work with you on a bill that would be a more effective tool for pressuring Libya.
- We understand that Republicans on the HIRC do not want to sign on to anything the families have not endorsed.
- We do not want to let the families down.
- We do not think that this proposal would let the families down.
- If we get a new resolution in the Security Council, we will have squeezed Libya's long term oil production harder and handed Qadhafi a real defeat. That is our aim.
- If we fail, we will have legislation that imposes strong unilateral sanctions.

-- Most important, this approach would not endanger support for existing sanctions.

-- I believe that this protects interests of the families.

-- I hope you agree.

(If Sen. Kennedy does not agree to this proposal, we would be prepared to work with him now on an amendment that would require the President to impose sanctions on firms that violate existing UN sanctions against Libya.)

Irish Times 2/10/96

# Trimble says purpose is to halt elections

By Gerry Moriarty,  
in Belfast

UNIONIST politicians reacted with anger to the Canary Wharf bombing, and the IRA statement that its ceasefire was ended.

Mr David Trimble, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) leader, said that if the IRA was behind the bombing, it was clearly an act designed to prevent elections in Northern Ireland.

It was incredible that people who for the past 18 months were saying they wanted to enter the democratic process should be resorting to violence to stop democratic elections, he added.

Mr Trimble, speaking before flying out to the United States last night, said people should be reserved in their comments until

there was more reliable information from RUC and military intelligence.

The DUP leader, the Rev Ian Paisley, said the message must now go out that there could be no dealing with organisations which held on to, and used, bombs and guns. He believed that the statement genuinely came from the IRA.

"No man can be trusted until he brings forth the fruits of repentance," he said. The security authorities in Northern Ireland had been fooled by the IRA, although he believed that the security chiefs in Britain were aware that the ceasefire could end.

The Alliance Party leader, Dr John Alderdice, said the bombing and statement were profoundly depressing. The republican move-

ment must decide whether to condemn or condone the bombing. To condone it would set Sinn Féin "outside the pale of democracy again".

He continued: "This is a time for cool heads, for assessing the situation, and hopefully we will find that this is something that can be taken under control and dealt with quickly."

Mr Ken Maginnis, the Ulster Unionist Party spokesman on security, said that he had spent 18 months hoping against hope that he would be wrong when he predicted that the IRA ceasefire was nothing but an attempt by the IRA and Sinn Féin to create a tactical political advantage for Sinn Féin.

He said that for some months Sinn Féin had been distancing it-

self from the IRA so that it could state it regretted such incidents as happened at Canary Wharf last night, but that it understood why such a bombing should happen.

Mr Peter Robinson, the DUP deputy leader, said the IRA was not interested in peace.

Rather than accepting that unionists' reluctance to engage in all-party talks contributed to the bombing, Mr Robinson said that the refusal of "sensible unionists" to engage with Sinn Féin had been justified.

"It has shown very clearly that you cannot deal with these people, and they are still terrorists. Until they turn their back on terrorism, until they do decommission their arms, until their organisation has been stood

down, then I believe unionists will be more justified than ever in saying there can be only one route that brings Sinn Féin into the same room as unionists, and that is through an elected process," he added.

The message must also go out to the loyalist paramilitary organisations that they should not reply with a "kneejerk reaction" to the IRA. "They should hold their ceasefire," he said.

The Rev William McCrea, the DUP security spokesman, said that once again "IRA vermin" were threatening British citizens. "Every citizen must withstand the onslaught of republicanism. The government must permit the security forces to forcibly crush the rebellion in our midst," he added.

TO [initials]  
MAP -  
Perhaps we can use  
these smms  
to get him to  
talk about  
ways to a

# Sinn Fein leadership appears bewildered by ceasefire announcement

By Maol Muire Tynan,  
Political Reporter

THE Sinn Féin leadership seemed taken aback and confused in the immediate aftermath of last night's bomb attack on Canary Wharf. Within minutes of the IRA announcement that the "complete cessation of military operations" would end at 6 p.m., senior republican sources were expressing total bewilderment.

However, the precision and execution of the bomb attack would indicate that considerable planning went into the operation and that it had the imprimatur of the IRA leadership. The fact that the explosion happened within an

hour of the IRA statement also supports the view that it was a highly organised affair.

Replying to questions last night on RTE television, the Sinn Féin leader, Mr Gerry Adams, did not condemn the bombing but said he "presumed" that the IRA had carried out the attack.

He said he could not comment on rumour of a possible split, but said that efforts should be doubled after this event. His commitment to a peace settlement remained intact.

He said he was saddened by the turn in events, adding that an unprecedented chance for peace had foundered on the refusal of the British government to move to all-

party talks. The pursuit of the peace process remained Sinn Féin's main function.

Speculation that the attack might have been conducted by a splinter group within the republican movement has been treated coolly by most observers because of the very sophisticated nature of the incident. Well-placed republicans have been strongly denying suggestions of a split from the outset of the ceasefire and reiterated this belief in recent days.

One senior figure said in the early stages of the ceasefire that there would be no fracture and if the IRA decided to return to its campaign of violence, it would do so united.

## IRA call for Charlie Bird signalled end of ceasefire

By Alison O'Connor

THE first indication that the IRA ceasefire might be over came shortly after 5.30 p.m. yesterday.

A man claiming to be from the IRA rang the RTE newsroom and asked for special correspondent Charlie Bird.

The reporter who answered the telephone said Mr Bird was not in Montrose at that time. The man told the reporter the ceasefire was ending and he read out the text of a prepared statement.

When asked by the reporter to authenticate the statement the

caller gave a recognised IRA code name, and an associated code word. He also said the statement was signed by "P. O'Neill".

RTE thought it unusual that the name P. O'Neill was used in combination with the code name and code word.

The statement was not used at the beginning of the 6.01 News. The man called back RTE asking why it had not been broadcast. He was told the station was doing its best to authenticate the statement, but was not satisfied it had done so. He was asked could he authenticate it further.

After that call, the man made

contact with Mr Bird on his mobile telephone.

"The person I spoke to has proven to be very reliable in the past about information and statements emanating from the Irish republican movement," Mr Bird said. He added that information through "this particular channel" has always been correct.

At 6.58 p.m. RTE broadcast the statement. The bomb in Canary Wharf in London exploded at 7.01 p.m.

By then, other news organisations had received copies of the statement announcing the end of the ceasefire.

justice, says Clinton

# Clinton to intensify efforts for peace

## US President assures Major of commitment

From Conor O'Clery, in Washington

PRESIDENT Clinton, shaken by the breakdown in the IRA ceasefire, has urged the British Prime Minister, Mr Major, not to be distracted from the peace process, a senior US official said yesterday.

The White House is working on the assumption that the IRA bomb in London was a "one-off", and will intensify its efforts during the week to get the process back on track, the official said.

Mr Clinton will meet Mr David Trimble today when the Ulster Unionist leader comes to the White House for a working lunch with the National Security Adviser, Mr Anthony Lake. The visit was arranged some weeks ago.

Mr Trimble will also meet Senator George Mitchell, whose name featured in weekend reports that a senior administration official would go to Downing Street to help restore momentum to the process.

Mr Mitchell will be in London next week in his capacity as chairman of the International Crisis Group, a recently formed body which tries to identify conflicts before they occur.

He had been expected to meet Mr Major while there to follow up the report of the international body on arms which he chaired.

There was also speculation over the weekend that Mr Lake might visit Britain in the near future to discuss the crisis, but no decision has yet been made on this, the administration official said.

day with some 30 representatives of Irish America, at which assurances were given of the administration's full commitment to the peace process and continuing regard for Mr Adams as a key player.

The officials included Ms Nancy Soderberg of the National Security Council, the Commerce Secretary, Mr Ron Brown, the deputy assistant to the President for legislative affairs, Ms Susan Brophy, and Ms Martha Pope, deputy to Mr Mitchell in his capacity as special economic envoy to Ireland.

"They seem fully aware that Gerry Adams is in a very difficult position," said one of those who participated.

"They agreed that if Gerry Adams is out of the picture there is no peace process."

The White House spoke to the Sinn Féin leader several times on Friday and again on Saturday as officials "reviewed the situation and tried to establish how best to move forward".

Mr Lake telephoned Mr Trimble on Friday to reiterate the importance of coming to Washington despite the crisis.

Mr Trimble arrived on Saturday evening, accompanied by Mr Ken Maginnis, the party spokesman on security, and the party secretary, Mr Jeffrey Donaldson.

Mr Lake, who has compared the peace process to a bicycle which falls over if it goes too slowly, will want to talk to Mr Trimble on how to move things forward, the official said.

administration official said.  
Mr Clinton said on Saturday that he telephoned both Mr Major and the Taoiseach and assured both "that America would continue to be committed to work for a negotiated, secure, peace".  
"I am determined to do all that I can to see that the enemies of peace do not succeed," he said.  
"We will not stop in our efforts until peace has been secured."

Administration officials organised a conference call on Saturday.

