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Title:	Report in the Irish Times of a speech made by William Craig, leader of the Ulster Vanguard, when addressing the South-West Monday Club at the British House of Commons, in which he discussed a potential civil war in Northern Ireland and the betrayal of the Unionist community by the British government and people.
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Report in the Irish Times 20th October 1972 of a speech made by Mr. William Craig, leader of Ulster Vanguard, when addressing the South-West Monday Club at the British House of Commons.

The Vanguard leader, Mr. William Craig, told a meeting of the South-West Monday Club at the House of Commons in Westminster last night that they were going to have a civil war in Northern Ireland and he, himself, could mobilise 80,000 men who would not "see any compromise in Ulster".

In an hour-long speech, which was frequently incoherent and repetitious, Mr. Craig said: "We are prepared to come out and shoot and kill. I am prepared to come out and shoot and kill. Let us put the bluff aside. I am prepared to kill, and those behind me will have my full support".

He said that the Secretary for State, Mr. Whitelaw, had said they were on a collision course. He accused Mr. Whitelaw of setting them on that course and declared that they would ship the Secretary of State and everything he represented out of Ireland.

Mr. Craig said that more than 600 people had died "because of the stupidity and irresolution of the British Government", and predicted that by Christmas the number of deaths would have reached more than 1,000.

He told his audience of 50 people that it was time the British people faced up to what was happening in Northern Ireland. They must ask why people "who are more British than you can find in England or Scotland" were involved in such turmoil. The reason was that the forces that should have defended freedom and democracy had failed the country.

It was because they had had to fight for more than 50 years for what people in Britain took for granted, that they were unforgiving and could no longer accept "the rule of the establishment".

They had always thought that the British way of life was best preserved within the United Kingdom, but now there was a big question mark over that proposition. They were not "out on the ground" in order to preserve the union. They had been betrayed by the British Government, he declared.

They had been set, Mr. Craig said, on a course of civil war. "We accept it, we will fight it and we will win it". They resented and would resist any attempt to deprive them of their British heritage.

It was ridiculous for the present Government to tell them to come round a table and talk about a new Constitution acceptable to the minority. As leader of the "greatest loyalist organisation in Ulster", he could tell them that they would not talk. They had been bombed and shot at and they were resolved to take no more. They were not going to abandon what they believed in order "to maintain an empty Union Jack. We are going to take our cross out of your flag if you do not honour your obligations".

They were saying "no" and they were saying "no" from strength. He said he knew that the people to whom he was speaking looked to the result of the ballot box, but he looked to the result of bullets not ballots. The organisations that he represented had produced "the greatest gatherings of people in the United Kingdom. On three occasions he had called out more than 100,000 people.

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They had marshalled forces now that would defy any edict of the present British Government.

Mr. Craig said that they would defeat any efforts of the British Government. They wanted to preserve their British heritage and way of life, but they were no longer prepared to tolerate "the impossible situation that your Government has imposed upon us". "They were prepared to fight and die". They wanted to remain British, but they were not going to surrender. Mr. Heath and Mr. Whitelaw could make up their minds that whatever they proposed "has no relation to what happens on the ground".

He said that he, himself, could defeat "any surrender by the British Government and I will defeat it". They would not accept the proposal to hold local elections, but wanted a General election. They had shown Mr. Heath that he did not govern Northern Ireland. If the British Government did not come quickly to its senses, they would go independent. He believed that they would become independent and that in that condition they would be more British than the British.

"We are prepared to die for what we believe in", he said. "I come as a man who believes in something and I know it will not be decided at the ballot box. My decision will not be in terms of ballot but of bullets. You are looking at a man who has been shot at. We are going to ship Mr. Whitelaw and all he represents out of our country".
