

# Irish Republican Information Service

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## MAJOR REJECTS HUME/ADAMS CONDITIONS

ACCORDING to a report in the *Irish Times* on November 26 John Major has rejected the conditions laid down by the Provisionals and the SDLP leader John Hume for another unilateral ceasefire. The newspaper stated that John Hume received a reply the previous weekend which will be published in a Belfast newspaper (probably in the *Belfast Telegraph*) in the next couple of days (November 27 or 28).

Major has rejected an automatic entry to the Stormont talks for the Provisionals if they call another unilateral "cessation" as well as their demand for a timescale for talks. This would mean an indefinite "decontamination" period for the Provisionals after a ceasefire before being "invited" by Patrick Mayhew to enter the talks.

This move followed a meeting between John Major and David Trimble, Ulster Unionist Party leader in Downing Street on November 21. Major is believed to have told Trimble that the Hume/Adams proposals would be unacceptable to him, his own backbenchers, the British House of Commons and the UUP. Trimble has denied striking a deal with Major to ensure the nine UUP votes in the British House of Commons in support of the Tory government in return for Major's rejection of the Hume/Adams proposals.

Meanwhile, US National Security Advisor Anthony Lake said in a TV interview on November 24 that "the talks, frankly, are not going well." Even if the Provisionals agreed to another unilateral ceasefire "there's always a danger that a ceasefire could again be broken," he said.

## CAR-BOMB PLANTED AT RUC BARRACKS IN DERRY CITY CENTRE

A 600lb car-bomb was left outside the main gates of the headquarters of the English paramilitary police (RUC) in Derry's city centre on November 21. A caller on behalf of the Continuity Army Council of the IRA rang the Derry media at 11.30am warning that a bomb in the boot of a car outside the barracks in Strand Road would explode in 20 minutes.

British army bomb disposal personnel defused the bomb in the vehicle, a black Renault 11, in a remote explosion shortly before 1pm. A senior RUC officer admitted after the attack that the British Crown forces had been on "alert" in the previous few days when a mass operation of raids, searches and arrests took place in nationalist areas of the city. "Unfortunately our activity over the weekend was not enough," said the RUC man. Local people claimed there was a virtual curfew in operation with pedestrians and motorists being stopped and homes and workplaces being raided. Following the car-bomb attack the British closed off Strand Road indefinitely. SDLP leader John Hume said that those responsible for the attack on the British Crown were the "enemies of Ireland". In a response on November 23 Republican Sinn Féin President, Ruairi Ó Brádaigh said that John Hume may seek to brand those who continue to seek a British withdrawal and Irish national independence but that did not take away from the validity and integrity of their objectives. He continued: "The men and women of 1916 were similarly abused by British and pro-British elements. This has continued down the years and as recently as 1971 the Dublin foreign minister used exactly that term to mark those who actively opposed full membership of the EEC by the 26-County State.

"Of course it all depends on one's version of Ireland. Those in the SDLP and the Provisionals who are willing to settle for a reformed Stormont with cross-Border boards would certainly see people who continue the struggle for a free Ireland as their political opponents.

"But John Hume's version of an Ireland remaining under British rule is not the ideal of those who sacrificed down the centuries. Their model of British disengagement from our country and completely new political structures here to share power and decision-making among majorities and minorities has a legitimacy that not even Mr Hume can challenge.

"Those in the British forces who fired over 1,000 plastic bullets in Derry last July were not branded 'enemies of Ireland' by John Hume. Why did he not use that description for those in the British army who crushed Derry citizen Dermot McShane to death under an armoured personnel carrier on July 13?" he said.

Speaking on BBC Radio Foyle on November 23 also, Martin McGuinness of the Provisionals said that he wished the Continuity IRA would "go away". When asked by the interviewer if he also wanted the Provisionals military wing to "go away" as they allegedly had the same objectives, McGuinness did not answer the question.

## 'ELEVENTH NIGHT' LOYALIST ATTACK ON FAMILY

A PROTESTANT family were pulled from their car and attacked by a loyalist mob at an 'eleventh night' bonfire in July 1995 when they were mistaken for Catholics, a court was told on November 19. The driver told how he was travelling with his family from Lisburn, County Antrim. Because of disturbances caused by loyalist bonfires there were a number of diversions on the roads. After a number of detours they found themselves driving back towards Lisburn when they were confronted by a mob attending a loyalist bonfire who were blocking the road.

One of the loyalists asked the driver where he was coming from. The driver inadvertently said he was coming from Lisburn, which gave the impression he didn't know the area. The loyalist then said: "Hard luck, you Fenian bastard, you're going the wrong road". He then reached in and took the keys out of the ignition, ordering the man to get out of the car. A crowd of up to 60 people gathered around the car smashing the headlights and rear window. A man with his face covered came forward and threatened to burn the car with the occupants in it.

Around this point someone in the crowd recognised the family as being Protestants and the driver was given his keys back. One of the attackers, who was trying to drag the driver's wife out of the car refused to let go of her and only released her after one of his friends hit him over the head with a bottle.

The driver and his wife, both elderly, suffered health problems as a result of the attack. The woman was hospitalised for 14 weeks. Their grandson, who was in the rear of the car was cut in the face by the broken glass.

The driver was giving evidence at the trial of 22-year-old William Felix Whitten who denied hijacking the car. The man's daughter, who was also in the car, said she recognised Whitten as one of the men who led the attack when she later saw him in a shop in Dromore. The family have had to move out of the village since the incident.