In a statement on Saturday, Mr Clinton said the real differences in the world "are not between Catholics and Protestants, Arabs and Jews, Muslims, Croats and Serbs. They are between those who embrace peace and those who reject it, those who look to the future and those who are blinded by the hatreds of the past, those who open their arms and those who are determined to keep clenching their fists."

*Nancy -  
This is the  
article that  
sent K-S member  
to you. SB*

### 'Restore ceasefire'

THE statement issued by the Government on Saturday:

The Cabinet Sub-Committee on Northern Ireland has carried out a detailed review of all aspects of the current situation.

The Government note with profound regret the statement announcing the ending of the IRA's complete cessation of hostilities. They unreservedly condemn last night's bombing in London and express their deep sympathy, on behalf of the Irish people, to the victims of that act of violence and to their families.

On 1st November, 1982, the Taoiseach of that day said:

"It is not possible to adopt the pretence of being democratic, while simultaneously striking at the right to life and freedom which are the very basis of democracy."

Violence, and the threat of violence, have no place in democratic negotiation. Nothing can justify a resort to violence in an attempt to override the democratic political process.

The Government's search for an inclusive process of negotiation was based on a clear commitment by the IRA to a total cessation of violence. The fact that that commitment has now been revoked alters the situation fundamentally.

The Government believe that democratic negotiation is the only method by which the division in Northern Ireland can be healed and permanent peace restored. Only those who take no part in violence, in the threat of violence,

or in the support of violence, can take part in democratic negotiation.

The great majority of the people of this island, the broad sweep of nationalist opinion in Northern Ireland, and Irish-America — all have invested in the peace that resulted from the IRA cessation of violence. The ending of that cessation shatters the hopes of all those who invested in peace and worked for democratic political progress.

The ceasefire of August 1994 was the key enabling event which permitted a whole range of top level political contacts and developments to take place.

The Government have noted Mr Adams' request for a meeting.

The Government want the IRA ceasefire to be restored immediately.

The basis for previous Government meetings with Sinn Féin was that a total cessation of IRA violence was already in place. That policy enjoyed support because it showed that violence was not an acceptable method of promoting a political programme. We are concerned to ensure that any meeting with Sinn Féin should be consistent with that long-standing policy.

The Government remain resolute in their determination to end terrorism from whatever source and have already commenced a full review of security towards that end. Close co-operation will be maintained with all relevant governments.

10th February, 1996

*Test times  
12/2/96*

→ Nancy Soderberg

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RTE-1 TV NEWS AT 6:00 PM

"Government not to talk to Sinn Fein until cease fire resumes." Cable follows.

Taoiseach has said that only those who take no part in violence and the threat of violence can take part in democratic negotiations. In response to the Sinn Fein request for a meeting, Bruton said until there is a cessation of violence, the government is not in a position to conduct meetings of the kind requested.

Bruton now briefing opposition leaders Bertie Ahern and Mary Harney on the situation. Meetings at Government buildings are continuing.

Repeated statements heard earlier from Taoiseach, and Tanaiste and de Rossa en route to cabinet meeting.

New Statement by Taoiseach: After the sub-committee cabinet meeting ended a three-page statement was issued: Government position hardened during the day ... statement referred to by newscaster as "uncompromising":

"Nothing can justify violence in an attempt to override the democratic political process. The government's search for an inclusive process of negotiation was based on a clear commitment by the IRA to a total cessation of violence. The fact that that commitment has been revoked alters the situation fundamentally."

Pressure is now being exerted in tandem from the Government and opposition and from London and Washington on the Republican movement to return to the peace process and give up violence. If this doesn't happen, doors opened on both sides of the Atlantic will close.

**Bruton told RTE later:** We want to see the killing stopped... We want the IRA stop their campaign. One of the incentives, in fact in one sense, the only incentive offered to get killing stopped, back in August, was that as a result of it, it was possible for Sinn Fein political leaders to have unrestricted access to the leading figures in the Irish Government to the White House in America and so on. As this is the incentive that is available, indeed the only incentive we have to bring the republican movement back to path of peace, we want to use it most effectively. So we're saying to Gerry Adams, 'yes, we do want to meet you, but we want you to help us to meet you by stopping the IRA campaign, by doing what you can do now, to stop the IRA campaign first.'

→ Nancy Soderbergmore "prick a dirty"  
coverage of media  
reports. Dick N.

16

**Bertie Ahern:**

Sinn Fein still has a significant role to play. I would like to see Sinn Fein meeting with both governments now explaining how they see the situations. I think that both governments should meet Sinn Fein to see what is happening. Standoffs will achieve nothing. Vacuums have always proved to be a major problem in Northern Ireland. Vacuum created now will do no good for the peace process.

pan-nationalist  
coalition starting  
to form?  
Govt. is meeting  
with the  
opposition this  
evening...

**President Clinton's statement shown —**

**Congressman Peter King's statement from DC shown:** British have to bear a share of the responsibility

**O'Dowd from "Irish Voice":** increasing pressure has caused this...with goodwill of all parties, this can be put together again.

**Newscaster says:** President and advisors trying to revive the peace process. What will the Americans do. Seems likely that Mitchell and Lake will soon travel to NI and Britain to help pick up the pieces.

**Gerry Adams:**

Acknowledged that ceasefire was over. "It would be very easy for me to engage in ritualistic, selective condemnation. I've denounced...different elements to the heavens. But it's no substitute for action. On a personal level of course I regret what happened...and have a deep sympathy with those who were injured. My commitment is to see that this doesn't happen again. It will be dangerous but we have to try and move the process forward. The blame falls squarely on British with their high risk strategy...stretched it like a piece of elastic...it broke last night. How do we deal with it? By going to the two governments. There's no point in going to the IRA at this time. They clearly having shown discipline and patience....for 18 months have now once again taken their own counsel and made their own judgment. It's More important to talk to those with a political mandate and political responsibility.

**Newscaster says:** It's hard to see where the process goes from here. Crumb of comfort is that loyalist paramilitaries have indicated they will refrain from violence. There's undisguised despair among senior Sinn Fein figures tonight as they assess the chances that by their actions the IRA have once again consigned them to the political margins.

CC TO R/mt  
+ return

Nancy Bodderley

a rough transcript of a Gerry Adams interview.  
DTE. N. 11.1

14

Gerry Adams on Sky News at 3:00 p.m. Irish Time 2/10/96

Said he didn't know about the bombing. Called White House because SF had "picked up the news" that something was up. He "did my duty" by contacting various parties. Expresses his sympathy. All of those of us "in political life" have a great responsibility. My commitment is to dialogue, democratic assessment, and a negotiated outcome.

**Q: Why didn't you contact the British government if you called others?**

I have told Patrick Mayhew about the "undermining of my position" and told British government about how serious our position was. British government were only too aware. John Major's "high risk gamble" is part of what got us here today.

Responsibility is squarely with IRA. I must examine if there was something else I could have done over last 18 months. John Major has to do the same thing.

**Q: Why can't you condemn the outrage?**

You have to allow me to use my own formulations of words to describe my attitude to these incidents. We must address these incidents with an aim to moving things forward. It wouldn't help me with those people {who were against stopping the violence} one bit. The last 18 months showed that the British government has put in a new pre-condition three months into it.

**Q: Do you think it was wrong, are you angry?**

I'm sad. I've never sought to condone any IRA operation, especially those that inadvertently harmed civilians. We need to return to dialogue. Jaw, jaw has stretched the patience of certain people. Need to get back to negotiations

**Q: Will this bomb move the British Government along? It will only delay it.**

I don't speak for IRA. SF response is that we are deeply wedded to the peace strategy. Our main function as a political party. Mr. Major must grasp this. I'm prepared to meet him more than half way.

**Q: What message do you have for the IRA:**

I'm going to be involved I hope with British and Irish governments. I've spoken to Hume this morning. How I address those matters publically requires more contemplation by me.

CC MAD  
TZ  
+ return

AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN

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PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

12 February 1996

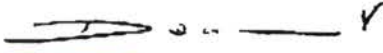
Ms Nancy Soderberg  
Deputy Assistant to the President  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
WASHINGTON Dc 20500

Dear Nancy

I thought you might like to have, on a strictly confidential basis, copy of a letter which the Taoiseach sent to John Major yesterday evening.

Let's stay in touch today.

Yours sincerely

  
Dermot Gallagher  
Ambassador

12/02/96

11:17

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11-FEB-96 SUN 22:21

TAOISEACH'S OFFICE

TEL NO. 353 1 6764048

NO. 650

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P. 02

11-FEB-96 21:14

353 1 6764048

FAX NO. ... 353 1 6764048

P. 02



Offis an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

February, 1996.

11 February

Right Honourable John Major, MP,  
Prime Minister.

Dear *John* *John*

I found our phone conversation this afternoon very useful. I agree fully on the desirability of maintaining the closest possible co-operation between our two Governments at this difficult time. I am also glad that we are in agreement on the need for an early meeting between us. As I said, it would be helpful if we could both see clearly the likely outcome of such a meeting before making an announcement.

