



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

DECOMMISSIONING PROPOSALS

UK UNIONIST PARTY

The UK Unionist Party considers that the terms upon which the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland accepts a cease fire from Sinn Fein/IRA for the entry of Sinn Fein into the Multi Party Talks, are central to the requirements for decommissioning. A Declaration by Sinn Fein for themselves and for the IRA that any cease fire is complete in its nature and permanent in its duration has significant implications.

- (1) Such a declaration would remove the need for the retention of weapons or explosives as a means of obtaining political goals.
- (2) The failure to declare a cease fire to be both complete and permanent necessarily suggests a reservation that some circumstances might justify a resort to violence.
- (3) Such a declaration, if sincere, necessarily implies that armaments held by paramilitary organisations will not be used again and removes objections in principle to their being made available (at least in part) for destruction prior to Sinn Fein's entry into substantive negotiation.

- (4) A complete and permanent cease fire also removes, in principle, any requirement for weaponry to be handed over in exchange for perceived political progress by those in possession of it. Any such progress can only be the product of democratic procedures.
- (5) Any such declaration made by Sinn Fein/IRA would require immediate reciprocation by the PUP and UDP, for themselves and the CLMC.

The UK Unionist Party believes that the future intentions of any party or paramilitary group can only be assessed on the basis of their past and current statements and actions.

The refusal of Sinn Fein/IRA as at 31st August 1994 to declare their cease fire not only to be complete but also permanent gave rise to a pro-Union belief that the IRA would return to violence if political progress as assessed by them did not occur. The IRA resumption of violence and the events post Canary Wharf confirmed this belief. The bona fides of Sinn Fein/IRA were mistakenly accepted by the International Body and subsequent events have shown that the IRA was planning and actively preparing for a resumption of violence during the August 1994 cease fire. As a result, common sense and prudence would require from Sinn Fein not only an unreserved cease fire declaration, but a practical demonstration of their good faith and of their future intention for themselves and the IRA to renounce the use of violence permanently. The activities of Sinn Fein/IRA have given pro-Union parties scarcely any hope that these organisations will renounce violence as a method of achieving political ends. Indeed, their behaviour since Canary Wharf has virtually extinguished any

credence which can be given to them. It is against this background that the UK Unionist Party offers the following proposals as the minimum requirements for the admission of Sinn Fein into the Talks. The UK Unionist Party is mindful that it is for the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in his discretion to invite parties to participate, but it is for the parties to decide the terms upon which they themselves will continue to take part. Minister Owens, for the Republic of Ireland Delegation, was anxious to impress the pro-Union parties about the reality of the terms upon which Sinn Fein would take part, but both governments must face the reality that, unless Sinn Fein/IRA conform to the accepted principles upon which dialogue can proceed among democrats, the participation of the pro-Union parties may be forfeited.

THE UK UNIONIST PARTY'S PROPOSALS FOR DECOMMISSIONING

- (1) A declaration by all parties fronting, associating with or sharing the political objectives of a paramilitary organisation for themselves and such organisation of a cessation of violence that is complete in that it encompasses violence of any kind against any one and permanent in its duration.
- (2) That any such declaration be accompanied by a handing over of a credible quantity of weapons and explosives as a demonstration of the maker's good faith that the cessation of violence is both complete and permanent.
- (3) A declaration by the relevant party both for itself and the organisation it is said to front of its public subscription to the Mitchell Six Principles.
- (4) An acceptance by the relevant party that the democratic process of negotiations can in no way be related to or made dependent upon any process of decommissioning and that decommissioning will progress to completion whether or not a political agreement acceptable to that party or its related organisation is achieved.
- (5) Acceptance of Sinn Fein's entry into substantive negotiations will not take place until both governments have enacted all enabling legislation and put in place all necessary regulations for the practical processing of decommissioning.