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REPUBLICAN STATEMENT ON NORTHERN CRISIS

13/8/1969

Seen by the Taoiseach
14/8/69

The present events in the Six Counties are the outcome of fifty years of British rule.

The civil rights demands, moderate though they are, have shown up that Unionist rule is incompatible with democracy; if the minority thought they could grant them and stay in power they would have done so after the degree of pressure put on them.

The question now is no longer civil rights, but the continuation of British rule in Ireland.

The Irish people cannot be expected to stand idly by and allow an Orange bigoted junta to continue in power in the Six Counties, suffering the repressions of a brutal and sectarian police force, whose main function is to oppose the legitimate demands of the people.

It is necessary to re-state the demands of the Republican Movement at this juncture:

We demand, firstly, that the Dublin government, which claims the mantle of the Republic, make immediate representations to the British government at Westminster, demanding: (1) the withdrawal of troops from the north of Ireland, and the holding of an all-Ireland election, under proportional representation, with UN supervision; (2) the immediate granting of the civil rights demands, as a gesture in the direction of the above — these basic demands of the civil rights movement are

- (a) universal adult suffrage at 18 for all elections in Northern Ireland;
- (b) an impartial boundary commission to draw up fair electoral areas;
- (c) the introduction of the proportional representation system of election;
- (d) the repeal of the draconic Special Powers Act and Public Order Act;
- (e) the outlawing of religious discrimination in housing and jobs, and making incitement to religious discrimination illegal;
- (f) disbanding of the sectarian B-Special constabulary, and the establishment of independent machinery of enquiry into complaints against the police.

British troops never brought peace to Ireland, and those who think that their use in the present situation could help matters are cherishing an illusion. Neither must there be any reversion to direct rule of the North by Westminster: direct rule by Westminster as during the disastrous 19th century is no solution to either Ireland's or the civil rights problems.

If Westminster refuses these just and reasonable demands, we insist that the Dublin government use all resources at their disposal, including military force if need be, to defend the people who are at present being

assaulted in the streets and burned out of their homes by the forces of 'law and order' in Derry and other areas of the Six Counties.

If the Dublin government refuses to act, we call upon the Irish people to organise during the coming period to take whatever action is necessary to provide support and solidarity for our fellow-countrymen in the North, and to go on from there to the establishment of an all-Ireland democratic republic, the only ultimate solution to the problem.

We call on all Irish people to rally behind these demands of the Republican Movement, during the next few days, and by holding demonstrations, meetings, rallies, to show their solidarity with the people of the North in their struggle. They are urged to use the guidelines provided by this statement in doing so.

Issued by the Ard-Chomhairle of Sinn Féin

*30 Plás Gardnar
Dublin*

*Signed: Tomás Mac Giolla,
President*