Firstly our Summit must avoid any outcome which can be presented as going ahead regardless, without Sinn Féin. Our priority now is to stop the IRA campaign. This means that, if we cannot have the ceasefire reinstated before our meeting, we must make an announcement at the meeting that offers a positive way forward. This way forward must be one that Sinn Féin could

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11-FEB-96 SUN 22:21

TAOISEACH'S OFFICE

FAX NO. 353 1 8764048

NO. 650 003  
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Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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honourably join, and into which they would be accepted by the other participants, once the IRA campaign is over. In other words, we should aim to announce a contingent package or process, the contingency being the end of violence.

*! election talks* → As to the content of the package, we discussed a number of possible elements. You told me that you had been close to agreement with the Unionists on how an elected body would lead directly and immediately into inclusive negotiations, in which the Unionists would agree in advance to participate. I am glad that you still believe such a package is achievable and that you are determined to work for it.

*Amint* You mentioned that the consent principle was a problem for the Unionists in this regard. We would need to consider how this problem could be overcome in so far as it is relevant to the process of negotiation. As you know, the consent principle has been accepted by all parties in our Forum for Peace and

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TAOISEACH'S

FAX NO. 353 1 6764048

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Offis an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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Reconciliation, with the exception of Sinn Féin. I do not see any short term prospect of Sinn Féin's view changing on this point. There is, however, a realistic awareness on the part of the Sinn Féin leadership that this consent principle will be fundamental in the approach of all other parties to the negotiations. It will therefore inevitably be reflected in the outcome of the negotiations.

*talks / 25*

It is also important, from a number of points of view, that the election should flow from talks of some kind. These initial talks would serve the purpose, at the very minimum, of enabling the two Governments to clear up doubts and misunderstandings in the minds of the participants about what was proposed. These initial talks would also enable us to discuss how the principles and modalities of the Mitchell Report would fit into the "elective process/negotiations" scenario. Unless there is some general understanding on this issue in advance, there is a real danger that decommissioning-type stand-offs will completely paralyse the negotiations. We would not want

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Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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decommissioning issues to become the sole focus of an election campaign. It would therefore be best to have some understanding about them beforehand - at least between ourselves and preferably between the parties.

There will also be the question of North/South relations in the context of any elected body. It is important that we should be clear in advance as to how such a body would meet the criteria so carefully set out in the Mitchell Report.

North/South relations must be independent of and not contingent on majority agreement within the body. This will require careful planning.

Then there is a matter of the system of election. There are a wide variety of options being canvassed. Each party has its own preference.

I cannot tell you exactly what the SDLP's preference would be, but I believe it is at the moment radically different from what is envisaged by the Unionists.



Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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Announcing any proposal for an election without a settled approach on this point could be very dangerous.

As I have said earlier, we feel that it will be difficult to achieve agreement on all the complex issues involved unless we bring parties into one convenient venue, to allow intensive consultations, without, however, face-to-face meetings except among those who want them. If there is a speedier and more effective way of doing this, we are, of course, open to that.

I would stress that many of the issues you were negotiating with the Unionist parties are also of great concern to the Irish Government, and we would not wish to be faced with any fait accompli on issues of such importance to us. !

Because of the importance of our close co-operation, I believe we must also pay great attention to the presentational aspects which arise in each of our constituencies. I have drawn clear lines between my approach to Sinn Féin in

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TAOISEACH

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Oifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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a ceasefire situation, and the one I take when a ceasefire is revoked. At the same time, as we agreed, neither of us is in the business of unnecessarily slamming doors. The presentation of the election process needs to take account of the justifiable fears of nationalist politicians in Northern Ireland, who, as the people who would actually have to stand for election, will have the final say. The elective approach should not be presented as a foregone conclusion, or a policy to be imposed.

Before we meet, we should try to reach agreement on these and all other relevant points. This could be quite difficult, not least because some of the work to be done is technically complex.

For these reasons, I would prefer if the necessary preparatory work for our Summit was further advanced by our officials before any announcement of a precise date.



Óifig an Taoisigh  
Office of the Taoiseach

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I hope you will find a means, in your address to Parliament tomorrow, to take account of the sensitivities I mentioned to you about matters such as an election and proximity talks. We need to ensure that we have the maximum convergence of language on these matters.

*With warmest regards*

Yours sincerely,

*John*  
Taoiseach

Embassy

P.1  
 NSC: Nancy Soderberg.  
 RTE transcript of  
 2/10/96 2pm (Irish Time)  
 interview with Adams.

Dick Norland.

0/02/96 14:52 odd 7:?? !22-ADAMS CR

DAMS CREDIT SATURDAY VIEW - CHECK WITH RADIO DESK FOR RECORDING

The Sinn Fein president, Gerry Adams, has said there is a "tremendous onus" on all who played a central role in building the peace process to redouble their efforts to salvage it.

Speaking on RTE Radio's "Saturday View" programme, Mr Adams said: "We're in a very grave situation and we need to use our combined efforts and energies to take us out of this."

He added that the best way forward was through talks and dialogue and that the quicker that happened, the better.

Responding to requests that he criticise last night's bomb, Mr Adams said he is a democratic politician, committed to a peace process and a settlement. He said he was prepared to consider if he could have done more over the last eighteen months in terms of consolidating that process.

Pressed on the condemnation issue, Mr Adams said: "If the focus remains on the past, the past will become the future." He said that what happened last night was "very regrettable" and that he wanted to make sure that it never happens again.

Asked was he surprised by the bomb, Mr Adams said the IRA had never consulted Sinn Fein about operational matters, and that he would not like to see the party involved in those matters.

He said Sinn Fein was "totally committed" to a democratic resolution of this conflict and that they view negotiations as the way of ending that conflict.

He said the IRA was not defeated in August 1994 any more than the Loyalists or the British were, but that he and John Hume were able to persuade "physical force republicans" that there was an alternative way forward. He said he believed they had made a judgement that there was no evidence or encouragement that alternative argument.

Asked if he believed there was a split, Mr Adams said: "I would think that the IRA are united. They showed remarkable unity over the last eighteen months. It may be a good thing; I tend to think that it is."

AMBASÁID NA HÉIREANN

TELEPHONE: (202) 462-3939

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EMBASSY OF IRELAND

2234 MASSACHUSETTS AVE., N.W.

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20008

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2 FEB '96 (MON) 17:24

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## **STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE PROCESS**

With permission, Madam Speaker, I will make a statement on the bomb explosion in the South Quay area of London last Friday, the declared end to the IRA ceasefire and the implications for security and the peace process in Northern Ireland.

There is no doubt the evil act in London was the work of the IRA. It has all the hallmarks of their operations with the callous sacrifice of innocent lives.

The bomb followed shortly after an IRA statement, given to the Irish broadcasting organisation on the evening of 9 February, that the complete cessation of hostilities ordered in August 1994 was now at an end. The IRA admitted their responsibility on 10 February.

The facts of the incident are briefly these. Around 1745 last Friday warning calls were made that a large bomb had been placed at South Quay Station, Marsh Wall in London. Local police arrived at the scene shortly after six o'clock, and Anti-Terrorist Branch officers shortly after that.

At around 1830 a suspect vehicle, a Ford flat-backed lorry, was identified, and the immediate area cleared. While the area was being evacuated, the vehicle exploded, causing extensive damage to buildings in the area, and a large number of casualties.

Two people were killed, and 43 injured, 2 critically. Three police officers were among the casualties. The House will join me in extending our deepest sympathy to all the innocent victims and their families. It is little short of a miracle that the casualty list was not much longer.

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I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of the emergency services. Despite being hampered by a fractured gas main at the scene, they responded magnificently and they richly deserve all our thanks.

Madam Speaker, this may not be the last such atrocity. More may follow, both here in the mainland and in Northern Ireland if the IRA ceasefire is not renewed. We will do all we can to prevent them and to catch all those responsible. The protection of the public will be our first priority.

*In Great Britain*  
~~On the mainland~~, security has immediately returned to pre-ceasefire levels. In Northern Ireland itself, we had been careful from the very first moment of the ceasefire to take no irreversible steps to downgrade our security capability. All necessary measures to cope with the present situation are now in place. The RUC is on full alert. We have sought to make an appropriate and proportionate response to the increased threat without disrupting daily life more than necessary.

Madam Speaker, the IRA has brought the 17 month old ceasefire to an end. There is no shred of an excuse for this return to violence, least of all now, when all-party negotiations were clearly in sight.

After the August 1994 ceasefire declaration, we called repeatedly on the IRA to make clear that it was permanent, despite criticism by some for doubting IRA good faith. We did doubt their good faith, and the IRA did not say it was permanent. Nonetheless, after a prudent period of time, in order to move the process forward, we were prepared to act on the working assumption that the ceasefire would last.

In the months that followed we reduced the more visible and inconvenient aspects of security.

