

TELLEX
THE BROADCAST REPORTING SERVICE
REPORT

Ireland

(2)

Prime Minister:

You asked to see a transcript of Mr Atkins' remarks on the "World This Weekend" yesterday. The reference to "IRA pursuit" is at the top of ~~page 3~~; + to the role of Dublin at the bottom of page 4. Mr Lynch's remarks recorded here were not a response to Mr Atkins.

LORD MOUNTBATTEN KILLED BY IRA

Print 3/9

[Handwritten signature]

[Handwritten signature]

RUSH

For: NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

IAN PROUD

Prog: WORLD THIS WEEKEND

Service: RADIO 4

Serial: 82876/BB

Date: 2.9.79 Time: 1300

Duration: 15 minutes 50 seconds

TELLEX

50 Grosvenor Street London W1X 9PH Telephone 01 493 3933 TELEX 27688

GORDON CLOUGH:

This weekend the body of Lord Mountbatten awaits Wednesday's state funeral. The families of those who died with Lord Mountbatten and of the 18 soldiers killed on the same day are mourning less publicly but just as intensely as Lord Mountbatten's Royal Family. Last Monday's murders were clearly in the minds of Cardinal O'Fiaich and his Archbishops when they prepared the pastoral letter read today in all Roman Catholic churches both in the Republic and Northern Ireland. They quote Pope John Paul as having said "Violence generates violence, hatred generates hatred, and they both humiliate and degrade the human person". And the bishops urged their congregations to use the Pope's visit to the Republic at the end of the month as an occasion for them to reflect on the use of violence. And the bishops go on to say, "May the Pope's visit challenge all Irishmen to put an end to our murdering hates and replace them by Christ's love and forgiveness. May his visit speak to the hearts and consciences of all those engaged in campaigns of violence and bring them back to awareness of the horrible evil of murder and to the sense of the absolute sacredness of human life." Curiously that message wasn't read in St. Peter's Cathedral in the Falls Road in Belfast today.

After the ceremonial of next Wednesday's state funeral, a reminder of the evil of murder and the sacredness of human life that the letter speaks of, the British and Irish governments in the persons of the Prime Minister, Mrs. Thatcher and the Taoiseach, Mr. Jack Lynch, meet for talks on how they can get together to strengthen security and perhaps seek jointness on a new political solution of the long standing problems which led to last Monday's 21 murders.

Present at those talks of course will be the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Humphrey Atkins. In an interview he's given to the World This Weekend, his first detailed statement since last Monday, Mr. Atkins insists that the British government's strategy remains the same, the defeat of terrorism, and he hopes to see Wednesday's talks leading to permanent co-operation between the Royal Ulster Constabulary in the North and the Garda in the South. Co-operation which, in Mr. Atkins' view, has already improved as a result of Monday's killings. Julian O'Halloran reminded Mr. Atkins of what the former Irish Minister, Doctor Conor Cruise O'Brien has described as the Dublin government's fatal ambivalence towards the IRA. In the light of that did Mr. Atkins think that this new found co-operation would turn out to be more than just short term?

HUMPHREY ATKINS:

Well this of course is our hope and we have heard over the last few days statements from the Taoiseach and the Minister for Justice and others condemning in absolute outright terms terrorism and reinforcing their determination to do their utmost to stamp it out. Now as I say the meeting which will take place on Wednesday will persue this further and I very much hope that they mean exactly what they say and that we can work together to get on top of this evil.

JULIAN O'HALLORAN:

What about the policing of the border? Is it possible do you think that an arrangement could be made whereby R.U.C. men and troops perhaps could follow known terrorists across the border into the South on specific occasions?

H.A.:

This is another strand in the whole struggle and it is one which we would like to be able to operate because it is more frustrating than you could believe possible when a suspect

is being pursued and comes through the border which everybody knows is unmarked and gets across and the pursuing forces have to stop. Now some arrangement for continuing that pursuit is I believe, essential.

J.O'H.:

How much do you fear a Protestant militant backlash in the North and what would you say to people who may be tempted now to join one of the Protestant para-military groups and hit back?

H.A.:

I would beg anybody not to do that because it is precisely what the Provisional IRA want. They would be delighted if sectarian violence was to break out again in Northern Ireland.

J.O'H.:

It has been written by one writer this week that there are four possibilities really as far as Northern Ireland is concerned, complete withdrawal, repartition, a revival of power sharing and continuance of direct rule in the same way. Now have you looked at all of those options?

H.A.:

Yes we have. I do not myself, and the government does not regard a withdrawal as an option because this is part of the United Kingdom and that is what the majority of the inhabitants want and it would be inconceivable that the authority of Her Majesty's Government should be withdrawn from any part of the United Kingdom if the inhabitants didn't want that to happen, so I don't regard that as an option. But all other options are being looked at as to how we can make progress and I am in the middle of a series of discussions at this moment with the party leaders in the province to see if we can find common ground upon which we can all advance. But that is what not only Her Majesty's Government want to do but it

is the declared policy of all the party leaders in the Province.

J.O'H.:

If you say you're looking at all other options then you are looking, are you, at something like either repartition or a different kind of federal relationship?

H.A.:

Look we must be clear about one thing. This is part of the United Kingdom and the people who live here want it to stay that way. Repartition must inevitably involve saying to a group of British subjects, the place where you now live used to be Britain but it isn't going to be anymore even though you want it to stay. So I don't believe that one can proceed on that line at all.

J.O'H.:

What ~~will~~^{role}, if any do you think, the Dublin government could play in a political initiative as far as Northern Ireland is concerned?

