

Notice of Indictment.

The DUP wishes to serve notice on the Chairman of the Multi-Party Talks that certain participants are in flagrant breach of the Mitchell Principles of Non-violence.

These Principles are the basis for entry to the Talks and are supposed to ensure that a level playing field exists for all participants. Any breach, ~~whether~~ reflected in actual violence or the threat to resort to violence for political purposes, poses a real threat to the stability of Northern Ireland and to any prospect of a successful outcome to these political talks.

Any failure to deal with such a threat with a serious and unambiguous response will destroy this process.

The DUP complaint is against those parties which claim to speak for the Combined Loyalist Military Command (C.L.M.C.), namely, the Progressive Unionist Party (P.U.P.) and the Ulster Democratic Party (U.D.P.).

On Wednesday 28 August the C.L.M.C. issued a statement threatening the lives of two other loyalists with expulsion from Northern Ireland or else "summary justice". The statement said: "Failure by either men to comply with this directive will result in summary justice for their treasonable and subversive activities. Anybody supporting these persons in their activities will be similarly dealt with."

When challenged about the statement the main spokesmen for the P.U.P. and U.D.P. refused to condemn it. In fact, some of the public utterances by those same spokesmen actually endorsed the death threats. David Ervine said he would not condemn it even if it meant his party's expulsion from the talks process.

When these talks commenced on the June 10 Sir Patrick Mayhew refused to admit the delegates representing Sinn Fein/IRA. The basis for his decision was their categorical refusal to renew its ceasefire and

to condemn the latest IRA atrocity at Canary Wharf. In the immediate aftermath of the opening of the Multi-Party Talks the IRA murdered a Garda Officer and bombed the Arndale Shopping Centre in Manchester, thus confirming the fact that Sinn Fein/IRA, by its own actions, had excluded itself from the talks.

The DUP brings forward this indictment on the basis of parity. Double standards must not be permitted to rule this process. What is more, this Loyalist threat cannot be used as the vehicle to bring Sinn Fein/IRA into the process.

Immediately after the C.L.M.C. statement was published my party demanded that the Secretary of State make clear the basis of entry to the talks. My party statement calling for the removal of those parties who supported this latest threat of violence was backed by a similar statement by John Taylor the Deputy OUP leader. He said: "These parties risk expulsion from the Talks if they fail to condemn the C.L.M.C. statement."

A matter of days after the threat was issued the elderly parents of Alec Kerr were attacked by a bomber in their home. When quizzed by the media the spokesmen for the P.U.P. again refused to condemn this outrage despite claiming his organisation had nothing to do with the bomb attack.

Sir John Wheeler issued the Government's response. He said: "Any threat of exclusions by terrorist gangs, if true, is totally unacceptable in a democratic society."

This continuing threat raises the serious question of the P.U.P.'s and U.D.P.'s continued involvement in the talks. These parties cannot be associated with such threatened violence for political ends with impunity.

The excuses offered by the spokesmen for these fringe parties sound alarmingly like clones for Gerry Adams. In fact Sinn Fein/IRA will be watching this process very carefully as we are in a "dry run scenario" that could open the way to their entry without the ending of

republican violence. If these parties get away with this threat then the door is wide open for the entry of Sinn Fein/IRA.

The fact that 26,000 people voted for the P.U.P. in the May election is altogether irrelevant in the debate over whether a man should live or die, on the judgement of a criminal organisation. Failure to distance themselves totally from the murder threat must signal the immediate expulsion of the fringe parties from Stormont.

What is clear is that their removal is entirely of their own making. They have the power to ensure they remain at the table.

Many opinion formers have expressed their views on this matter. In its editorial on the 30 August the News Letter said: "In taking firm action on this most fundamental matter, the Secretary of State will be responding, not just to the leaders of mainstream Unionism, but to the wishes of the overwhelming majority of people who hold absolutely no brief for the perverted justice of the terrorist organisation, loyalist or Republican".

The Belfast Telegraph backed this call on Thursday 5 September. In its editorial it said: "Death threats are no part of the political process and when, inevitably, the matter is raised at the multi-party talks next week, the only logical conclusion would be the expulsion of the PUP and UDP. Despite their discomfort they have declined to distance themselves from the paramilitaries or even to condemn the threat - just as Sinn Fein has done in the past."

The Daily Telegraph wrote on August 30: "The lesson of the peace process and its collapse is that appeasing terrorists and their associates does not pay. If the PUP is not treated in the same way as Sinn Fein, the Government's reputation for even-handedness will be badly undermined. Any party that wishes to participate in the democratic process must be prepared, unambiguously, to renounce violence. If the Loyalist parties cannot bring themselves to condemn threats even to someone as unpalatable as Mr Wright, out they must go."

These Talks must be adjourned until a decision is taken on this matter. The evidence is compelling. The fringe parties have it within their own grasp to stay or else put themselves out.