We took soldiers off the streets and opened all the border crossing points.

We did everything possible to create new jobs in Northern Ireland

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through renewed inward investment and helped to produce a remarkable economic upsurge.

We talked to Sinn Fein leaders at official and ministerial level.

We constantly sought to move the peace process on to the all-party negotiations everyone agrees are necessary.

No-one, ~~no-one~~, took more risks for peace than this Government. But we never lost sight of the fact that the IRA commitment had not been made for good. No responsible government could have done otherwise.

That was why we and others saw a start to the decommissioning of illegal arms as a way of creating confidence in Sinn Fein's acceptance of democratic peaceful methods, and showing that the violence really had ended.

But all the time that Sinn Fein were calling for all-party talks, we knew that the IRA continued to train and plan for terrorist attacks. Punishment beatings and killings continued. They remained ready to resume full-scale terrorism at any time. We could never be confident their behaviour was that of an organisation which had decided to renounce violence for ever. This was not a true peace. ?

Madam Speaker, I regret to say that the events of last Friday showed that our caution about the IRA was only too justified. The timing of the return to violence may have been surprising. The fact that violence could resume was not.

Madam Speaker, we must now continue the search for permanent peace and a comprehensive political settlement in Northern Ireland. Let there be no doubt that the Government's commitment to this is as strong as ever.

We will work for peace with all the democratic political parties and with the Irish Government. But a huge question mark now hangs over the position of one of the parties: Sinn Fein. Their leaders have

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spoken often of their commitment to peace and peaceful methods. But they have always ducked and weaved when they have been questioned about the IRA and their methods. After the events of last Friday their ambiguity stands out starkly.

The test for eligibility to take part in all party negotiations was set by the British and Irish Governments in paragraph 10 of the Downing Street Declaration: they should be democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process.

Sinn Fein's leaders claim that they did not know about the bomb at South Quay and the IRA's ceasefire statement. But they have refused either to condemn or to dissociate themselves from either. Madam Speaker, Sinn Fein must decide whether they are a front for the IRA or a democratic political party committed to the ballot not the bullet.

Meanwhile, one thing is clear. In the absence of a genuine end to this renewed violence, meetings between British Ministers and Sinn Fein are not acceptable and cannot take place.

That is also the position of the Irish Government. They have made it clear to Sinn Fein that their attitude and willingness to meet at political level will be determined by whether the IRA ceasefire is restored. We and the Irish Government are at one on this: the ball is in the court of Sinn Fein and the IRA, if indeed that distinction means anything.

It is for them to show, through their words and actions, whether they have a part to play in the peace process or not. I am not in the business of slamming doors. But the British and Irish peoples need to know where Sinn Fein now stand.

Madam Speaker, the people of a democracy are not passive spectators to events. They have the right to make their views clear on issues like this. The people of Northern Ireland, from both communities, have consistently done so. The popular will for peace has never been clearer.

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The peace process will go on. I commend all those who have had the courage and sense, in the face of this latest atrocity, to work to prevent a wider return to violence.

My right hon Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and I have met all the parties in the last two weeks. This process will be intensified with those parties which have not, for the present, disqualified themselves. The aim is, as it has always been, to establish the necessary confidence to enable negotiations between all the parties to start.

I want everyone to be absolutely clear on this point. The objective of all our actions and policies before and since the ceasefire has been to get to a position where all constitutional democratic parties can get round a table together. Everything else is a means to that essential end.

I told the House on 24 January that, if the paramilitaries would not start decommissioning their illegal arms, one alternative way forward was through elections to give the electoral mandates and confidence which could lead straight, and straightaway, to negotiations. As proposed by the Mitchell report, decommissioning could go ahead in parallel with these negotiations.

This proposal has been consistently misrepresented by Sinn Fein and misunderstood more widely. I repeat now that its purpose is to lead directly and speedily to negotiations between all parties committed to peaceful and democratic methods, aimed at reaching a comprehensive political settlement. An elected body would have to be broadly acceptable and would be strictly time-limited. I am not proposing an Assembly with legislative and administrative powers. Any suggestion of a return to old-style Stormont rule is manifest nonsense.

The proposed elections are a door to full negotiations. I continue to believe that they provide the most promising opening available. We will pursue this proposal and seek to persuade all concerned that it is indeed a way forward, not a means of delaying progress.

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Madam Speaker, our ideas are still in discussion with the parties. But I do want to assure the House that there are ways forward to negotiations with all the parties, and that these could include Sinn Fein but only, of course, if there is an unequivocal return to the ceasefire.

Others have ideas too, including the Irish Government. Our minds are not closed. Nor, I know, are theirs. I have talked to the Taoiseach twice since the bombing. We plan to meet in London soon to discuss all the possibilities. I intend to find a way through to the negotiations with all those committed to democracy.

Madam Speaker, the peace process in Northern Ireland has received a serious setback from the men of violence. But it is not over, not by any means.

We have seen the benefits of what has been achieved since the ceasefire: the freedom to live and work normally, and to enjoy life; increased prosperity and new jobs; new hope for the future. These must not be thrown away.

Madam Speaker, this Government will not be deterred by terrorism. The people of Northern Ireland have tasted peace, a peace that changed their lives. I have told the House before that I will leave no stone unturned in the search for peace. That is true today and will remain true in the future.

The people of Great Britain and Northern Ireland deserve no less.

# Fax Cover Page

## Friends of Sinn Fein

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Mairead Keane,  
Sinn Fein Representative to the United States

|                                                  |                                               |
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S. Keane

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Nuacht raiteas/News release

For immediate release: 15/2/96

Embargoed until 7 pm

Sinn Féin President Gerry Adams speaking tonight in West Belfast said:

"Last June I had the great privilege to meet President Nelson Mandela. I travelled to South Africa at the invitation of the ANC to meet its leadership, as well as other parties, including the National Party, to learn about their process of negotiation.

I learned many things on that trip. I have often spoken of the dangers and risks here in making peace but for me it was all summed up in one small phrase by President Mandela: *"To make peace with an enemy one must work with that enemy, and that enemy becomes one's partner"*.

### **British Bad Faith**

For many years Sinn Féin has sought through patient but intense dialogue to engage with our opponents, to exchange views, debate the issues and to build with them a permanent and democratic peace through agreement. 18 months ago when John Hume and I, along with Albert Reynolds and elements of Irish America persuaded the IRA to call a complete cessation we did so on the basis of a clear commitment by all the major Irish nationalist parties to pro-actively pursue a new, negotiated and democratic political arrangement.

In addition and crucially, there was a public commitment by the British government to convene with the Irish government the necessary peace talks to achieve this agreement. That was a year and a half ago. The commitments given then have not been honoured. In 18 months there has not been one word of negotiation.

### **High Risk Strategy**

On the contrary the British government has been engaged in a very high risk strategy to stall and string out the peace process, stretching it like a piece of elastic. It has engaged in the classic British counter-insurgency strategy of divide and rule. It has used one stalling device

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and precondition after another to undermine and fracture the nationalist consensus in order to prevent inclusive dialogue. Why? Because negotiations frighten this British government.

People in Britain must by now be asking if John Major is afraid of sitting down in an inclusive political process to discuss real and fundamental political, democratic and constitutional change in all the relationships in this island and between the people of Ireland and Britain. Until now the British government has refused to address the injustices and inequalities which led to conflict.

### **British Failures**

The list of British failures is depressingly long and well known.

1. No movement on the central issue of an inclusive political process in which all parties with a democratic mandate can participate as equals.
2. No movement towards all party peace talks which are essential for political settlement. On the contrary, two pre-conditions - the surrender of IRA weapons - and elections to a unionist quango have now been introduced. John Major has bought off unionist support at Westminster for a return to Stormont.
3. The British have reneged on and broken every commitment they have made both in public and private.
4. The Mitchell report on decommissioning and the twin track process itself was unilaterally dumped by John Major.
5. Sinn Fein and our voters are still treated as second class citizens.
6. British troop levels which remained throughout 1995 at their 1992 level and which continued to train and patrol in parts of the north, have now been strengthened.
7. The civilian population continues to be used as human shields by British forces.
8. There has been additional spending on military installations and only a tactical reduction in military bases.

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9. There has been no change in the RUC and no meaningful debate on policing.
10. The British deny having political prisoners.
11. Prison conditions for Irish political prisoners in Britain have significantly worsened.
12. The British continue to stall on a meaningful approach to the request for the transfer of Irish prisoners back from Britain.
13. The British government introduced a conditional 50% remission scheme for prisoners. This means in practice that only an additional 40 republican prisoners will be released over the next 5 years. An average of 8 a year.
14. British paratrooper, Lee Clegg, was released by the British after serving just two years of a life sentence for the murder of a teenage girl in West Belfast. He was welcomed back into the Parachute regiment and promoted.
15. The RUC escorted Orange marches through nationalist areas.
16. The RUC continues to attack peaceful nationalist demonstrators.
17. Plastic bullets are still seriously injuring people.
18. Harassment continues. People are assaulted. Young people in particular are targetted for harassment and abuse.
19. The British continue to block efforts to get at the truth behind collusion between elements of the British forces and the loyalist death squads. This collusion saw weapons being shipped in from south Africa and information on potential targets being supplied by British intelligence to the death squads.
20. Repression continues. The various wide ranging special laws, the Prevention of Terrorism Act and the Emergency Provisions Act have been renewed.
21. There is no change in the special non-jury Diplock courts.
22. Irish language schools continue to be denied proper funding.

