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NEG 35/96

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PST; PSS; Ministers Owen,
de Rossa & Taylor; Attorney
General; Minister of State
Coveney; Messrs. Teahon,
Donlon & Dalton; Amb.
London and Washington; Joint
Secretary; Counsellors A-I.

DUP News Release

STATEMENT FROM DR PAISLEY DUP STANCE ON DECOMMISSIONING

18/09/96

In order that the people of Northern Ireland might have a clear view of where the DUP stands in the present talks regarding the "Decommissioning" Debate, the DUP Talks Team led by the Party Leader issued the following statement from Stormont after a meeting with the Secretary of State:

"The Party's position, which was made clear at the election, was that there would be no substantive talks until the illegal arms were surrendered. The Government's stance was that a token number of arms should be surrendered and as the Talks proceeded, further arms, by instalments, should be handed in until all were handed in.

At one time, Mr Spring, for the Dublin Government enunciated a similar principle. Now both Governments have gone back on their pledges and the people of Northern Ireland have the right to know from every party, where they stand on this very important issue. Until there is the handing in of illegal weapons, this Party will not proceed to substantive talks with any group which holds such weapons. That is our position and nothing we have heard today from the British Government leads us to believe that the promises they made to us in the past about decommissioning by the IRA and loyalist paramilitaries are now going to be honoured.

In fact the two Governments are now agreed that IRA/Sinn Fein will be at the table and will be able to negotiate the substantive issues without any surrender of their illegal weaponry.

It is up to the other parties to let the public know where they stand on this important issue.

Progress on substantive issues without progress on the handing over of illegal weaponry is progress towards a united Ireland.

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DUP News Release

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19/9
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Donlon & Dalton; Ambs.
London and Washington: Joint
Secretary: Counsellors A-I.

Alderman Peter D Robinson MP

Secretary of State Fails to Condemn Threat

18/09/96

In his letter to me about the death threat against Billy Wright and Alex Kerr, the Secretary of State failed to condemn the terrorist death threat. In the only government statement on the CLMC death threat, again the government failed to condemn the threat. In their five page exoneration of the PUP and UDP indicating that there was no breach of the Mitchell Principles neither the British nor Dublin government condemned the death threat.

This absence of condemnation is capable of conveying a message to the Ulster public that the government would not be unhappy if these two men, whom they consider to be a thorn in their flesh, are to remain under threat - or worse.

This conclusion can be drawn all the more easily set against the back cloth of an inexplicable decision that no prosecution is to be taken against a man intercepted by the RUC on his way to the home in Mid-Ulster of Alex Kerr, armed with a pistol. The man admitted under questioning by the RUC that he had been sent by the paramilitary Leadership in Belfast but used the standard IRA excuse that he had been acting under duress and only intended to frighten Mr Kerr.

The decision to deny the Courts the opportunity to determine the validity of his excuse and to take no action on the firearms charge will again lead people to believe that the authorities will be soft on anyone else who might seek to carry out similar activity.

* Note to Editors:

Mr Robinson is believed to have made the same accusation during Monday's session of the Talks. It is understood that the Secretary of State did not reply.

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DUP *News* **Release**

Alderman Peter D Robinson MP

Robinson Comment on Alliance Mitchell Principles Indictment

18/09/96

The DUP Deputy Leader said that the Alliance Party attack at the Talks today left him feeling that he had been **savaged by a toothless rabbit**. The Alliance Party failed to produce a shred of evidence and had to admit that they had made an inaccurate allegation against William McCrea and their case against him had been framed without even reading his speech in Portadown.

Dr Alderdice may attempt to wash his hands by indicating he does not want to see the DUP and UUP thrown out of the Talks. He knows that this is not a decision that is within his competence. The action taken by the Alliance Party is the action that leads to expulsion from the Talks. It is clear that this is the real motivation of the Alliance Party.

