



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

STATEMENT ON THE REFERENDUM PROPOSAL

*Paragraph 10c of the Anglo-Irish Communique of 28 February states that the purpose of the multilateral consultations with the Northern Ireland parties commencing next Monday will be inter alia to consider a referendum in Northern Ireland in parallel with one in the south on the same day "to mandate support for a process to create lasting stability, based on the repudiation of violence for any political purpose."*

The North Down MP in a statement says that this is in effect an all-Ireland plebiscite and can be regarded as the first such vote since 1918. This opportunity must not be missed of getting the Dublin Government, just this once, to put its money where its mouth is and prove that all parties there actually mean what they say regarding consent.

Mr McCartney said "This process is about taking risks for peace and doing what our Government failed previously to insist on in 1974 and 1985: a radical change to Articles 2 and 3 of the Irish Constitution to do away with the constitutional imperative to bring about Irish unity by any means possible."

"Some anodyne words in favour of peaceful resolution of disputes will not do if the pro-union people are obliged to go along with the perceived diminution of sovereignty such a referendum entails. I do not want a referendum that is declaratory but one which can actually change the atmosphere at the talks; one, which if endorsed by all the people on the island, would bind both governments and all the people to exclusively peaceful means".

"I will be pressing both our Government and that in Dublin, and the other parties to the talks, to prove their *bona fides* by agreeing to a wording that rejects Irish unity brought about by other than peaceful means; and for those words to go into the Irish Constitution."

"If passed by all the peoples of the island it would have unique constitutional and moral authority, and greatest of all, enable the Republican movement to renounce force without diminishing their political goal. Only by amending Articles 2 and 3 in this way, can the IRA accept that a greater authority than that which presently permits their use of force, has spoken."

"A unique opportunity for an amendment process that would not destabilise the south nor risk failure, now exists. A general set of remarks in favour of a cessation of violence would be valueless for the very reason that it both diminished Ulster's self determination while missing out on the only possible moment when the south could cheerfully dispense with its constitutional imperative."

29 February 1996

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adamsj

Thu Feb 29 22:34 page 1

NO.	SLUG	From	Date	Status	Time
-	IRISH-BRITAIN-MAJOR-1STLD	BENreuu	Thu Feb 29 21:55	Wire	3:25

:BC-IRISH-BRITAIN-MAJOR 1STLD

Britain's Major says IRA must renounce violence

(Updates with Major quotes, IRA statement, new throughout)

By Paul Mylrea

BANGKOK, March 1 (Reuter) - British Prime Minister John Major, dismissing as a "sick joke" an IRA statement dashing hopes of a renewed ceasefire, said on Friday the Northern Ireland peace process would continue with or without the guerrillas.

In a defiant message to the Irish Republican Army from Bangkok, where he is attending a summit of European and Asian leaders, Major said the guerrillas had to give up violence for their political wing, Sinn Fein, to enter full peace talks.

"For the last 25 years the IRA have murdered people, they've bombed people, they've kneecapped people, they've dealt with people in a most disgusting and disgraceful way...Nobody is going to give way to them, not now, not in the future, not ever.

"They either decide to behave properly and get into democracy or democracy will go on without them," Major said.

Major and Irish Prime Minister John Bruton on Wednesday set a date of June 10 for the start of all-party peace talks designed to map out the future of the British-ruled province.

The announcement was intended to restore the momentum of a process shattered by IRA bombs in London earlier this month which killed three and ended a 17-month guerrilla ceasefire.

Both governments are due to start 10 days of intensive consultations with the main political parties in Northern

adamsj

Thu Feb 29 22:34 page 2

NO.	SLUG	From	Date	Status	Time
-	IRISH-BRITAIN-MAJOR-1STLD	BENreuu	Thu Feb 29 21:55	Wire	3:25

Ireland on Monday to thrash out the details of elections that will precede the June 10 negotiations.

But they have ruled out ministerial contacts with Sinn Fein or its entry into the June talks until the ceasefire restarts.