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23. There is no peace dividend for areas of deprivation. Not one new job in West Belfast.

24. Catholics are still victims of discrimination.

25. Families whose loved ones were killed by the British forces are still denied access to the facts. The inquest system effectively hides the truth.

### **Sinn Féin's Positive Approach**

For our part Sinn Féin has demonstrated a real and determined commitment to democratic negotiations. We have sought at all times to play a positive and constructive role in every effort that has been made to reach a settlement, even when we clearly had concerns about those efforts.

Unlike others we have been prepared to engage in talks with anyone or any group without preconditions.

We joined the Forum for Peace and Reconciliation and played a full and active part in it.

Sinn Féin played a full part in the twin track approach and engaged with the Mitchell body, producing a submission which was well received and acknowledged as a positive contribution to the search for a resolution of this issue.

### **Unionists**

Sinn Féin has always stressed the need for unionist involvement in the peace process. We cannot make peace without them. Efforts to marginalise or to ignore or to exclude other political opinion does not work. It is also undemocratic. So every effort has to be made to involve the unionists. But the unionist refusal to engage cannot become a block on political negotiations or a veto on political progress. The unionist resistance to negotiations, which is consistent with their political position, has been a flag of convenience for the British government.

The British government committed itself to encourage, enable and facilitate agreement among the Irish people but there has not been any attempt by John Major or his ministers to encourage the unionists to

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engage in the search for agreement.

On the contrary, the unionists have been encouraged not to engage in the peace process, as the British contrived preconditions to which the unionists dutifully signed up. Unionist leaders refused to talk. They were backed by the British government and they were then rewarded for not negotiating with the promise of elections to a new Stormont. In contrast those who have been willing to engage have been penalised and marginalised.

The unionists, even at this late stage, and in the interests of their own electorate, should engage positively in the search for an agreed settlement. The gloating and the glee with which some unionist politicians greeted the ending of the IRA cessation is itself evidence of their negative approach to the peace process. In effect their actions ensured that their prophecies were self fulfilling.

### **An Elected Body**

In the present already dangerous and difficult climate, any willingness by Dublin to accept the Unionist election proposal would not auger well for the period ahead. What is required is a determination to rebuild the peace process rather than concessions to the British and unionist position.

Dublin's rejection of this proposal was welcomed by Irish nationalist and democratic opinion. The election was clearly another stalling device, designed to push back all-party talks.

The British government is now saying that an election would lead directly and immediately into all-party talks. 18 months ago the British gave a similar commitment and they then reneged. In November they said that all-party talks would begin by the end of February. They then reneged on this commitment also.

Michael Ancram's comments today were an unintentional but clear insight into British thinking. British government references to all-party talks are in fact references to talks involving all parties, except Sinn Fein. The British government intend to try to exclude Sinn Fein. Indeed, it is clear that the British want Sinn Fein to be excluded from their proposed election process also. Such bare-faced disenfranchising of our electorate, of whole nationalist communities, would be a recipe for disaster. The alienation and disaffection with electoralism which would result is unthinkable.

**Irish government**

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I want to reply to the speech by Mr Bruton in Leinster House on Tuesday. When Mr Bruton took over as Taoiseach he inherited a peace process which had been developed to the point where John Major had made clear commitments to begin substantive talks, an alternative to the IRA campaign had been established and the IRA and then the loyalists had been persuaded to end their campaigns. Cessations do not constitute peace. They were not the end of a peace process but an important phase of it.

When I first spoke to Mr Bruton I spelt out to him in great detail the basis for the IRA cessation. Others did so also. I recommended that he and his senior officials brief themselves fully on the substance of the consensus which had persuaded the IRA to call its cessation. I stressed the need for the peace process to be consolidated, for the Irish government to stand up to the British government and to prevent any preconditions being introduced by Mr Major.

The last eighteen months were a learning process for everyone concerned. The experience and lessons of successful peace processes elsewhere, and indeed it is the tragic lesson of the Irish one, is that conflicts can only be democratically resolved when the process for resolution is inclusive, without preconditions, and with all main players accepting and fulfilling their responsibilities in an urgent way. If the British government was not engaging in the process in a meaningful way - and they ceased to do so soon after the cessation - then the onus to provide leadership fell more and more heavily upon the Irish government. Dublin had to work doubly hard, and be seen to do so, to fill the vacuum created by the British.

Physical force republicans had been persuaded to end an armed campaign despite their distrust of British intentions and their natural scepticism about the ability or willingness of the Irish establishment to face up to the British establishment. That they did so for eighteen months should not be devalued. That this endured despite provocation and a clear lack of serious involvement by the British or unionists should not be underestimated.

There is a natural tendency for everyone concerned to seek to avoid blame for the breakdown in the peace process. There is also a more dangerous temptation to seek to blame others. This should be avoided. Unfortunately the Taoiseach by his statements has sought to hold me and Sinn Fein accountable for last Friday night's IRA explosion. Furthermore he has excluded me, our party and its electorate from

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normal political contact on that basis. He says that he will talk to me as soon as I "go to the IRA and succeed in getting them to say that they will stop killing people". He has not told me how I should proceed to do this; or what will happen if I fail.

### **Need for Strategic Thinking**

Neither has he shown any understanding of the difficulties which British bad faith has created for all of us. This is a time for clear heads and steady nerves. In my last conversations with the Taoiseach, as in previous conversations, I argued the need for strategic thinking by the government. I pointed out the dangers inherent in British brinkmanship and of the need to stand up to unionist intransigence. The Taoiseach knows how the British frustrated every effort to get them to engage properly. He knows also how the unionist leaders, particularly those in whom he had some faith, failed to live up to their responsibilities. He knew that the precondition of decommisioning was a formula for disaster. He must know also what must be done to correct all of this.

None of this is offered as justification for the tragedy of Friday nights IRA bombing or to blame anyone other than those who have accepted responsibility for it. I want to restate the obvious. The IRA is responsible for the explosion on Friday night. No one else should be expected to assume that responsibility. But all of us do have to accept responsibility for our stewardship of the peace process. The responsibility for the breakdown of the process lies clearly with Mr Major. But what of the rest of us? Can any of us, especially those in positions of power and authority, absolve ourselves?

Mr Bruton has said that "Sinn Fein can from time to time speak authoritatively for the IRA". This is not the case. Sinn Fein speaks authoritatively for Sinn Fein and for those citizens who vote for us. The Taoiseach knows this. There is also a suggestion that Sinn Fein have not kept faith with the Irish government. I have honoured all the commitments made by me with Mr Hume and Mr Reynolds and subsequently with Mr Hume, Mr Bruton and Mr Spring. I have constantly warned the government of the fragility of the process. Whenever I became aware of the developing situation on Friday I contacted the Taoiseach's department and I tried to contact the Tanaiste. The senior official to whom I spoke in the Taoiseach's department was already aware of the IRA statement. None of us could have guessed how quickly and regrettably the situation was going to deteriorate but I have never deceived anyone about the IRA. Neither have I ever deceived the IRA.

### **A Formidable and Daunting Task**

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Sinn Fein's peace strategy remains as the central plank of our party policy. We will not be deflected from this. I have also made clear my regret and sorrow for the deaths and injuries suffered in Friday nights attack. My sympathy is with the victims and their families. I accept fully my responsibility to try to avert and to prevent such incidents. It is my clearly stated objective to bring an end to all armed actions, to end the war and to take the gun out of Irish politics. That is a formidable and daunting task. It is bigger than any one person. Making peace is the sum total of many acts. It is a dangerous and risky enterprise. It must be a collective effort. Most politicians measure risk in terms of popularity, party political considerations or electoral concerns. Peace in Ireland requires much more of political leaders. The people expect their representatives to measure up to the challenges of this time, not least because the people realise that they will be the losers if the politicians fail. We cannot afford to fail and we should not expect others to pay for our failure. The worst failure of all is the refusal to talk. Breakdowns in other peace processes caused leaders to redouble their efforts. That is why they succeeded.

### **Sinn Féin has Closed No Doors**

Over the past week the Sinn Féin leadership has endeavoured to maintain contact across the political spectrum. We have closed no doors. Only today I sent a letter to John Major underlining our commitment to rebuilding the peace process and urging him to fulfill the responsibilities of leadership by commencing the negotiations which are vital to restore confidence in the peace process. There cannot be peace in Ireland unless Mr Major becomes a full partner in this enterprise.

