 Northern violence increased in the late 1980s. Part of the reason for this was three shiploads of arms and Semtex explosives sent by the Libyan dictator, Colonel Gaddafi, to the Provisionals.
arms and Semtex explosives sent by the Libyan dictator, Colonel Gaddafi, to the Provisionals.
• To damage the economy and make it too expensive for the British to remain in Northern Ireland,
the Provisional used the Semtex to set off large explosions in town centres.
 Although their main targets were buildings not people, people were killed. On 11 November 198
an IRA bomb at a Remembrance Day ceremony in Enniskillen killed eleven Protestants.
• The IRA also announced that anyone providing a service to the British army was a ' <i>legitimate</i>
target and they murdered people like civil servants, caterers and builders.
• Some of their victims were Catholics but most were Protestants. This increased the bitterness
between the two communities.
 In response to IRA violence the British brought in their counter-terrorism agents, the SAS. They
succeeded in intercepting some IRA actions.
• At Loughgall in Co. Armagh on 8 May 1987 they killed eight IRA men as they attacked an RUC
barracks. Guns they captured had been used in 33 raids or murders. Republicans complained
about a British 'shoot to kill' policy.
 The British also used 'supergrasses', i.e. IRA people who informed on their comrades.
• The brush also used Supergrasses, i.e. INA people who informed on their confrades.
 Loyalist violence also increased in response to IRA activity. Between 1986 and 1989 the UDA
killed over 40 Catholics.
 In the early 1990s they succeeded in killing a number of IRA men and Sinn Féin councillors.
Republicans claimed that the security forces showed them who to kill.
• The violence made life difficult for people in Northern Ireland. There was always fear of a bomb
or a shooting. Town centres were sealed off and people were searched when they went shopping.
 The economy was damaged. Businesses closed after bombs went off and no new ones wanted
to open, so unemployment remained high. Only a large British subsidy kept the economy from
collapsing.
Gummary
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Headings	Notes
A NEW DEPARTURE IN SINN FÉIN POLICY	But behind the scenes, changes were taking place. The most important was a gradual shift in
	Provisional thinking.
	• Gerry Adams was impressed by Sinn Féin's success in winning seats in Northern Ireland and
	the republic during the hunger strike. But when the impact of the hunger strikes wore off, they
	lost these seats.
	• Adams thought that one reason for that was the Sinn Féin policy of abstention. Ever since the
	Treaty in 1922, Sinn Féin TDs had refused to take their seats in Dáil Éireann. In 1986 he got
	the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis to end abstention
	He also encouraged Sinn Féin people to get elected to local councils where they helped local
	people with issues like unemployment, vandalism and drugs.
	But this led to tension within the republican movement:
	How could Sinn Féin councillors get jobs for people when IRA bombs were destroying them?
	And would more people vote for Sinn Féin if IRA violence stopped?
	These issues started a debate among republicans. What was the best way forward? Could they
	win the war? If not, might it not be better to cease fire so that talks could begin?
MOVING SLOWLY	Alongside the violence in the late 1980s, there was a complex web of secret 'talks about talks'
TOWARDS A CEASEFIRE	to try to get the Provisionals to agree to a ceasefire.
	There were secret contacts between Gerry Adams and John Hume, and between Adams and
	Taoiseach Charles Haughey.
	They all told Adams that if the IRA called a ceasefire, a 'pan-nationalist' alliance could be
	formed to negotiate with the British.
	 The British held talks with the unionists hoping for agreement on powersharing but these failed
	when Molyneaux wanted to get rid of the Maryfield Secretariat.
	 The British also had informers within the leadership of Sinn Féin and were aware of the debates
	among republicans about future policy. They held secret talks with Provisionals, hoping to
	encourage a more peaceful approach.
Keywordo	Summary

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Headings	Notes
MOVING SLOWLY	Republicans wanted the British to promise to leave Ireland if an agreement was reached
TOWARDS A CEASEFIRE	between nationalists and unionists. This led the Northern Secretary, Peter Brooke, to make an
	important speech in November 1990. In it he said that ' the British government has no selfish
	strategic or economic interest in Northern Ireland'.
THE IRA BOMBS	• But even as the secret 'talks about talks' were going on, the IRA set off bombs in England. In
ENGLAND	1992 it fired mortars into the garden of 10 Downing Street while the British Cabinet was meeting
	and set off a huge bomb in the financial district of London, causing millions of pounds worth of
	damage.
	• This may have been intended to show that the IRA was still strong, even if it did call a ceasefire.
THREE NEW LEADERS	• Three new leaders who appeared on the scene in the early 1990s helped to achieve peace.
	They were:
	1. John Major who replaced Margaret Thatcher as Prime Minister in 1990. He had formed a
	personal friendship with Albert Reynolds, when they met at EU meetings.
	2. In 1992 Reynolds replaced Haughey as Taoiseach. A practical businessman, he was eager
	to achieve peace in Northern Ireland. His friendship with Major made it easier to persuade
	the British to deal with the republicans.
	3. In 1992 Bill Clinton became President of the United States. He was influenced by a group of
	wealthy and powerful Irish-Americans and promised to seek peace in Northern Ireland.
	Progress towards peace was interrupted in October 1993 when an IRA bomb exploded in the
	Protestant Shankill Road area of Belfast, killing nine Protestants as well as the IRA bomber. To
	keep the trust of his followers, Adams carried the coffin of the bomber at his funeral.
	Outrage at this nearly ended all negotiations but Reynolds convinced Major that it was important
	to go on talking.
15 DECEMBER 1993: THE	• On 27 October 1993 the Irish government issued 'six principles' which must underlie any peace
DOWNING STREET DECLARATION	settlement.
Keywords	Summary
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Headings	Notes
15 DECEMBER 1993: THE	The six principles included:
DOWNING STREET DECLARATION	 No talking to people who used violence
	No change in the status of Northern Ireland without the clear consent of the majority there
	Major accepted these principles.
	On 15 December Reynolds met Major in Downing Street and they issued the Downing Street
	Declaration.
	• A short document with just eleven paragraphs, it stated firmly that it was up to 'the people of the
	<i>island alone</i> ' to decide their future and that a united Ireland could only come ' <i>on the basis of</i>
	consent, freely given, North and South'.
TEMPTING THE	 Some hardline IRA people wanted to ignore the Declaration but Adams and McGuinness
REPUBLICANS	thought it could form the basis of talks.
	Reynolds then offered concessions to Sinn Féin. He let them appear on TV and radio and set up
	a Forum for Peace and Reconciliation to discuss the way forward.
	In America, Clinton agreed to let Adams attend a conference on Northern Ireland in New York
	but only if there was a permanent IRA ceasefire.
	• The republican leaders hesitated and in London the IRA fired mortar bombs at Heathrow airport.
	This produced an angry reaction from Reynolds and the Americans. So did the announcement
	of a limited ceasefire in March 1994.
	• Finally, on 31 August 1994 the IRA announced an unconditional ceasefire.
	At last the way was open to a full peace process.
	• At last the way was open to a full peace process.
EXAM QUESTIONS	What moves were made to find a peaceful resolution of the Troubles between 1973 and 1993?
	(HL 2008)
	What was the importance of one or more of the following:
	The Sunningdale Agreement 1973
	The Anglo-Irish Agreement 1985
	The Downing Street Declaration 1993 (HL 2009)
Keywords	Summary