

Statement by the Combined Loyalist Military Command, Belfast, Oct. 13, 1994

After a widespread consultative process initiated by representations from the Ulster Democratic and Progressive Unionist parties, and after having received confirmations and guarantees in relation to the Northern Ireland constitutional position within the United Kingdom, as well as other assurances, and, in the belief that the democratically expressed wishes of the greater number of people in Northern Ireland will be respected and upheld, the Combined Loyalist Military Command will universally cease all operational hostilities as from 12 midnight on Thursday, Oct. 13, 1994.

The permanence of our ceasefire will be completely dependent upon the continued cessation of all nationalist/republican violence; the sole responsibility for a return to war lies with them.

In the genuine hope that this peace will be permanent, we take the opportunity to pay homage to all our fighters, commandoes and volunteers who have paid the human sacrifice. They did not die in vain. The Union is safe.

To our physically and mentally wounded who have served Ulster so unselfishly, we wish a speedy recovery and to the relatives of these men and women, we pledge our continued moral and practical support.

To our prisoners who have undergone so much depravation and degradation with great courage and forbearance, we solemnly promise to leave no stone unturned to secure their freedom.

To our serving officers, NCOs and personnel, we extend our eternal gratitude for their obedience to orders, for their ingenuity and good humor in the most trying of circumstances, and we commend them for their courageous attitude and unshakable faith over the long years of armed confrontation.

In all sincerity, we offer to the loved ones of all innocent victims over the past 25 years, abject and true remorse. No words of ours will compensate for the intolerable suffering they have undergone during the conflict.

Let us firmly resolve to respect our differing views of freedom, culture and aspiration and never again permit our political circumstance to degenerate into bloody warfare.

We are on the threshold of a new and exciting beginning with our battles in future being political battles, fought on the side of honesty, decency and democracy against the negativity of mistrust, misunderstanding and malevolence so that together we can bring forth a wholesome society in which our children and their children will know the meaning of peace.

Copyright 1994 Irish American Post. Comments or questions regarding content or subscription information (\$12/year) to IAP@celtic.stanford.edu or The Irish American Post, 301 N. Water St., Milwaukee, WI 53202 (414-273-8132).