Sinn Féin will shortly meet with Irish government officials. On that occasion and as a sign of our intent to play a full leadership role in the necessary rebuilding of the peace process I will lead the Sinn Fein delegation. It is of the utmost importance that dialogue be reestablished as the vehicle for resolving our difficulties and that the rights of Sinn Feins electorate are upheld by the government in Dublin. It has been put to me that Dublin is interested in hearing from Sinn Fein how the IRA cessation can be put together again. This is a legitimate question which I will do my best to respond to but it is one which can only be answered authoritatively by the IRA itself. While I am prepared to speak to the IRA I will not speak for them. All of us know that the peace process broke down because of British bad faith. There is no point therefore in underestimating the difficulties facing us. On the contrary, this would be counterproductive. Getting the IRA to recommence a cessation is possible only, in my opinion, in the context

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of rebuilding the wider peace process. Sinn Fein will therefore be anxious to hear the Irish government's proposals for getting this back on track.

### **The Need for Urgency**

If I was asked to outline an ABC of how this could be accomplished I would stress the need in the first instance for urgency. We have learned the hard way that no-war does not mean peace and that cessations cannot be taken for granted. Peace demands dialogue, inclusive and in good faith. The big failure of the last eighteen months lies with No 10 Downing Street. The peace process was frustrated at every turn by British bad faith but the IRA was willing to enhance the prospects for a negotiated settlement. These negotiations never happened so there will obviously be increased caution and cynicism.

The absence of negotiations led to the breakdown. The commencement of negotiations therefore provides the way forward. Any new process must contain copperfastened and unambiguous public assurances that all party talks will be initiated by both governments at the earliest possible date - both governments are committed to beginning this at the end of February - and that they will proceed with urgency and within an agreed timeframe upon an inclusive agenda and without any preconditions whatsoever. A peace process is a means to an end. The end is a negotiated settlement - an agreed peace settlement. That requires change. That requires everyone playing a full role. Sinn Fein have argued that change is required in three main areas. There is a need for political and constitutional change. There is a need also for a democratisation and demilitarisation of the situation.

Finally, I would like to speak directly to Irish republicans. We have struggled together for over 25 years now, and some of our veterans have struggled for much longer than that. It has never been an easy struggle and there has always been plenty of cause for irritation or frustration. For the last 25 years and especially since 1969 I have been constantly up-lifted by your resilience and fortitude. There may well be as many opinions among republicans about the current situation as there are in other sections of our people. In many ways this will reflect the views of the wider community. But because republicans are committed to an end to British rule in Ireland and to a total transformation of society in this island we have an acute sense of what the breakdown of the peace process means.

For the last number of days I have engaged in a wide range of contacts and discussions with allies in the search for peace in our country. I

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have also been in constant contact with the national leadership of Sinn Fein and senior colleagues. In seeking to take stock of this new situation there is a need for dialogue also with our base. For us as well as others this is a time for cool heads and steady nerves. We have been united through all the difficulties of the past and we will remain united. Whatever the challenges facing us one thing is clear. Irish republicans want peace. We want justice. We have demonstrated our commitment in a very real way to the achievement of these goals. Peace - a real and lasting peace - is the prize. Of all the players we especially must keep our eye on that prize.

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| ON BEHALF OF                                                    | THAR CEANN                                                       |
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### Government Statement

The Cabinet Sub-Committee on Northern Ireland has carried out a detailed review of all aspects of the current situation.

The Government note with profound regret the statement announcing the ending of the IRA's complete cessation of hostilities. They unreservedly condemn last night's bombing in London and express their deep sympathy, on behalf of the Irish people, to the victims of that act of violence and to their families.

On 1st November, 1982 the Taoiseach of that day said:

"It is not possible to adopt the pretence of being democratic, while simultaneously striking at the right to life and freedom which are the very basis of democracy".

Violence, and the threat of violence, have no place in democratic negotiation. Nothing can justify a resort to violence in an attempt to override the democratic political process.

The Government's search for an inclusive process of negotiation was based on a clear commitment by the IRA to a total cessation of violence. The fact that that commitment has now been revoked alters the situation fundamentally.

The Government believe that democratic negotiation is the only method by which the divisions in Northern Ireland can be healed and permanent peace restored. Only those who take no part in violence, in the threat of violence, or in the support of violence, can take part in democratic negotiation.

The great majority of the people of this island, the broad sweep of nationalist opinion in Northern Ireland, and Irish-America - all have invested in the peace that resulted from the IRA cessation of violence. The ending of that cessation shatters the hopes of all those who invested in peace and worked for democratic political progress.

The ceasefire of August 1994 was the key enabling event which permitted a whole range of top level political contacts and developments to take place.

The Government have noted Mr. Adams request for a meeting.

The Government want the IRA ceasefire to be restored immediately.

The basis for previous Government meetings with Sinn Féin was that a total cessation of IRA violence was already in place. That policy enjoyed support because it showed that violence was not an acceptable method of promoting a political programme. We are concerned to ensure that any meeting with Sinn Féin should be consistent with that long-standing policy.

The Government remain resolute in their determination to end terrorism from whatever source and have already commenced a full review of security towards that end. Close co-operation will be maintained with all relevant Governments.

10 February, 1996

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→ FAX TO  
MARY AND PETER

**COMCENTRE PLEASE PASS TO :**

①  
TO : TONY LAKE  
WHITE HOUSE

②  
PADDY TEAHON  
PS/TAOISEACH.

FROM : JOHN HOLMES

DATE OF DOC : 12/2/96

TITLE: PM'S STATEMENT TO HOUSE OF COMMONS.

CLASS : Secret / Confidential / Restricted (U/O)

DATE FAXED : 12/2/96

TIME : 15.10

NO OF PAGES : 1 + 11

PRECEDENCE : **FLASH**

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**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT**

**NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE PROCESS**

**12 FEBRUARY 1996**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER  
NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE PROCESS**

**With permission, Madam Speaker, I will make a statement on the bomb explosion in the South Quay area of London last Friday, the declared end to the IRA ceasefire and the implications for security and the peace process in Northern Ireland.**

**There is no doubt the evil act in London was the work of the IRA. It has all the hallmarks of their operations with the callous sacrifice of innocent lives.**

**The bomb followed shortly after an IRA statement, given to the Irish broadcasting organisation on the evening of 9 February, that the complete cessation of hostilities ordered in August 1994 was now at an end. The IRA admitted their responsibility on 10 February.**

**The facts of the incident are briefly these. Around 1745 last Friday warning calls were made that a large bomb had been placed at**

South Quay Station, Marsh Wall in London. Local police arrived at the scene shortly after six o'clock, and Anti-Terrorist Branch officers shortly after that.

At around 1830 a suspect vehicle, a Ford flat-backed lorry, was identified, and the immediate area cleared. While the area was being evacuated, the vehicle exploded, causing extensive damage to buildings in the area, and a large number of casualties.

Two people were killed, and 43 injured, 2 critically. Three police officers were among the casualties. The House will join me in extending our deepest sympathy to all the innocent victims and their families. It is little short of a miracle that the casualty list was not much longer.

I would like to pay tribute to the efforts of the emergency services. Despite being hampered by a fractured gas main at the scene, they responded magnificently and they richly deserve all our thanks.

Madam Speaker, this may not be the last such atrocity. More may follow, both here in the mainland and in Northern Ireland if the

IRA ceasefire is not renewed. We will do all we can to prevent them and to catch all those responsible. The protection of the public will be our first priority.

*In Great Britain*

~~On the mainland~~, security has immediately returned to pre-ceasefire levels. In Northern Ireland itself, we had been careful from the very first moment of the ceasefire to take no irreversible steps to downgrade our security capability. All necessary measures to cope with the present situation are now in place. The RUC is on full alert. We have sought to make an appropriate and proportionate response to the increased threat without disrupting daily life more than necessary.

Madam Speaker, the IRA has brought the 17 month old ceasefire to an end. There is no shred of an excuse for this return to violence, least of all now, when all-party negotiations were clearly in sight.

After the August 1994 ceasefire declaration, we called repeatedly on the IRA to make clear that it was permanent, despite criticism by some for doubting IRA good faith. We did doubt their good faith, and the IRA did not say it was permanent. Nonetheless, after a prudent period of time, in order to move the process forward, we

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were prepared to act on the working assumption that the ceasefire would last.

In the months that followed we reduced the more visible and inconvenient aspects of security.

We took soldiers off the streets and opened all the border crossing points.

We did everything possible to create new jobs in Northern Ireland through renewed inward investment and helped to produce a remarkable economic upsurge.

We talked to Sinn Fein leaders at official and ministerial level.

We constantly sought to move the peace process on to the all-party negotiations everyone agrees are necessary.

No-one, no-one, took more risks for peace than this Government. But we never lost sight of the fact that the IRA commitment had not been made for good. No responsible government could have done otherwise.

