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Interview with An Taoiseach

Channel Four News - 29 January 1998

Interviewer: Taoiseach, very strong stuff in the report given on Bloody Sunday to the British Government. Do you have any confidence tonight that an English judge could reach the same conclusions?

An Taoiseach: Well, can I say that I am very pleased tonight that Prime Minister Tony Blair, having examined our report, having had a number of meetings with me and discussed this with his own advisers, but I think it is particularly based on the personal assessment that he has done over the last few weeks, in the period since Christmas, of the facts, that we now have a judicial independent inquiry. We have a very senior judge who, I believe, is held in very high regard and hopefully two other members of that Tribunal team who will do good job. So it is major step forward and I want to acknowledge that. We've worked hard on our assessment. We've prepared this document over a very long period. It goes back over an analysis of the situation that we've had in the Irish Republic for twenty five years. Of course, to give credit to of those committees and groups of relatives in Derry, who have campaigned down the years. If I may also take the opportunity to thank yourselves in Channel Four because when we were campaigning in this issue over many years when many people were not listening, Channel Four continued to have excellent programmes following the facts that were there and we did appreciate that.

Interviewer: Well that is very good of you Taoiseach, but can I just press you on the specific issue of whether you are satisfied with the fine print of this inquiry?

An Taoiseach: I am. Of course more details will come out but we argued for an independent judicial inquiry. It was mentioned that we should have maybe a judge from the United States or elsewhere but I do not want to take issue with the British Prime Minister appointing, who he believes, a very senior judge. I am sure the other mechanisms will be put in place.

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