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IRELAND



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Mrs. Thatcher - 15th October, 1984.

Peter Jennings: In order to reduce support for the IRA and Sinn Feinn still further, do you intend to approve any new initiatives to stop the feeling of alienation and frustration felt by many roman catholics in Northern Ireland during your forthcoming summit with Irish Prime Minister, Mr. Garret FitzGerald?

rs. Thatcher: Do you remember earlier in the interview, I said I am often ~~being~~ asked about new initiatives. People don't define the initiatives and if there were any sudden quick initiatives that would be equally acceptable to both parts of the community in Northern Ireland, ~~you~~ ^{we} would have found them. I am not sure if they can ever be found from this country. I think that there would have to be some coming together within Northern Ireland if we are every truly to be able to find a long-term solution. In the meantime we have to go on, trying to look at people in Northern Ireland, each and every person has equal rights because they do live in a democracy. It doesn't matter whether you are Roman Catholic or Protestant you vote equally. Every one person, one vote. There is a ballot box there, there is democracy, they all have a vote for the Westminster Parliament, they have a vote for local authorities, so they have democracy there, it is not a question of there ~~not~~ being an alternative, having to resort to the bullet because there is no ballot, there is. I can't think of ~~a sudden~~ ^{a sudden} new initiative. Everyone we bring forward is as acceptable to one side, is repugnant to the other. That is the great difficulty about this problem and we can only go on trying.