

~~NO TYPED COPY
DELIVERED TO ED ON NIGHT OF 18/10/98.~~

POL35/555(1)
DECOMM +
"TIME".

8m Sunday 18/10/98. (written)

①

Fri 16/10/98. (conceived)

A Chara,

This paper is about the ~~Good~~ Rep. Mov, the Good Friday Agreement + the removal of all arms from Irish life + culture. It's not an easy subject.

As you are aware, that whilst fully understanding + working within the Rep. struggle during the last 30 years I have a total abhorrence to violence. I also know that this desire for a country/nation free from killing + bloodshed is at the very heart of the Rep. leadership's drive for a peaceful Ireland (North + South).

For simplicity (~~in this paper~~) + clarity within this paper, I will use the word "decommissioning". I don't particularly like the word because it has an imperialistic tone about it + I agree with the Rep. analysis that the Rep. Mov. is clearly operating within Good Friday Agreement P20 - Decommissioning).

I wrote in my paper of 18/8/98 (ie. the post-Omech Paper) that I was "attempting to unravel the inherited core values of the Rep. family - The desires, the myths, the realities, the deaths + the

struggles of the past generations. All of these blending + merging into the last 30 years of struggle, narrowing from the broad fields of Wexford to the narrow corridors of the Good Friday Agreement.

What is the Rep Mov's position, feeling, on arms on this day Fri 16/10/98? My belief is that arms are not seen as the hideous shaped metals, mass-produced for profit by those very countries who preach democracy + peace; weapons that every evening our television screens remind us how brutal we can be to each other; weapons that slaughter innocent women + children in Africa, the Middle East and the Balkans.

How contrary to the core Rep belief of fraternity, freedom and justice to all men + women, to all nations + to all cultures. How ~~contrary~~ paradoxically contrary to the belief systems of the leaders of 1798. ~~h~~

Why is it then that the volunteers + the leadership of ~~the~~ Rep Mov, without exception ~~are~~ are fiercely resistant to the idea of decommissioning? The reality is that they are not opposed to decommissioning but they are completely distrustful of moving ~~overnight~~ after 600 years of struggle to the realisation that the war is really

over. This is a ~~clear~~ mirror image of the struggle which ~~has taken~~ ^{took} place within the leadership of the Rep. Mov. ~~from~~ Since the mid 1980s as they inched their way through the 1st + 2nd ceasefires ^{and} a ~~hostile~~ reluctant British Government towards the Good Friday Agreement.

In plain Northern Irish terms, the negotiators of the G.F. Agreement were fully aware of the part that arms played within the armed struggle. They were fully aware of the sacrifices made throughout the long years of Rep. struggle by the volunteers against the ~~British~~ military supremacy of the British ~~forces~~ army and sadly in the latter years against the loyalist volunteers. Against this background the Rep. negotiators wisely agreed paragraph 3, pp 20 - Decommissioning (The Agreement). "to work constructively + in good faith with the ~~independent~~ ^{independent}, international commission + to use any influence they may have to achieve the decommissioning of all para-military arms within 2 years following endorsement ~~of~~ in referendums North + South of the agreement + in the context of the implementation of the overall settlement."

It may be difficult to see it like this, but this is a British agenda. -

squeezing out of ~~the~~ Rep Mov. gun by gun, kilo by kilo, volunteer by volunteer ~~demoralisation by demoralisation~~.
imposing a culture of demoralisation
a culture of drip, drip surrender
which is light years away from the thinking
of the leadership of the Rep. Mov.

Let me suggest another agenda ^{an Irish agenda} to
the inheritors of the 1758 tradition. ~~the~~
the Rep. leadership. Weapons of war are a
mere commodity + should be seen as such.
The leadership should continue with their
Irish agenda. Take the high moral ground, not
as a gimmick but with absolute sincerity +
on ~~their own~~ Irish soil pile up the first
portions of the weapons of war + run an
old-fashioned steam-roller over them. ^{then} send
the picture of this act of courage to every
country + every newspaper + every media
station in the entire world to the people of
no property, to the poor, to the people without
hope + equally to those rich + powerful
nations whose power depends on arms +
control. Let the world see in one moment
of history who the real ~~leaders~~ peace
makers ~~are~~ in Ireland are.

This act of ^{courage} ~~bravery~~ will clear the way
for ^{the beginnings of} an unarmed police service

political + military
 This act of ~~cowage~~ ^{courage} will ~~strip away~~
 any moral enable the Irish + British
 Governments to implement an unarmed
 police service + ~~begin the implementation~~
~~of~~ enable the ~~British~~ British to
 introduce their own United Kingdom
 Private Arms Act 1977. Which in turn
 into ~~the~~ ~~the~~ ~~Six~~ ~~countries~~ the North of
 Ireland, achieving one of the cherished
 goals of the Rep. Mov. - an arms-free society
 in a demilitarised state.

This alternative, Irish agenda has
 a deeper rooted

There is a second + ^{even} more important
 reason ~~pressed~~ for pursuing that agenda.

Why decommissioning should be taken
 out the equation sooner rather than
 later and that reason is TIME.

