

For PM's box.

File



STATEMENT FROM PETER BROOKE ON IRA

Christmas is a season of peace and goodwill so any announcement that killing and maiming is to stop, even for a few days, is welcome news.

This will, however, bring little comfort to families who are facing this Christmas without a loved one, killed in the name of a cause which has no relevance for the Ireland or Europe of today.

Equally, it is of little comfort to those whose churches, homes, schools and workplaces have been destroyed by bombs and who are celebrating Christmas against the backdrop of wrecked churches and homes.

The people of Northern Ireland want peace. If the IRA is serious in sharing that wish then let them prove it by continuing this suspension indefinitely and giving up violence for good. That is what we all want - that would truly set the stage for a happy new year. If they cannot face that challenge the people, north and south, can only conclude that the IRA's real Christmas message came earlier this month in Belfast and Craigavon.

sc/NIO - aw  
23/12/91

(given to media 9pm tonight)