

NEG 35/96

PST; PSS; Ministers Owen,  
de Rossa & Taylor; Attorney  
General; Minister of State  
Covey; Messrs. Teahon,  
Donlon & Dalton; Amb.  
London and Washington; Joint  
Secretary; Counsellors A-I.



# News Release

## STATEMENT FROM DR PAISLEY DUP STANCE ON DECOMMISSIONING

18/09/96

In order that the people of Northern Ireland might have a clear view of where the DUP stands in the present talks regarding the "Decommissioning" Debate, the DUP Talks Team led by the Party Leader issued the following statement from Stormont after a meeting with the Secretary of State:

"The Party's position, which was made clear at the election, was that there would be no substantive talks until the illegal arms were surrendered. The Government's stance was that a token number of arms should be surrendered and as the Talks proceeded, further arms, by instalments, should be handed in until all were handed in.

At one time, Mr Spring, for the Dublin Government enunciated a similar principle. Now both Governments have gone back on their pledges and the people of Northern Ireland have the right to know from every party, where they stand on this very important issue. Until there is the handing in of illegal weapons, this Party will not proceed to substantive talks with any group which holds such weapons. That is our position and nothing we have heard today from the British Government leads us to believe that the promises they made to us in the past about decommissioning by the IRA and loyalist paramilitaries are now going to be honoured.

In fact the two Governments are now agreed that IRA/Sinn Fein will be at the table and will be able to negotiate the substantive issues without any surrender of their illegal weaponry.

It is up to the other parties to let the public know where they stand on this important issue.

Progress on substantive issues without progress on the handing over of illegal weaponry is progress towards a united Ireland.