Sinn Fein has been campaigning for months to get all-party peace talks started and has given a cautious welcome to Wednesday's Anglo-Irish announcement.

In its statement on Thursday, the IRA confirmed it had held talks with Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams as well as moderate nationalist SDLP leader John Hume.

But the statement, issued in the name of the IRA's governing Army Council, made no mention of a ceasefire.

Instead, it said the ceasefire broke down because of British "abuse" of the truce, which the IRA called so that Sinn Fein could join in peace talks.

It did not rule out a return to the ceasefire later, but it left the IRA still on a war footing against a government which it argues is illegally occupying Northern Ireland.

Major, who said the statement was "frankly like a sick joke", reacted angrily to the IRA charge that his refusal to set a date for all-party talks earlier had led to the breakdown of the ceasefire.

"For them (the IRA) to claim that anybody is responsible for what has happened in Northern Ireland over the last 25 years except them will be received with incredulity by anyone who knows anything about Northern Ireland," Major said.

He repeated that the IRA had to stop its violence and address the issue of scrapping its weapons before Sinn Fein could be fully integrated into the peace process.

adamsj

Thu Feb 29 22:34 page 3

<u>NO.</u>	<u>SLUG</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Time</u>
-	IRISH-BRITAIN-MAJOR-1STLD	BENreuu	Thu Feb 29 21:55	Wire	3:25

"There's an option for Sinn Fein. They can decide they're going to opt into the democratic process, call a ceasefire, meet with the other parties, ...and deal with decommissioning, or they can decide to opt out of the democratic process...

"But if they decide to opt out of the democratic process, they cannot stop it. It will proceed without them," he said.

He warned he would brook no delay in the talks. "The time for waiting is gone... The offer lies on the table. It's up to them," a grim Major said.

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adamsj

Thu Feb 29 22:37 page 1

NO.	SLUG	From	Date	Status	Time
	IRA STATEMENT	BENcpyu	Thu Feb 29 17:53	Wire	1:18

From : SALLYANNE GODSON NEWSG Belfast

To : GNS

LONDON NEWSDESKS

THE IRA ISSUED THIS STAMENT IN DUBLIN TONIGHT

NB EMBARGOED UNTIL 18.00

"WE WISH TO CONFIRM THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LEADERSHIP OF OGLAIGH NA HEIREANN MET WITH JOHN HUME AND GERRY ADAMS AT THEIR REQUEST. THERE WAS A DETAILED AND OPEN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. WE ;LISTENED ATTENTATIVELY TO THE CASE PRESENTED BY BOTH LEADERS AND NOTED THEIR SHARED COMMITMENT TO RESTORING THE PEACE PROCESS. FOR OUR PART WE RESTATED OUR ABSOLUTE COMMITMENT TO OUR REPUBLICAN OBJECTIVES, WHICH INCLUDE THE FREE EXERCISE BY THE IRISH PEOPLE OF OUR INALIENABLE RIGHT TO NATIONAL SELF-DETERMINATION. WE ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE WHAT WE SAID ON FEB 9, STRESSING THAT A RESOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT IN OUR COUNTRY DEMANDS JUSTICE AND AN INCLUSIVE NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITHOUT PRECONDITIONS. WE POINTED OUT TO MR HUME AND ME ADAMS THAT THE FAILURE BY THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT TO PUT IN PLACE INCLUSIVE NEGOTIATIONS FREE FROM PRECONDITIONS, THE ABUSE OF THE PEACE PROCESS BY THE BRITISH OVER EIGHTEEN MONTHS AND THE ABSENCE OF AN EFFECTIVE AND DEMOCRATIC APPROACH CAPABLE OF PROVIDING AN IRREVOCABLE MOMENTUM TOWARDS A JUST AND LASTING PEACE IN IRELAND, WERE THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS WHICH LED TO THE FAILURE THUS FAR OF THE IRISH PEACE PROCESS. WE REPEAT THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO FACE UP TO OUR RESPONSIBILITIES, OTHERS NEED TO DO LIKEWISE." ENDS

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