That was why we and others saw a start to the decommissioning of illegal arms as a way of creating confidence in Sinn Fein's acceptance of democratic peaceful methods, and showing that the violence really had ended.

But all the time that Sinn Fein were calling for all-party talks, we knew that the IRA continued to train and plan for terrorist attacks. Punishment beatings and killings continued. They remained ready to resume full-scale terrorism at any time. We could never be confident their behaviour was that of an organisation which had decided to renounce violence for ever. This was not a true peace.

Madam Speaker, I regret to say that the events of last Friday showed that our caution about the IRA was only too justified. The timing of the return to violence may have been surprising. The fact that violence could resume was not.

Madam Speaker, we must now continue the search for permanent peace and a comprehensive political settlement in Northern Ireland. Let there be no doubt that the Government's commitment to this is as strong as ever.

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We will work for peace with all the democratic political parties and with the Irish Government. But a huge question mark now hangs over the position of one of the parties: Sinn Fein. Their leaders have spoken often of their commitment to peace and peaceful methods. But they have always ducked and weaved when they have been questioned about the IRA and their methods. After the events of last Friday their ambiguity stands out starkly.

The test for eligibility to take part in all party negotiations was set by the British and Irish Governments in paragraph 10 of the Downing Street Declaration: they should be democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process.

Sinn Fein's leaders claim that they did not know about the bomb at South Quay and the IRA's ceasefire statement. But they have refused either to condemn or to dissociate themselves from either. Madam Speaker, Sinn Fein must decide whether they are a front for the IRA or a democratic political party committed to the ballot not the bullet.

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Meanwhile, one thing is clear. In the absence of a genuine end to this renewed violence, meetings between British Ministers and Sinn Fein are not acceptable and cannot take place.

That is also the position of the Irish Government. They have made it clear to Sinn Fein that their attitude and willingness to meet at political level will be determined by whether the IRA ceasefire is restored. We and the Irish Government are at one on this: the ball is in the court of Sinn Fein and the IRA, if indeed that distinction means anything.

It is for them to show, through their words and actions, whether they have a part to play in the peace process or not. I am not in the business of slamming doors. But the British and Irish peoples need to know where Sinn Fein now stand.

Madam Speaker, the people of a democracy are not passive spectators to events. They have the right to make their views clear on issues like this. The people of Northern Ireland, from both communities, have consistently done so. The popular will for peace has never been clearer.

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The peace process will go on. I commend all those who have had the courage and sense, in the face of this latest atrocity, to work to prevent a wider return to violence.

My right hon Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and I have met all the parties in the last two weeks. This process will be intensified with those parties which have not, for the present, disqualified themselves. The aim is, as it has always been, to establish the necessary confidence to enable negotiations between all the parties to start.

I want everyone to be absolutely clear on this point. The objective of all our actions and policies before and since the ceasefire has been to get to a position where all constitutional democratic parties can get round a table together. Everything else is a means to that essential end.

I told the House on 24 January that, if the paramilitaries would not start decommissioning their illegal arms, one alternative way forward was through elections to give the electoral mandates and confidence which could lead straight, and straightaway, to negotiations. As proposed by the Mitchell report,

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decommissioning could go ahead in parallel with these negotiations.

This proposal has been consistently misrepresented by Sinn Fein and misunderstood more widely. I repeat now that its purpose is to lead directly and speedily to negotiations between all parties committed to peaceful and democratic methods, aimed at reaching a comprehensive political settlement. An elected body would have to be broadly acceptable and would be strictly time-limited. I am not proposing an Assembly with legislative and administrative powers. Any suggestion of a return to old-style Stormont rule is manifest nonsense.

The proposed elections are a door to full negotiations. I continue to believe that they provide the most promising opening available. We will pursue this proposal and seek to persuade all concerned that it is indeed a way forward, not a means of delaying progress.

Madam Speaker, our ideas are still in discussion with the parties. But I do want to assure the House that there are ways forward to negotiations with all the parties, and that these could include Sinn Fein but only, of course, if there is an unequivocal return to the ceasefire.

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Others have ideas too, including the Irish Government. Our minds are not closed. Nor, I know, are theirs. I have talked to the Taoiseach twice since the bombing. We plan to meet in London soon to discuss all the possibilities. I intend to find a way through to the negotiations with all those committed to democracy.

Madam Speaker, the peace process in Northern Ireland has received a serious setback from the men of violence. But it is not over, not by any means.

We have seen the benefits of what has been achieved since the ceasefire: the freedom to live and work normally, and to enjoy life; increased prosperity and new jobs; new hope for the future. These must not be thrown away.

Madam Speaker, this Government will not be deterred by terrorism. The people of Northern Ireland have tasted peace, a peace that changed their lives. I have told the House before that I will leave no stone unturned in the search for peace. That is true today and will remain true in the future.

The people of Great Britain and Northern Ireland deserve no less.

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FROM : John Holmes

TO:

DATE OF DOC :

TITLE: Interview transcript

CLASS : ~~Secret~~ / ~~Confidential~~ / ~~Restricted~~ / U/C

DATE FAXED : 15.2.96

TIME : 2045

NO OF PAGES : This + 3

MESSAGE :

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HW 1-NOBLECHT.

The following is the full text of an interview with a spokesperson for the General Headquarters staff of Oglagh na h-Eireann:

AP/RN: The shock waves from the IRA bomb attack in East London on Friday are still reverberating. Many people will be asking: "Just what brought the 18 month long IRA cessation to an end"?

IRA: Put plainly and bluntly the end of the cessation was brought about by John Major's cynical misuse and betrayal of the historic opportunity offered by the Irish peace initiative.

AP/RN: Can you expand on that reply?

IRA: The IRA leadership delivered a complete cessation of military operations on a clear unambiguous and shared understanding that inclusive negotiations would rapidly commence to bring about political agreement and a peace settlement. The British government committed itself to this publicly. So too did the Dublin Government. It was crystal clear about this: John Major reneged on these commitments, publicly given. He has acted in bad faith throughout the period of the IRA cessation, introducing one new precondition after another. He has betrayed the Irish peace process and has deliberately squandered this opportunity to resolve the causes of the age old conflict between Britain and the Irish people. He did so to keep himself in power. The promised negotiations we have had a year and a half of stalling, prevarication and provocation with various political devices being put in place for staving off a negotiation scenario for the foreseeable future.

From all of this we could only finally conclude that the surrender or political defeat of Irish republicans was the actual agenda for the tactical engagement by the British government in the Irish peace initiative.

For 18 months the British chose to ignore the opportunity which existed and put sectional, party political considerations above progress by underwriting and reinforcing the unionist veto that they themselves had bestowed.

AP/RN: Wasn't it naive to expect the British government to deliver on their commitments?

IRA: On the contrary: trusting the British government played no part in our decision of August 31 1994. 25 years of countering British political and military strategies were sufficient guard against that. In fact the British government was not consulted. Our approach was based firmly on political realities and on our responsibility in seeking a just and lasting peace settlement.

It was the Irish peace initiative, put together by Irish nationalist parties which we responded to. When it emerged we responded on October 3 1993 by stating: "Oglagh na hEireann welcomes this initiative .... if the political will exists or can be created, it could provide the basis for peace."

It was in fact the nationalist parties who persuaded us that the potential existed, within the nationalist consensus, for a viable alternative dynamic for change.

So on August 31 1994 we announced a complete cessation of military operations stating that it was our wish to: "Enhance the democratic peace process," and to "significantly contribute to the climate," which would allow for "the inclusive negotiations necessary if there is to be a resolution of the conflict".

The political will to make peace and the putting in place of inclusive negotiations as the essential mechanism for doing so are the critical tests which were put to the British government. They were in fact the litmus test of their seriousness about peacemaking. They have clearly demonstrated their absence of will. They have clearly rejected the means to peace.

AP/RN: Where then do we go from here? Are you optimistic about the way forward?

IRA: It isn't a question of optimism or pessimism. It is a question of realism. The fundamental issues at the heart of the conflict are unchanged. There is only one place for all the political representatives of the Irish people to go and that is to the negotiating table. Current British policy prevents all those with a democratic mandate from sitting around that table. Their denial of Irish democratic rights is at the core of the conflict. Where national rights are denied; where justice is denied; where the rights of a community are denied then there is inevitable conflict.

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IRA: Let me repeat our statement of February 9: "It is with great reluctance that the leadership of Ogleigh na hEireann announces that it's complete cessation of

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military operations ended at 6pm, Friday, February 9."

We in Oglagh na hEireann will continue to assert Irish national rights in the face of British denial for as long as is necessary.

AP/RN: What of the possible loyalist response do you anticipate that they will end their ceasefire?

IRA: Let us be absolutely clear about this the IRA have no desire to engage loyalists in any military sense. We do know that they have continued to very actively target nationalists during the last year and a half.

On the other hand they have shown themselves capable of imaginative and radical thinking at times. If their leadership is strong enough to prevent them reinvolving themselves in the murderous sectarian attacks on nationalists and Catholics which have been their stock in trade for the past 75 years then that would of course be welcome.

