

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

IRELAND



Reference Code:	2005/151/696
Title:	Northern Ireland press notice of announcement by Merlyn Rees, MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, on the election of representatives to the Northern Ireland Constitutional Convention
Creation Date(s):	29 April 1975
Level of description:	Item
Extent and medium:	2 pages
Creator(s):	Department of the Taoiseach
Access Conditions:	Open
Copyright:	National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.



blen For main NI file under date
29/4/75 *hvk 7.5.75*

Northern Ireland Office

Press Notice

Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AJ. Telephone Enquiries 01-930 4300 ext. 276 or 277
Stormont Castle, Belfast, BT4 3ST. Telephone Enquiries Belfast 63011

Handwritten signature and date 11.5.

Stormont Castle, Belfast

NIO/4/16

29 April 1975

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, MR MERLYN REES MP:-

The people of Northern Ireland are about to go to the polls to choose those who will represent them at the constitutional Convention. The exercise of this democratic right to play a part in determining the shape of their own political institutions is rightly foremost in the mind of Ulstermen of all political persuasions. But none of us can afford to ignore the continuing horrifying level of violence in the community. If it persists unchecked rational political debate could become difficult if not impossible.

In recent years people have had to learn to live with violence in Northern Ireland. There has however been a significant change in the nature of violence during 1975. During the past four months little of the bombing and shooting that has taken place has been the work of the Provisional IRA. But others have taken their place and the killings and maimings go on as before. Some of the victims have been guilty of nothing but having the wrong religion or the wrong name or living in the wrong street. Some have been caught up in power struggles between organisations who claim to have political aims. Some are gangsters quarrelling over their spoils.

The RUC are doing everything they can to arrest these violent men and to bring them before the courts and they have had some notable successes this year as a result of good, patient police work. There is no other solution to the problem of violence in a democratic society than for the forces of the law who act on behalf of that society to do their duty. But they cannot do it alone. They need your help to identify the

criminals. The bombers and gunmen do not come here from another planet. They live amongst us. They have friends and workmates. I ask everyone in Northern Ireland, any one of whom may be the next victim, to consider very carefully in the light of his own conscience whether he has information which would help bring these criminals to justice and which he must give to the Police. This will contribute more than anything else to stopping the bomber and the gunman. It is every citizen's duty.