

18 May 1998

## Alderdice calls for a declaration that the war is over.

The Alliance Leader Lord Alderdice met this evening with the Leader of the opposition, John Bruhan, and with the Taoiseach Bertie Ahern in Dublin. The Alliance Leader described his meeting with the Taoiseach as "extremely positive and worthwhile".

Lord Alderdice said:

"We looked at all the issues in the run-up to the Referendum and agreed that while all the participants and the two governments were doing all they could for a positive outcome on Friday, one of the most powerful contributions to a 'Yes' result would be a clear undertaking by those parties which had been associated with paramilitary violence that the war is over.

"They can use whichever words they choose to say it, but if they can make it clear that the days of violence are over, ended, finished for good it would build confidence throughout the community as a whole in a very powerful way.

"I do feel optimistic as we go into the last few days of this campaign, about the future generally and about the outcome of the referendum on Friday. The 'No' campaign is capitalised on the very understandable wave of emotion in the community, but I think it has peaked. As people look increasingly at the realities which would emerge from a 'Yes' vote or a 'No' vote, they come increasingly to the view that 'Yes' spells hope and 'No' would spell only despair and disaster."

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