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(sent May 97)

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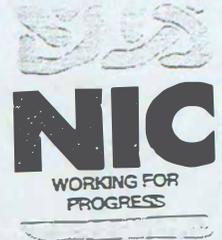
### G7 WORKERS STATEMENT

The Group of 7, which is a voluntary association of business and trade union interests in Northern Ireland, is issuing the attached statement to all employees in Northern Ireland. The Government welcomes this initiative by G7 and I would ask you to take the time to read the statement.

You do not need me to remind you of the opportunities and dangers which we all face in Northern Ireland. But I believe that G7 is right to stress that **each** of us has a responsibility to do whatever we can as individuals to promote greater harmony between us, to exploit the economic opportunities Northern Ireland enjoys and together to build a better future for ourselves and our children.

I am very conscious that as Ministers we carry a particularly heavy responsibility in all these areas, and as a new Ministerial team we have already expressed our appreciation for the tremendous support we received from you all as civil servants. But the G7 initiative reminds us all that we also carry responsibilities as individuals towards each other and towards society at large, and I would encourage each of you to reflect on these points along with all those other thousands of people in Northern Ireland who will be receiving the G7 statement.

MARJORIE MOWLAM



30 May 1997

Dear Colleague

It would be impossible to exaggerate the importance of achieving a successful resolution to the heightening tensions between the communities in the coming weeks. The world's eyes will be upon us – our customers, our suppliers, investors and tourists. For Northern Ireland the moment of truth has arrived, when it must decide whether it wants to be regarded as a serious, credible, first division player or is prepared to accept relegation.

The Statement made by the Prime Minister during his recent visit can prove a turning point if everyone in Northern Ireland grasps this fresh opportunity to achieve peace and political stability.

The Group of 7 came together last summer in light of the community disorder and open conflict which severely damaged Northern Ireland's prospects. This Group, comprising business, trade union, and economic development bodies, has sought to work with the political parties engaged in the talks process to develop the shared objective of improving prospects for economic growth and development. A new and promising relationship has been developed.

We believe that all of us must strive to build a better future together, free from violence and community tension. To achieve this we wish to inform every employee in Northern Ireland of the situation, the choices faced and how each individual can play an important role in determining the future. A simple statement has been prepared (attached). This statement will be copied to every pupil and student in Northern Ireland. We have also approached the Church Leaders to read the statement out at every church on Sunday 8 June.

**We ask you to participate in this initiative.** In liaison with your trade union, or employee representatives, we would invite you to copy this statement to every employee on Friday 6 June, or a few days before if this is more convenient. On Friday 6 June there will be extensive media coverage of this initiative.

The Group of 7 believes that the attitudes and actions of employers and their employees can make a real difference. Your support for this initiative will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Gill Tosh

Felina McManus

Arthur Clive

[Signature]

George O'Grady

Don McNeill

Frank Bunting

G7 8

# Our Future

The business organisations and trade unions and others concerned with economic development have united in the "Group of 7" with the objective of creating more jobs, greater prosperity and better opportunities for everyone in Northern Ireland. **We urge you to read this statement carefully.**

A great future could lie ahead for Northern Ireland, but only if we are prepared to grasp the opportunities facing us.

Decisions to be taken over the next few months will impact on our lives in just about every way possible. The prosperity of our economy, job security, employment prospects, and the whole environment in which we bring up our children will all be affected.

Reducing tension and avoiding conflict in the coming months must be our priority. This is something which everyone can help bring about.

Northern Ireland society faces choices:-

- Real opportunities and real potential for peace, progress, prosperity, or
- More hostility, animosity and sectarianism if the right direction is not chosen.

We all want to work in a harmonious work environment. But that is not enough. Our job security and job prospects also depend on the creation of an accommodating, fair and stable society. Each and every individual has a role to play:-

- We all need to recognise that there can be no place for violence, or threat of violence, in our community.
- We must all act responsibly and consider the impact of our words and actions.
- We should encourage dialogue and discussion to resolve differences, whatever difficulties stand in the way of progress.
- We must build a better society based on consent.
- **Individuals can make a difference.**

**Your words and actions count. Let's build a better future together.**

