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From The Archbishop of Dublin (Alan Buchanan), The See House, 17 Temple Road, Milltown, Dublin 6

10th July 1970

His Excellency the Taoiseach
21, Garville Avenue
Rathgar
Dublin 6

My dear Mr. Lynch

Possibly you saw our statement in the Press. I thought I owed you the courtesy of sending you a copy. It is our attempt to make some contribution towards our problems in Ireland. It had the unanimous support of our General Synod, both northerners and southerners alike.

I have been in constant touch with Archbishop Simms. He rang me the other night after he had met the leaders of the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches. He wondered whether I could pass on to you a message from all three of them.

They appreciate immensely the efforts which you personally have made to cool the situation. They were most emphatic that you should know this.

Their sole desire is to promote peace.

They believe that continued criticism of the North, or any section thereof, can only worsen the situation. They consider such criticism can increase the possibility of strife.

Archbishop Simms stresses that their one wish is to be helpful.

I would have delivered this message personally, but thought that my presence might embarrass you.

Your very sincere friend,
Alan Dublin

STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF
THE GENERAL SYNOD
OF
THE CHURCH OF IRELAND

The Role of the Church

In presenting this short statement on the role of the Church in society we affirm the personal dignity of all human beings, their right to be free to seek and serve the truth, and their responsibility for the general welfare of the whole community in which they live.

1. Northern Ireland

We warmly welcome the programme of social reforms introduced in Northern Ireland.

We believe that this programme should meet reasonable needs and grievances and that it is a basis for a more just and peaceful society.

But we know that legislation by itself cannot change society. This needs the interest, concern and goodwill of all sections of the community. We therefore urge members of the Church of Ireland to give their wholehearted support to these reforms. Further we believe that the reforms deserve and should have the support of all right-thinking people. This is the only way forward in Northern Ireland and it means the renunciation of prejudice, bigotry and intolerance by all sections of the community.

We reiterate our abhorrence of violence and all forms of intimidation.

2. The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

The Republic and Northern Ireland exist side by side on one small island. Each is bound to have an impact upon the other. Disturbance in either state affects the stability of the other. What hurts one indirectly damages the other. What helps one ultimately benefits the other. Both share many common interests.

The Church of Ireland includes citizens of both states. Some of our dioceses and even some of our parishes span the Irish border. We have a deep concern for the peoples of both states.

We do not expect that the two peoples should think alike politically. We do urge that they treat each other as neighbours in the fullest sense of that word. We appeal strongly for mutual respect between the two governments and between all the citizens of both states. This includes respect for each others' convictions.

Such mutual understanding and friendship can have an effect far beyond our shores. We can make a contribution to the peace of the whole world.

3. The Republic of Ireland

We believe that an urgent examination of certain issues which infringe personal rights and freedoms is essential, and that the State should not endeavour by legislation or otherwise to regulate matters which ought to be governed by individual conscience.

4. A time to work together

We welcome the evidence of growing friendliness and improved relationships between Roman Catholics and Protestants, throughout the whole of Ireland. This gives us greater opportunities of playing our part, both as individuals and as a Church, in the creation of a just society. We are willing and anxious to co-operate with other Churches in the creation of an Ireland which is christian in fact as well as in name.

12th May, 1970.