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Taoiseach's address to Fianna Fáil Ard Fheis.Saturday, 17th January, 1970.Additional material used by the Taoiseach when speaking on the situation in the Six Counties.

Whether we like it or not, we have to acknowledge that roughly 2/3 of the 1½ million people who make up the population of the Six Counties wish to be associated one way or the other with the United Kingdom. I don't believe that the great majority of them harbour any deep ill-feeling for the rest of Ireland or for their Catholic neighbours. Even though they must bear some responsibility for their silent condemnation of the discriminatory practices that have for so long operated against the minority in the Six Counties, I have no doubt that the great majority of these Unionists now recognise that discriminatory practices must be ended. We and the free world demand that it be ended - and ended quickly. But we must recognise that there are elements in the Six Counties, vested interests blind ideologists, religious bigots - a minority, no doubt, but nevertheless vocal and not without influence, whose sole aim is to maintain the anti-humanitarian practices that have earned such widespread condemnation.

This minority will trust to their own purpose the smallest word the slightest act - no matter from what source - that can possibly help to justify their vile ideology and to perpetuate and further inflame the distrust and naked enmity that they preach and practice. And it is on this distrust, bigotry and naked enmity that the wall of partition is built.

So those who preach force or military action to sweep away that wall may appear to some people to be advocating a heroic romantic and decisive master-stroke. But let us be realistic. We may feel with our hearts but we must think with our heads - and when the heart rules the head, the voice of

-2-

wisdom goes unheard. The plain truth, the naked reality, is that we do not possess the capacity to impose a solution by force. Even if we had that capacity, what would be the result? Would we want to adopt the role of an occupying conqueror over the million or so of Six-County citizens who at present support partition. Would we compel them to flee the country altogether or else to live under our domination in constant opposition, feverishly nursing hatred and secretly plotting revenge. Thus we would have marched ourselves into the role of overlords, a role which would necessitate the imposition by us on the subjugative new minority of some of the hateful tyrannical practices which we and the world called an abomination when they were imposed on the Catholic minority in the North. Is this the Ireland we want? Is this the kind of Irishmen we want to be? Is this the kind of unity we seek to achieve?

The answer is surely clear. And, because it is clear, the Government are determined to explore every peaceful means of removing the injustice of partition.