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Monday, March 9, 2009

## Robinson calls for matter to be left with police



Northern First Minister Peter Robinson said the matter must be left to the police

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DAN KEENAN

**NORTHERN REACTION:** REACTION WITHIN Northern Ireland to the murders from heads of government, politicians and police representatives was emphatic.

Chief constable Sir Hugh Orde, who warned last Thursday about the substantial threat posed by dissident republicans, said: "We have all the resources we need to . . . find the people responsible for this, who not only deliberately and determinedly drove an attack home on the British military establishment, but who were also equally determined to try and kill ordinary members of the community at the same time. People should reflect on that."

He added: "A tiny number of people are determined to drag us back to where nobody wants to be."

First Minister Peter Robinson, who was among the first political representatives to visit the scene on Saturday night, said: "Can I urge all of those who may be angry within

the unionist community . . . this is a matter to be left entirely with the police and the authorities to deal with.

“They are capable of dealing with it and they shall deal with it and we must give them our full support.”

His DUP colleague and South Antrim MP Rev William McCrea said: “There’s nothing but murder in the hearts of these people, but one thing I can guarantee: they will not defeat us, they will not win, but we will see them defeated.”

Sinn Féin president Gerry Adams said the killings were “wrong and counter-productive”.

“There should be an end to actions like the one in Antrim last night,” he said. “The popular will is for peaceful and democratic change. Sinn Féin has a responsibility to be consistent. The logic of this is that we support the police in the apprehension of those involved in last night’s attack.

“The police also have a responsibility to give leadership and to behave at all times in a transparent and accountable manner. The British government has a duty to uphold the new political arrangement and the peace process. We will not be deflected from our republican and democratic objectives.”

SDLP leader Mark Durkan said: “Such terrorism achieves nothing but grief and injury for victims and shock and disgust across the community. So-called dissident republicans are not proving anything that we don’t know.

“We know they are opposed to peace and we know their capacity to attack, threaten, disrupt and even to kill. They need to understand this is not an attack on British army but the Irish people who have voted for and value above all else peaceful politics and democratic accommodation.”

Ulster Unionist leader Sir Reg Empey asked: “Why can’t these so-called dissidents accept the democratically expressed views of people, parties and governments on both sides of the Border and allow us to build peace and new opportunities? We must not allow a minuscule terrorist faction to set a new and utterly ruthless agenda.”

Alliance leader and Assembly member for South Antrim David Ford said: “This attack highlights the real need for an intelligence-based approach to tackling the threat of terrorism. These individuals need to be caught as quickly as possible.

“Northern Ireland cannot and must not be pushed back towards the precipice.”

The killings were also strongly condemned by the Police Federation which represents most PSNI officers, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and church representatives in the area.

This article appears in the print edition of the Irish Times

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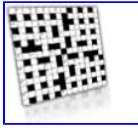
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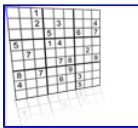
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