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UVF ATTACK IN DUBLIN: REACTIONS

SUMMARY

1. Strong political condemnation. Tanaiste calls for review of security south of the border. Editorials call for IRA ceasefire to break rising cycle of violence.

DETAIL

2. The UVF attack on the 'Widow Scallans' pub in Dublin on 21 May, in which one man was killed and another seriously injured, dominates the Irish media. The Irish Press today (23 May) for example devotes eight pages to it.

3. The Tanaiste said the attack was 'a disturbing and sinister development which would demand a complete review of security on this side of the border.' The Taoiseach strongly condemned the attack and called for an end to violence and tit for tat killings. Bruton, Fine Gael leader, said the attack was designed to terrorise the people of the state and described the loyalist killers as 'imitators' of the Provisionals. He called on the Government to exercise extreme care in words and deeds, saying that the downside of any type of political dialogue with an organisation which continued to use violence was that it encouraged imitators to bid for the same status.

4. All the national dailies carry editorial comment. The Irish Independent says 'the cycle of murder and revenge - murder is a reign of terror the North is living with every day. What happened on Saturday night in Dublin is a reminder to us of the existence on this island of two bands of murderers.' It suggests 'our safety lies partly in vigilance and partly in encouraging elected politicians to keep on trying to find a solution.' The Irish Press believes the attack 'represents a sinister and disturbing development, at a time when peace hopes have been revived,' and questions whether

"loyalist paramilitaries are now using terror in an attempt to derail the peace process by goading their Republican counterparts into retaliatory action." But it believes "the best hope is still the peace process, fragile though it be."

5. The Irish Times suggests that constitutional Unionist politicians are increasingly preoccupied by the dangers posed by the paramilitaries among their own people. "There is an awareness that the monster of loyalist violence, if it gets out of hand, may prove itself even more voracious and irrational than its Provisional counterpart." It believes that if there is a genuine peace wing within the Provisionals "it must be aware that the longer it procrastinates, the greater will be the problem of containing or winding down not just Republican but also loyalist violence.... Nothing could be more likely to break the rising cycle of violence and thus prevent further attacks than a declaration of a lasting ceasefire by the IRA."