

JOINT DECLARATION: BRIEF FOR THE PRIME MINISTER

Points to Make

1. Intelligence consistently confirms the Provisionals are serious about wanting to end violence, but will not risk doing so without a sufficient pretext. The Taoiseach believes, and is prepared in principle to guarantee, that a Joint Declaration in the terms you have seen would do the trick.
2. Duty to test this proposition further. A PIRA cessation leading to permanent peace would have multiple political and practical benefits. Equally, must not compromise our principles or sign up to anything which would be counter-productive in security or political terms.
3. Irish Government have much improved their draft. Nevertheless, imperative that we have an explicit reference to Northern Ireland's statutory constitutional guarantee in the text itself. Needed to demonstrate that fears of betrayal are unfounded.
4. The text you have incorporates UK amendments (not yet put to the Irish) to achieve this. With these amendments, as Patrick Mayhew can explain, the key principles for us are now protected.
5. I want to sound Jim Molyneaux later today on Privy Council terms. Propose initially to seek his advice, and if possible to secure his private support and public muted reaction. Would also, of course, be seeing him as party leader of the UUP, and drawing on my personal good relationship with him. Northern Ireland Secretary will see him separately about UUP wish list such as Northern Ireland Select Committee and reform of Northern Ireland legislative procedures at Westminster.
6. I propose to show Jim Molyneaux the text and also an intelligence assessment. For this purpose the JD text would include the constitutional guarantee, but in the short form without the words in square brackets. (These would be included in what is put to the Irish Government though we could fall back to the shorter version.) Taoiseach may maintain the view that any amendment is unsaleable.
7. If way clear, would write on Tuesday to the Taoiseach confirming our understanding of his guarantees, and insisting on explicit inclusion of constitutional guarantee.
8. If clear that further progress cannot be made, we will have broken on imperative need to include constitutional guarantee. This is the right issue, as it is the foundation of our policy in respect of Northern Ireland. We would need to work with the Irish to ensure that the Provisionals took the blame.

Other Points

Deliverability

The intelligence assessment is that the Provisional leadership are the best judges, and that they could deliver the bulk, and perhaps the whole, of the Provisional movement.

Price for JD should be surrender, not cessation

The intelligence is clear that PIRA will not surrender. But also clear that they envisage more than a ceasefire - an end to PIRA violence leading to lasting peace on all sides.

Insist that PIRA stacks arms

The Irish Government say this has not been an element of the negotiations thus far. Insistence now would be seen as a wrecking tactic. The Provisional leadership will want to enforce the ceasefire on their own members, and to have weapons in store against Loyalists and splinter groups. But right at a later stage to put pressure on the Provisionals to turn cessation into peace and give up the deep arms hides.

Other points on JD text (eg bury paragraph 2)

Some scope to suggest adjustment when I write to the Taoiseach. But major late changes would probably make the text unsaleable.

Amnesties

Not raised so far. No commitment should be given.

What if PIRA cessation does not hold?

Pressure can be brought to get it restarted. Declaration will not have compromised our principles.

Why the rush?

Hume/Adams statement of 25 September has caused mounting tension. Increases with each day which passes without public product.