

(29)

**Nuacht raitéis** /News release**For immediate release: 27/8/96**

Sinn Féin Party Chairperson Mitchel McLaughlin this evening commented on remarks today in which Loyalist leader David Ervine pointed up the absence of confidence by loyalists in the current political process. Mr McLaughlin said: "If the peace process is to be rebuilt and confidence restored the two governments must take an urgent initiative for peace which learns the lessons of recent failures and seeks to include everyone in dialogue on the basis of equality".

Mr McLaughlin added:

"Two years ago this weekend the IRA announced its historic cessation and a period of unprecedented opportunity opened up.

It has been clear for some time that the peace process floundered on the rock of British government intransigence and its refusal to engage in anything but tactical manoeuvring.

Equally clear, if the peace process is to be rebuilt and confidence restored the two governments must take an urgent initiative for peace which learns the lessons of recent failures and seeks to include everyone in dialogue on the basis of equality.

In particular this is the responsibility of the British government.

There is an onerous responsibility on the Irish government to see that this happens.

In the absence of such an initiative it is entirely likely that the unionist leadership will continue to take their lead from the British government and refuse to build a real peace process based on equality.