

**JOINT DECLARATION: IRA RESPONSE - CONTINGENT LINES TO TAKE**

**SCENARIO ONE: ACCEPTANCE BY THE IRA OF THE JD AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF IMMEDIATE CESSATION OF VIOLENCE**

We welcome this very positive response to the Joint Declaration. I very much hope that events in the next few weeks will prove that the IRA really mean this - if they do then this New Year could be the beginning of a new peaceful democratic future for Northern Ireland.

As the Prime Minister said in House (15 December) if there is a permanent end to violence, and if Sinn Fein commits itself to the democratic process, then we will be ready to enter into preliminary exploratory dialogue with it within three months. But, first it must end violence for good.

IRA's cessation accompanied by their interpretation of JD

Naturally we welcome the Provisionals' decision. Hope that in the coming weeks they prove that they really mean it. Understand that they have a view about what the Declaration implies, and that it is different from ours. We are ready to explain what we believe to be clear already. There will be no adjustment to the Declaration, and no side deals. What the Declaration makes clear (para 10) is that the important thing for the Provisionals is that they have stopped permanently the use of or support for violence.

An unannounced ceasefire

Pleased that there has been no violence for some while. It is much better to have peace on the streets rather than shootings and bombings. But we should not draw any hasty conclusions. What is necessary is that the IRA should renounce for good the use of support for violence. We have to see that, and see that they mean it, before they can - as the Joint Declaration says - join in dialogue on the way ahead.

### Republican split

Tragic that there are still some people who prefer violence to peace. Their decision to continue with murder and destruction will not be welcomed anywhere in Northern Ireland, and will not shift us an inch from our determination to pursue dialogue with all those who are committed to exclusively peaceful methods and show that they abide by the democratic process.

### SCENARIO TWO: REJECTION OF JD BY IRA WITH ASSERTION OF JUSTIFICATION

There can be no reason and no excuse for continuing with the violence. There will never be a better opportunity for the Provisionals to opt for a peaceful future, but they have chosen to put their need for violence above the people's wish for peace. We hope they may yet change their minds. We shall not be deflected from pursuing jointly the path of peace and reconciliation with the Irish Government and those democratically mandated parties

who are committed exclusively to peaceful methods. We and the Irish Government shall continue steadfastly to oppose the terrorists, stepping up wherever practicable the intensity of our measures.

### IRA "spectacular"

There never has been any excuse or reason for this kind of atrocity. But at this time, when there has never been a better opportunity for the Provisionals to opt for a peaceful future, it is especially reprehensible that they should "announce" their decision in this way. The people of Ireland, North and South, and in Great Britain will not find it easy to forgive them. We still hope that they may end the violence for good, but Mr Adams' talk of peace rings hollow now.

### SCENARIO THREE: QUALIFIED ACCEPTANCE OF DECLARATION BY THE PROVISIONALS

### Temporary three day ceasefire

What all the people of Ireland and Great Britain want to hear

from the Provisionals is that they have given up violence for good. Sinn Fein has talked a lot in the past months about the need to take risks for peace. It's a pity they do not take their own words seriously. Any day without killing is welcome. But there can be no excuse now for avoiding a permanent renunciation of violence.

Ceasefire subject to new conditions [possibly reviving claim that two week break would have been enough to enter into exploratory dialogue]

In Brussels on 29 October two Governments said there could be no secret agreements or understandings between them and organisations supporting violence as a price for its cessation. We are not negotiating with the Provisionals for peace in this democracy.

The Joint Declaration set out a clear challenge to the Provisionals. They should give up violence for good, and show that they have done so. The way would then be open for them to enter the political arena as a

democratic party under the law.

HMG has never proposed a meeting with the IRA following a two week ceasefire. The authoritative message from HMG of 5 November was published in the House of Commons on 29 November. That remains the position.

Seeking further elucidation

The Joint Declaration is quite clear. But it is important for everyone concerned to study it carefully, to be entirely sure they understand it. We hope that Sinn Fein will not delay before responding positively to the heartfelt wishes of so many people for a permanent peace in Northern Ireland.

Need for an amnesty for prisoners

There will be no secret deals or bargains with terrorists as a price for their ending violence. There can be no exploratory dialogue with Sinn Fein until they have stopped the violence for good and shown that they have.

There are no political prisoners, and there can be no amnesty for those convicted of terrorist crimes.

SCENARIO FOUR: LOYALIST CEASEFIRE

Welcome any diminution of violence. But it is not ceasefires we want - it is a permanent end to all violence

People convicted of crimes will continue to be sentenced by the courts, and there are well understood an established procedures for dealing with sentenced prisoners.

There is no question of "allowing" people in any part of the United Kingdom to hold weapons illegally, or in other ways to depart from what is clearly laid down in law.

The law will continue to be applied. Those who have committed crimes will have it enforced against them. So will those who have been found illegally in possession of weapons.

[There are precedents in the United Kingdom for "amnesties" to allow people to surrender illegally held weapons. But we have no plans to introduce one in Northern Ireland.]

Once the Provisionals have renounced violence for good, they can within 3 months enter preliminary talks with the Government. These would not be talks on Northern

Ireland's political future. They would be talks about how Sinn Fein could enter the political process. The 5 November document set out the purposes for exploratory dialogue. These were:

- i) to explore the basis on which Sinn Fein would come to be admitted to inclusive political talks process to which the British Government is committed but without anticipating the negotiations within that process
- ii) to exchange views on how Sinn Fein will be able over a period to play the same part as the current constitutional parties in the public life of Northern Ireland
- iii) to examine the practical consequences of the ending of violence.

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from wherever it comes. Call on  
 all those who use or support  
 violence in Northern Ireland to  
 stop it now, and stop it for  
 good.

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