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STATEMENT BY THE TAOISEACH IN THE DÁIL ON THE OCCASION
OF THE MURDER OF SENATOR FOX, 12th MARCH, 1974.

It is with a profound sense of regret and shock that I inform this House of the brutal murder of Senator Billy Fox.

His body was found between 10 and 10.30 today in a field *near the home of friends he was visiting* not far from his own home.

The Senator was a young man with a relaxed and confident personality, and a keen interest in public affairs. Like many here he entered local politics and was elected to his local County Council in 1967. On 2nd July, 1969, he became a member of this House. Last year, he was elected to Seanad Éireann. He contributed to the work of the Dáil quietly and effectively and with an abiding sense of loyalty to his ideals which earned him the respect even of those who did not always share his views. Among those who knew him he was a popular and respected figure, well liked for his forthcoming and cheerful personality. For his work, he has now paid with his life.

I know that on occasions like this words can do little to ease the sense of pain and loss felt by those who knew the Senator personally. I am sure nonetheless that the House would wish me, on their behalf, to convey to the Senator's relatives and friends the deep sense of sympathy we all feel for them in their loss.

I have received the following telegram from Mr. Faulkner:-

"My colleagues and I in the Northern Ireland Administration have learned with shock and horror of the death of Senator Fox. We in the North have had our own tragic experience of the risks which democratic politicians must run as they take their stand against the men of violence. We express to you, to your colleagues in the Dáil and the

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Seanad and to the relatives and friends of
Senator Fox our feelings of profound sympathy."

It would not be fitting for me here to talk at length of the mentality of the persons responsible for this crime. Murder at any time is an obscenity - an offence against the law of God and man - but there is something more than usually foul about the murder of a man selected, whether directly or indirectly, by the people to represent them in their Parliament and Government. It is a negation of the order on which our society stands. To condone it - for any purpose or in any interest - is to share in the contempt ^{of} its perpetrators ~~have~~ not only for the institutions of society but for the decency and dignity of human life itself.

I assure this House now that, insofar ~~that~~ it is within the power of my Government, those guilty of this offence, if they live within our jurisdiction, will be brought to justice. We dedicate ourselves with the authorities in Northern Ireland to ensuring that no part of this island will be a refuge for those who kill and maim in the name of an ideal which they discredit every day by their acts; and we renew again our commitment to do all in our power in this State to ensure that its people and their representatives can live and work without fear and in toleration and respect of each others beliefs and traditions.

I would ask you, a Cheann Comhairle, to adjourn this House ^{until}
^{morning} 10.30 tomorrow as a tribute of respect to the memory of Senator Billy Fox.

Ar dheis laimh Dé go raibh a anam.