

## NATIONAL ARCHIVES

### IRELAND



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Statement by the Taoiseach, Mr. J. Lynch, ~~Tuesday~~ <sup>wednesday</sup>,  
the 13th August, 1969.

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It is with deep sadness that you, Irishmen and women of goodwill and I have learned of the tragic events which have been taking place in Derry and elsewhere in the North in recent days. Irishmen in every part of this island have made known their concern at these events. This concern is heightened by the realisation that the spirit of reform and intercommunal co-operation has given way to the forces of sectarianism and prejudice. All people of goodwill must feel saddened and disappointed at this backward turn in events and must be apprehensive for the future.

The Government fully share these feelings and I wish to repeat that we deplore sectarianism and intolerance in all their forms wherever they occur. The Government have been very patient and have acted with great restraint over several months past. While we made our views known to the British Government on a number of occasions both by direct contact and through our diplomatic representatives in London, we were careful to do nothing that would exacerbate the situation. But it is clear<sup>now</sup> that the present situation cannot be allowed to continue.

It is evident, also, that the Stormont Government is no longer in control of the situation. Indeed the present situation is the inevitable outcome of the policies pursued for decades by successive Stormont Governments. It is clear, also, that the Irish Government can no longer stand by and see innocent people injured and perhaps worse.

It is obvious that the R.U.C. is no longer accepted as an impartial police force. Neither would the employment of British troops be acceptable nor would they be likely to restore peaceful conditions - certainly not in the long term. The Irish Government have, therefore, requested the British Government to apply immediately to

2.

the United Nations for the urgent despatch of a Peace-keeping Force to the 6 Counties of Northern Ireland and have instructed the Irish Permanent Representative to the United Nations to inform the Secretary-General of this request. We have also asked the British Government to see to it that police attacks on the people of Derry should cease immediately.

Very many people have been injured and some of them seriously. We know that many of these do not wish to be treated in 6 County hospitals. We have, therefore, directed the Irish Army authorities to have field hospitals established in County Donegal adjacent to Derry and at other points along the border where they may be necessary.

Recognising, however, that the re-unification of the national territory can provide the only permanent solution for the problem, it is our intention to request the British Government to enter into early negotiations with the Irish Government to review the present constitutional position of the 6 Counties of Northern Ireland.

These measures which I have outlined to you seem to the Government to be those most immediately and urgently necessary.

All men and women of goodwill will hope and pray that the present deplorable and distressing situation will not further deteriorate but that it will soon be ended firstly by the granting of full equality of citizenship to every man and woman in the 6-County area regardless of class, creed or political persuasion and, eventually, by the restoration of the historic unity of our country.