

RESPONSE TO 1 SEPTEMBER COMMUNICATION.

In our communication of August 14 we outlined our doubts about your commitment to the development of a real peace process. Your message of 1 September 1993 does little to remove these doubts.

From the beginning of this process we had assured you of our preparedness to be as reasonable and flexible as possible. Our commitment to the search for a genuine peace process was evidenced by the fact that we positively conveyed the very specific request from your representative for a two week suspension of military activity on the part of the IRA to the IRA leadership. You informed us that the discussions which would follow on from such a suspension would result in republicans being convinced that armed struggle was no longer necessary.

The positive response to this request by the leadership of the Irish Republican Army underlined the willingness on the republican side to facilitate movement towards a real peace process.

The rejection of this substantial gesture by you has not only prevented further movement, but has damaged the project and increased the difficulties involved. This, and your present attempts to deny this aspect of the contact between us, can only be regarded with the utmost scepticism and must raise serious questions about your motives in all of this.

As we have already pointed out we found our preliminary meeting valuable. Despite our reservations, and the difficulties since, we still believe that there exists a basis for progress which can be developed into a genuine, realistic and democratic peace process. This, however, requires a degree of political will to move forward which has, up to now, been singularly lacking on your part.

Sinn Fein is engaged in a serious attempt through our contact with you and with others to develop such a process. Our party president Gerry Adams is currently discussing with SDLP leader John Hume this possibility. We have publicly called for a new and imaginative initiative by the Dublin and London Governments, based on democratic principles, to break the present deadlock.

Our commitment to any genuine peace process which sets equality, justice and political stability as its objective is a matter of public record. Sinn Fein has, like every other party to this conflict, its own particular political analysis. But the future shape of Irish society is a matter for the Irish people to decide democratically, without impediment of any kind, through dialogue and all embracing negotiations.

Sinn Fein remains committed to such a real peace process.

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