### **DERRY ARMS FIND**

ONE man was arrested after the British police (RUC) captured a quantity of arms in the Dungiven area of County Derry on November 19 during house searches. The RUC seized an AK47 assault rifle, a PRIG grenade and a Mark 16 horizontal mortar. The raids followed the discovery of a newly-dug hole in the banking at the side of a road in County Derry on November 16. A command wire was found in a follow-up search. The RUC claimed a landmine attack was being planned on the British Crown Forces.

### **ARSON ATTACK ON CHURCH**

ST Joseph's Catholic church in Ballygawley, Co Antrim was attacked on November 15. Arsonists broke two stained-glass windows and poured diesel and other flammable liquids through to light the fire. There was widespread smoke damage. The church was saved from more serious damage because the diesel produced thick smoke which took up all the available oxygen and smothered the fire.

The church had previously been attacked in July 1995. This attack was the latest in a string of arson attacks on Catholic-owned property in County Antrim. As St Joseph's was being cleaned after its attack, St Mary's on the Hill primary school in Carrmonee, County Antrim was carrying out repairs also. A petrol bomb thrown into the kitchen of the school caused slight damage before burning itself out.

### **22,000 IRISH HELD IN BRITAIN IN 18-MONTH PERIOD**

MORE than 22,000 Irish people were held in Britain under the repressive Prevention of Terrorism Act during the 18 months of the Provisionals' 1994 ceasefire and 92% of all those detained since 1974 were released without any charge, according to Fuascailt, a prisoners' group in Britain. The group launched an information card on November 20 explaining to people what their rights were if detained under the act.

### **RUC AUTHORITY MEMBER TOOK PART IN DRUMCREE BLOCKADE**

THE BRITISH have finally admitted that a member of the RUC British police's governing body was involved in an illegal loyalist blockade in July last in defiance of the RUC. John Wheeler, Crown Forces minister at Stormont, responded to a written question by SDLP MP Joe Hendron in the British House of Commons on November 21. Wheeler said that Trevor Wilson, a member of the Six-County Police Authority, was seen by the RUC "in close proximity to, but not part of" a loyalist roadblock near Cookstown, County Tyrone on July 9 during the Drumcree crisis.

### **DUNLOY ORANGE PARADE BLOCKED**

A 130-STRONG Orange march was prevented from going through the nationalist village of Dunloy, County Antrim by a 150-strong group of local residents who blocked the route on November 24. After five minutes scuffling with the nationalists the RUC British police told the Orangemen that the parade would have to be cancelled when they saw the protesters wouldn't move. A stand-off developed and lasted for an hour before the Orangemen decided to sing 'God Save the Queen' and disperse. During the stand-off, several journalists were threatened by loyalists and one cameraman had his camera tampered with.

### **PETROL BOMB ATTACK ON RUC**

THE RUC British police were surrounded by up to 50 youths and attacked with petrol bombs in Lurgan, County Armagh on November 24. The attack occurred after the RUC received reports of a suspicious object in Glendenrings factory in Victoria Street shortly after 6pm. When they went to the building they were attacked and trapped in the premises. They called back-up to rescue them. Two plastic bullets were fired by the RUC. The RUC described the attack as "sustained and well-orchestrated".

### **£1,000 FINE FOR LOYALIST FOR POSSESSION OF ARMS**

A MAN walked free from Belfast Crown Court on November 22 after he was found guilty on two charges of having unlawful possession of Sten magazines, ammunition and primers.

Desmond Leslie Lindop (43), a former British Aerospace engineer from Durham, England was cleared of a charge of conspiring with his brother to manufacture sub-machine-guns for a British-backed death squad.

Desmond Lindop was arrested on April 13, 1995 in a car park near his brothers home in Holywood, County Down. Twelve Sten magazines, 400 bullets and 1,000 primers were found in the boot of the car.

Inside the home of Denis Hugh Lindop (47), the RUC found what was described as a "veritable Alladins cave" of arms, ammunition and gun components. Two of the weapons found were home-made sub-machine guns marked "UFF Avenger 1995".

The judge accepted Desmond Lindop's, who he described as a "person well-versed with fire-arms", explanation that he didn't know it was illegal to bring a car-load of weapons into the Six Counties. However he fined him £1,000 for a "stupid rather than a vindictive act".

The judge also accepted that he didn't know that his brother was manufacturing sub-machine guns in his home and cleared him of the conspiracy charge.

The case is similar to one on October 18 (see IRIS 170) when a loyalist, Robert James Stewart, was fined £200 for possession of a gun while under the influence of alcohol. Stewart said he had been taking the gun to a friend near-by when he was arrested as he took aim at a plastic bucket. On the other hand, six Republicans were sentenced in January to between five and seven years in Dublin for possession of a shotgun and a revolver.

### **PRISON CHANGES COSMETIC**

CHANGES to the Six County prison system were announced on November 21 and quickly condemned for only giving the impression of movement while leaving the real problems unaffected.

The changes announced include:

an increase in Christmas home leave from one week to ten days for prisoners who have served more than 12 years;

an increase in leave available to prisoners due to be released in the near future;

the introduction of fortnightly weekend home leave for life sentence prisoners recommended for release;

a reduction of categories of prisoners who must be escorted to attend hospital.

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