The leadership of the movement by their
 public statements clearly recognise that
 decommissioning is being used ~~as~~ to delay
 the implementation of the Good Friday
 Agreement + it is not beyond the hopes of
 some of the Unionist family to write the
 Rep. Mov. out of that Agreement
 altogether. However, the real danger lies
 in the British Parliamentary System and
 to allow the decommissioning issue to
 run its natural course of 2 years
 risks co-inciding with

thus delaying the fuller implementation of the ~~the~~ whole agreement risks ~~getting~~ ~~the~~ getting caught into the last 2 years of the Blair administration and the "back-burner" syndrome^a which British politics would ^{then} prefer Irish affairs to operate.

This could prove disastrous for the Irish & the very worst fears of those Republicans who find it difficult to go along with the present strategy ~~would~~ would be realised ~~that~~ & their present position vindicated.

DECOMMISSIONING AND IMPORTANCE OF TIME

POL35/555(7)

October 16th 1998

A Chara,

This paper is about the Republican Movement, The Good Friday Agreement and the removal of all arms from Irish life and culture. It's not an easy subject.

As you are aware, that whilst fully understanding and working within the Republican struggle during the last thirty years I have a total abhorrence to violence. I also know that this desire for a country free from killing and bloodshed is at the very heart of the Republican leadership's drive for a peaceful Ireland.

For simplicity and clarity within this paper, I will use the word "decommissioning" I don't particularly like the word because it has an imperialistic tone about it and I agree with the analysis that the Republican Movement is clearly operating within Good Friday Agreement (Page 20 'decommissioning').

I wrote in my paper of 18th August 1998 (i.e. the post-Omagh paper) that I was 'attempting to unravel the inherited core values of the Republican Family - The desires, the myths, the realities, the deaths and the struggles of the past generations. All of these blending and merging into the last thirty years of struggle, narrowing from the broad fields of Wexford to the narrow corridors of the Good Friday Agreement.'

What is the Republican Movement's feelings on arms on this day Friday 16th October 1998? My belief is that arms are not seen as the hideously shaped pieces of metal that they are, mass produced for profit by those very countries who preach democracy and peace; weapons that every evening on our television screens remind us how brutal we can be to each other. Weapons that slaughter innocent women and children in Africa, the Middle East and the Balkans. How contrary to the core Republican beliefs of Fraternity, Freedom, and Justice for all. How paradoxically contrary to the belief systems of the leaders of 1798.

Why is it then that the volunteers and the leadership of Oglagh na hÉireann without exception are fiercely resistant to the idea of 'decommissioning'? The reality is that they are not opposed to 'decommissioning' but that they are completely distrustful of moving after 600 years of struggle to the realisation (that the war is really over.) This is a mirror image of the

October 16th 1998

struggle which took place within the leadership of the Republican Movement since the mid 1980's as they inched their way towards the first and second ceasefires with a reluctant British Government blocking the journey at every step. Without the Labour Government there would be no Good Friday Agreement.

In plain Northern Irish terms the negotiators of the Good Friday Agreement were fully aware of the part that arms played within the 'armed struggle'. They were fully aware of the sacrifices made throughout the long years by the volunteers against the military supremacy of the British Army and sadly in the latter years against the loyalist volunteers. Against this background the Republican negotiators wisely agreed paragraph 3 Page 20 'decommissioning' (The Agreement) 'to work constructively and in good faith with the independent, international commission and to use any influence they may have to achieve the 'decommissioning' of all paramilitary arms within two years following endorsement in referenda North and South of the Agreement and in the context of the implementation of the overall settlement.'

It may be difficult to see it like this, but this is a British Agenda:- Squeezing out of a reluctant Republican Movement gun by gun, kilo by kilo, volunteer by volunteer, imposing a culture of demoralisation, a culture of drip, drip surrender which is light years from the thinking of the leadership of the Republican Movement.

Let me suggest another agenda, an Irish agenda, to the inheritors of the 1798 tradition. Weapons of war are a mere commodity and should be seen as such. The leadership should continue with their own Irish peace agenda. Taking the high moral ground, not as a gimmick, but with absolute sincerity and on Irish soil pile up the first portions of the weapons of war and run an old fashioned steam roller over them.

The picture of this act of moral and political courage would be received in every country and every newspaper and in every media station in the entire world.

To the people of no property, to the poor, to the people without hope and equally to those rich and powerful nations whose power depends on arms and control. Let the world see in one moment of history who the real peace makers in Ireland are.

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This act of political and military courage will enable the Irish and British Governments to speedily implement an unarmed police service, and would enable the British to introduce their own 'United Kingdom Private Arms Act 1997' into the North of Ireland, thus achieving one of the cherished goals of the Republican Movement, an Arms-free society in a demilitarised state.

There is a second and even more important reason why "decommissioning" should be taken out of the equation sooner rather than later and that reason is TIME. The leadership of the movement, by their public statements, clearly recognise that "decommissioning" is being used to delay the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, and it is not beyond the hopes of some of the Unionist family to write the Republican Movement out of the Agreement altogether. However, the real danger lies in the British Parliamentary system and to allow the "decommissioning" issue to run its natural course of two years, thus delaying the fuller implementation of the whole Agreement risks getting caught into the last 2 years of the Blair administration when traditionally the "back-burner syndrome" comes into play, when Prime Ministers are so concentrated on their own survival that they have little or no space for anything other than re-election. This has happened many times over the last thirty years and could prove disastrous for the current peace process.

At this moment in our history time is more important than weapons.

June