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Question No.2.

DÁIL QUESTION addressed to the Taoiseach by Deputy  
B. Desmond for answer on Thursday,  
16th December, 1971.

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QUESTION:

To ask the Taoiseach if, further to the statement made by the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland following the killing by members of an illegal organization of Senator John Barnhill, he will comment on the allegations made by Mr. Brian Faulkner.

REPLY:

It is clear that a deliberate attempt is being made to conceal the failure of British policy in the North by attempting to shift the focus of attention to the Border area. Therefore, I reiterate my rejection of allegations that the Government are in any way responsible for the continuing daily tragedy in the North.

Every objective observer is well aware that the causes of violence in the North lie in the refusal of civil and human rights to 40 per cent of the population in the area for a half century - a deprivation which current policies are not correcting. The House is aware that I have repeatedly made this point direct to Mr. Heath; it is indeed regrettable that British policy should seem to be inspired by those responsible for the attempt to continue discrimination against the minority in the North notwithstanding the cost to the British economy, the British Army and British prestige. I repeat that violent activity is generated and sustained almost totally within the Six County area. To the extent that there is cross-Border activity -

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Lord Windlesham who is a Minister in the present British Government spoke, in the British House of Lords on the 23rd September last, of "relatively few crossings by terrorists" - we have employed our resources to the full and we strive to improve our security arrangements whenever possible in the Border areas.

Everyone knows the difficulty of policing the Border and, therefore, I repeat the suggestion I made months ago, and frequently since, that the Irish and British Governments should jointly ask the United Nations Security Council to provide a UN observer group to operate on both sides in the Border area in order to establish the facts and so serve to expose or prevent activities prejudicial to the peace.