As Republicans we are absolutely opposed to sectarianism but history has shown that the British government 'dirty tricks department' have armed and unleashed loyalism at any stage where the British are under significant pressure about their own role in Ireland. We can only hope that loyalists will not allow themselves to be used as surrogates or dupes for either the British or the Unionist leaders.

The basic flaw in loyalist working class ideology is that their sole objective has been to maintain an elite British and unionist upper class establishment. All their killing is based on not wanting change. It is a massive contradiction for organisations made up of working class people. Let us hope that such contradictions have been resolved.

AP/RN: Could you give us your views of where the nationalist consensus now stands and where does Sinn Fein go from here?

IRA: From our position we feel that nationalism in Ireland has a general consensus on a number of fundamentals:

- 1) there is broad agreement that what is required is real and meaningful negotiations about how a settlement can be achieved.
- 2) there is agreement that current political arrangements have utterly failed and must be replaced.
- 3) there is agreement that there can be no internal settlement within the Six Counties.
- 4) there is agreement that Britain has a central role in enabling and persuading parties to participate in arriving at a settlement in Ireland. But that there cannot be peace unless Britain wants it.
- 5) there is broad agreement that Britain has, thus far, failed to live up to its responsibilities.
- 6) there is also agreement that the most urgent task facing all of us is the ending of conflict in Ireland on the basis of a just and lasting peace.

As to what Sinn Fein now does, that of course is a matter entirely for Sinn Fein, they, like us, will follow their own counsel. Sinn Fein have already stated publicly that they are absolutely committed to their peace strategy. We naturally wish them every success.

AP/RN: Since the ending of your cessation there has been considerable speculation amongst journalists, commentators and some politicians about possible IRA splits and about relations between Sinn Fein and yourselves. Do you have any comment?

IRA: Setting aside the fact that there is a degree of mischief making in some predictable quarters let us deal with the question of IRA splits. It is worth pointing to the high levels of discipline shown by IRA Volunteers over 18 long months of cessation in the face of continuous provocation. Let us not forget that the British forces didn't have any cessation of activities, house raids, arrests, harassment, the firing of plastic bullets, the recruitment of informers and the refortification of military strongholds continued apace.

We take this opportunity to salute the patience, fortitude and discipline of all our Volunteers. They compare more than favourably with activists in any liberation movement worldwide or indeed in Irish history. There are no splits, we are united in

Interview with Bruton

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**This WEEK in Politics - Network 2 TV at 7:00 pm Feb. 10, 1996 (Irish time)****John Bruton**

A democratic government can't talk to an association that advocates violence. What we want is to get Sinn Fein and the IRA back onto the peace path. We're offering them an incentive. We'll meet you as soon as you tell us that the violence is over. I understand their frustration, but progress was being made...important progress made in Washington with the Tanaiste on proximity talks.

**Q: What do you want Sinn Fein to do?**

They have been able to speak authoritatively on behalf of IRA. We want them now to speak authoritatively to the IRA. Killing people isn't consistent with a democratic process. I have no doubt that they have influence on the IRA.

**Q: If the IRA do what you say and fail, what will you do? You're victimizing them**  
We're not refusing to receive messages from them. Channels of communication are open, but we can't engage in meetings with them while violence continues. We can't be involved in anything that can be perceived as negotiating under duress.

**Q: Will these tried and true paths of communication used before still be used:**  
We will follow policy pursued by the last government. There were no meetings while violence was taking place.

**Q: what's the bottom line. What do we want Sinn Fein to come up with?**  
We want a statement that says the cessation of violence has been restored. Once that's done, the problem is solved as far as we're concerned. No reason not to believe them as far as that's concerned.

**Q: they're holding this threat over the process then?**  
It's a threat over democracy. You can't hold negotiations under the threat of violence. All options were open to them on the condition that peace was maintained.

Sdlp read?

We have to make decision on this as a government. This is a decision for the government. I'm not going to make statements about others. (About Americans) I think President Clinton's statement was very clear condemning terrorism. Blaming pol. Developments in London was "gutless"

**Q: What about help from George Mitchell ?**

Any constructive proposal is welcome. Bombing was a tragedy. Another great tragedy that Mitchell report didn't get the attention it deserved.

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**Q: George Mitchell and Tony Lake within next 48 hours, would you welcome that?**  
 I certainly would. It is the people who set the bombs make the decision to violence. They have to be persuaded. All in the North must realize that their lives will be made worse by violence.

**Q: How could Major help get process underway**

We had actually put forward a formula which would have gotten people talking to each other -- proximity talks. This is the only way forward. This idea was gaining strength.

**Q: Target of end of month talks is a non-runner?**

Obviously the situation has changed dramatically. Hopefully IRA will change their mind, and we will aim to reinstate the process in full. Sinn Fein's primary responsibility now is to accept non-violence.

**Q: there may have to be draconian methods used by both governments if there's a return to violence:**

Existing security arrangements are being tightened up, but no particular measures .

**Q: The 2 governments were engaging in recriminations right before bomb went off. Should you and John Major shoulder some of the blame:**

I believe John Major's statement was presented in far too open and shut a way. Elections should have been discussed in track of talks, not as a fait accompli. We were attempting to change this through idea of proximity talks. This is political. Not on the same order as killing people. There is moral difference between making a political judgment in the context of political persuasion and killing people.

**Q: British sources saying they were right about decommissioning do you accept that**  
 No, it was clear that that was going to be very difficult for republicans to do because it represented a surrender. Only be overcome by bringing them more and more into talks. Psychologically a mistaken way of approaching it. Not a lot to be gained from I told you so's "between democrats".

**Q: do you accept that the most difficult task for republicans is to put violence back into the bottle**

That's the problem tonight. Violence affects everyone. Destroys the basis of our society. I appeal to anyone with any influence, please use it to get people to realize the democracy is not served by violence, but by talking by patience. This path was wroking, slowly, but we can still get back on that path. Let's give peace a chance.

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**.This week in politics (cont'd)****Ray Burke Fianna Fail:**

We abhor violence. It is vital to get the process back on the rails. We have asked President Clinton to appoint George Mitchell as a peace envoy. This message has been conveyed to Washington through the US embassy. We are meeting with the US ambassador on 10:00 am on Monday morning. We are hoping that this (Mitchell appointment) will happen.

Sen. Mitchell has a central role in the way forward. British and Irish governments can't let the situation deteriorate. We don't want kneejerk security situation. No blanket security. Gerry Adams was sidelined in the decision by the Army Council. It's obvious that he didn't know. But he has a major role to play. His contacts with Sen. Mitchell can be used. We need British and Irish governments to agree to Sen Mitchell as a Peace Envoy. Need power of Pres Clinton behind the process.

The Irish government should meet Gerry Adams . have a responsibility to meet all sides. All angles, all avenues should be talked to . We intend to talk to the loyalists.

(Ray  
Burke ≠ Bertie Ahern)

**Michael McDougall: Democratic Left:**

US intervention is helpful. Any US intervention that can get across to IRA army council that they are isolated and get them back to peace process {is welcome}.

Senator Mitchell's report was a balanced one. It may have been too much for Provisional IRA army council. Sen Mitchell has as good credentials as anyone. He did not rule out Unionists agenda either. Six principles in Mitchell report are substantial to go ahead. Canary Wharf has played right into the hands of those with intransigent views on decommissioning



# Friends Of Sinn Féin



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 9 February 1996**

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**SINN FEIN PRESIDENT GERRY ADAMS RESPONDING TO TODAY'S EVENTS IN LONDON SAID:**

"Our response to today's events is one of sadness. My sympathy and thoughts are with those injured today. I regret that an unprecedented opportunity for peace has floundered on the refusal of the British government and the Unionist leaders to enter into honest dialogue and substantive negotiations. I appeal for calm. Sinn Fein's peace strategy remains as the main function of our party. It is my personal priority. All those who made genuine efforts to build a peace process must keep our nerve in the face of predictable and hypocritical reaction from public representatives who have done nothing to encourage the risky search for a peace settlement. That search for peace must be redoubled."

**PRIME MINISTER: STATEMENT ON CANARY WHARF BOMB  
9 FEBRUARY 1996**

The Prime Minister said: "This is an appalling outrage. My first thoughts are with the casualties, their families and the emergency services. We will pursue relentlessly those responsible for this disgraceful attack.

Sinn Fein had given assurances time and time again that they were committed to peaceful progress. I now call on the leadership of Sinn Fein and the IRA to condemn immediately and unequivocally those who planted this bomb and any suggestion that the ceasefire is now over.

It would be a tragedy if the hopes of the people of Britain and Northern Ireland for lasting peace were dashed again by the men of violence. This atrocity confirms again the urgent need to remove illegal arms from the equation.

For my part, I remain committed to the search for peace in Northern Ireland and will not be distracted from this by terrorism.

qvai:sth