

NATIONAL ARCHIVES**IRELAND**

Reference Code: 2003/17/289

Title: Text of a television address made to the people of Northern Ireland by William Whitelaw MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, following the bombings in Belfast (as reported in the Irish Times on 24 July 1972)

Creation Date(s): 22 July, 1972

Level of description: Item

Extent and medium: 1 page

Creator(s): Department of Foreign Affairs

Access Conditions: Open

Copyright: National Archives, Ireland. May only be reproduced with the written permission of the Director of the National Archives.

N1 5/1/2
DFA/5

22nd July 1972

Text of a television address made to the people of Northern Ireland by Mr. William Whitelaw MP Secretary of State for Northern Ireland following the bombings in Belfast (as reported in the Irish Times 24th July 1972)

You all know that Her Majesty's Government has tried very hard indeed - very hard - to bring peace to this province during the past four months.

You also know that a small group of very determined killers are bent on preventing it. They showed by their cruel and callous actions yesterday that quite without warning they were prepared to kill, maim and destroy to get their own way; that the wishes of ordinary men, women and children to live their own lives their own way were of no consequence at all.

They may say that the end justify the means. The Provisional I.R.A. will be hard-pressed to find an Irishman who will believe that the means they employed in Belfast and Londonderry yesterday were justified. Could any political objective justify it?

All of you must realise that the British Army is here to protect ordinary people's lives and property and **must** go after the killers, the bomb makers and the fanatics who mastermind them. The Secretary of State for Defence and I have given firm orders to this effect and you will have seen that the security forces are already intensifying their efforts.

This will mean inconvenience and some hardship for some innocent people who may live in certain areas and no doubt the Provisional I.R.A. will attempt to make the maximum propaganda out of it. But no-one can now have any sympathy for those who are prepared to kill innocent men, women and children in cold blood. And so I urge that all of you help the security forces to root out the gunmen and the bomber from your midst. For unless you do there is only misery ahead for you and indeed for all of us.

The time has come when everyone - the churches, the politicians, the trade unions, the housewives, the school teachers - must speak out. They must condemn the Provisional I.R.A., which is fast dragging this community to total ruin.

That does not mean you should take the law into your own hands. Please let the security forces get on with the job - although, if you want to help, join the U.D.R. or the Police Reserve. They need you.

The Provisional I.R.A. have been given every chance to end their violence and to allow the whole community to live in peace. But they have spurned the opportunity. They have proved that they are determined to wreck Northern Ireland in order to gain their objectives. They must fail. On behalf of Her Majesty's Government I tell you they will fail.