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Title: Broadcast interview with Taoiseach Jack Lynch relating to the case taken to the European Commission of Human Rights by the Irish government against the United Kingdom for the ill-treatment of internees in Northern Ireland.

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Extract from

"7 Days" Interview with Mr. Lynch, Tuesday,
30 November, 1971.

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- Interviewer: Taoiseach, you have now referred complaints of the ill-treatment of internees in the North to the Commission of Human Rights. What is the purpose of the exercise at this stage? Is it to embarrass the British Government?
- Taoiseach: By no means. On the contrary. You will remember when internment was introduced or rather detention as they called it then, it became internment much later, allegations of ill-treatment of detainees were made frequently and we sought at that time with the British Government, first of all to have the causes of these allegations investigated and to have them eliminated to the fullest possible extent. First of all it was denied that there was any grounds for these allegations and subsequently the Compton Committee was set up and even then we made protests, representations and suggestions about the setting up of that Committee, about the composition of the Committee, its terms of reference, we felt the terms of reference were too narrow, we felt also that the fact that the method of examination of complaints was far too restricted and would give the internee and the complainant no possible chance of having his case properly investigated. I think that in fact has proved to be the case. The Compton Committee limited thought it was has now established ill-treatment. I am not going to refer to the suggestion that it was not brutality but ill-treatment, that is a matter that the Compton Committee tried to establish but they successfully I think, I think it is well known that the allegations have been very well founded but they haven't been fully investigated, nor could they be.
- Interviewer: Now the Court of Human Rights may, I understand, take eighteen months to two years and what use is that to the present internees suffering there as they are suffering?
- Taoiseach: Well if they continue to suffer certainly the fact that these cases have now been brought before the Court of Human Rights will I hope be a deterrent against any continued ill-treatment of that nature and insofar as these allegations will have been established then I think it is only correct in the interests of not only these internees but any other person who will be detained in similar circumstances will have at least the assurance that somebody will look after their interests. I would like to say too that it is obvious that the British Press generally and the British Labour Party by the terms of their amendment to the motion that was debated last week and this week in the House of Commons were absolutely dissatisfied with as well as I can remember the words "the method of extraction of information that should not be tolerated in any civilised society."

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Interviewer: On the timing of your complaint were you in fact expecting some major development from the debate in the House of Commons last night?

Taoiseach: Well the timing of the debate has depended on a number of factors, naturally we had to get the information, we had to get the statements and we wanted to be absolutely sure that the statements substantiated the charges that had been made. We have examined these statements in conjunction with the Compton Report, as well as that we were hoping all the time that something more would be done, that some other form of inquiry, we would have been satisfied with a wider form of inquiry and simply that justice should be seen to be done. Unfortunately the limited scope and personnel of the Compton Inquiry didn't in our opinion enable justice to be seen to be done. All these factors and of course as you said, we were hoping that there would be some worthwhile political initiative from the British Government.