

CONFIDENTIAL

PLANNING UNIT
MAY 1994

DRAFT STATEMENT ON SINN FEIN'S RESPONSE TO JOINT DECLARATION

Final text to be confirmed with NIO when details are known

[We shall study Sinn Fein's statement carefully.]

The Government's position has always been perfectly plain. What we want is a permanent end to all violence. Nothing less than that is acceptable. And it is not something which can be negotiated or bargained for. The Prime Minister and the Taoiseach agreed in Brussels last October that 'there could be no secret agreements or understandings between Governments and organizations supporting violence as a price for its cessation' and that 'all those claiming a serious interest in advancing the cause of peace in Ireland should renounce for good the use of, or support for, violence'.

In the Joint Declaration, both leaders said 'that the achievement of peace must involve a permanent end to the use of, or support for, paramilitary violence.'

Making in the Joint Declaration an unswerving commitment to democracy, they said: 'democratically mandated parties which establish a commitment to exclusively peaceful methods and which have shown that they abide by the democratic process, are free to join in dialogue in due course between the two Governments and the political parties on the way ahead'.

Consistent with that, we have said that within 3 months of a permanent end to violence we would enter preliminary exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein.

[Of course, any halt to the killing in Northern Ireland is welcome.] [If this response helps achieve a permanent end to all paramilitary violence, then it is a step forward.]

What matters - for loyalists and republicans alike - is deeds not words.