H.A.:

The ultimate responsibility for the future of this part of the United Kingdom rests obviously with the government, with the Parliament in Westminster and people of the Province. There is no responsibility anywhere else in Dublin or any other part of the world. What, of course, is perfectly true, is that they have an interest. Of course they have an interest, they are next door and so clearly they are anxious to know what is going on, they are anxious to be, I won't say consulted, but to be kept informed and this I recognise as a genuine interest on their part and of course there are other interests that they have too, there is the joint economic interest, so there is the co-operation on the economic front. We hope very much that there's going to be great co-operation on the security front, but the political problem in the end rests firmly in Westminster.

J.O'H.:

It now seems though, doesn't it, that the Provisional IRA is better organised than ever, it may be smaller and that it is determined to escalate violence to an unacceptable level.

H.A.:

Yes you are quite right, it is differently organised to what it used to be, it is organised very much more on the lines of a terrorist organisation and it uses the traditional methods which terrorist organisations do not only of actions and activities but also for money raising, it robs banks, it uses intimidation, it uses persuasion, it uses rackets of all kinds to extort money from the population to buy arms and generally further its violent causes. It is essentially now a classic terrorist gang.

J.O'H.:

But is there any possibility if political solutions are being looked at at the same time as security measures that you could meet leaders of the Provisional IRA in the future sometime?

H.A.:

The leaders of the Provisional IRA have nothing whatever to do with political progress, that is not what they are interested in. They have said so publicly, they want to destroy the form of government that exists in the Province and when that is done, according to them, it won't be, but they say when it is done, then they will turn their attention to destroy the form of government that exists in Dublin. Now that they have publicly said and made it quite clear. They haven't got political aims, they've only got violent aims, and because of that I have no intention of talking to them.

J.O'H.:

You would totally rule out any meeting?

H.A.:

Yes.

J.O'H.:

Can we talk now about the American dimension on Ireland? Governor Carey announced early this month, didn't he, that you had agreed to meet him in New York with the Foreign Minister of the Republic, Mr. Michael O'Kennedy and that announcement caused you some embarrassment didn't it?

H.A.:

The proposition when I met Governor Carey was that we should have a further discussion to the one we had which was about security. What I was anxious to do and we are all still anxious to do it, is to bring home to the people in the United States, exactly what the Provisional IRA now is and what it is doing, because they have engaged themselves in propaganda in the United States and there are a number of people I fear, in the United States, who do not recognise what the Provisional IRA really is or what its aims are and over the years, they have raised far too much money in the United States. Now any opportunity for me or anyone else to inform public opinion in America of exactly what is happening seems to me to be useful. Now that was what I believe could be usefully done. Governor Carey I believe has had other ideas of having further discussions about political matters and so on which I and the government felt we could not, should not enter into because as I said before in the end the responsibility for political development in the Province rests with the government in London and with Parliament at Westminster.

J.O'H.:

Do you feel that the offices of people like Governor Carey, Senator Kennedy, Senator Moynihan, and Speaker Tip O'Neill, could be put to good use in what you see as the prime target in the United States of explaining to people there the situation as you see it and the British government sees it and stopping the funds going to the IRA?

H.A.:

Anyone who is prepared to help us in that very important task is most welcome and there are people who are doing it and the more that it is done and the more the message is given in America that this in fact is what is happening that the people of Northern Ireland are faced with a new and terrible terrorist gang with no scruples and no political ambition other than to overthrow government by force and stir up communal strife, the more we can do that, the better. And whoever is prepared to help us is welcome.

G.C.:

That was the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Humphrey Atkins. Now while you've been hearing that interview with Mr. Atkins, listeners to Radio Telefis Eireann's equivalent to the World This Weekend, This Week, have been hearing an interview with the Taoiseach, Mr. Lynch. We've been recording that interview as it goes out, indeed it's still continuing. Gerald Barry asked the Irish Prime Minister whether the effects of last week's events would have long term repercussions.

JACK LYNCH:

Looking back almost one week after these horrible events I can say that the sense of shock and horror and shame has by no means diminished. I did say in my statement subsequently when I came home that I thought that it would inevitably be an impact on Anglo-Irish relations and the immediate aftermath of the horrible events, that there would of course inevitably be a sense of outrage amongst the British people and new anger and we can well understand that too, but I feel that in the calm perspective of the events that the British government will not react and certainly will do nothing, that would in any way prejudice the good relations that have existed for a long long time and I hope continues to exist and will continue to exist between our two countries.

GERALD BARRY:

Do you see the attacks as perhaps sinister indications of renewed and perhaps even more intensive IRA campaign of violence?

J.L.:

They certainly show a more sophisticated campaign, obviously some bombs are being detonated by remote control that has been a fairly new technique with the IRA, it certainly is as callous as anything we've seen ever since the beginning of the campaign in the North but I do not expect it to be an increasing in activity, perhaps they'll be able to do their things more effectively now and therefore our vigilance and our security will have to be all the more intense.

G.B.:

Well you refer to the natural and understandable horror and outrage in Britain particularly at the killing of Earl Mountbatten, now you've had time since you came back here to gauge the mood here. Do you still think you were right not to come back immediately when news came through of these deaths?

J.L.:

Well one can never be right or wrong in a situation like that because there are always different opinions as to what the right course of action is. If for example one noted political observer in his column yesterday said that it was right that I should not in any way exacerbate the sense of outrage or create any kinds of crisis.

G.B.:

Is there a special problem just north of the border and just south of the border that is related to old frictions between Britain and Ireland, that neither country is able to quite trust the other?

J.L.:

I wouldn't accept that in the slightest because on the border and as far as border security is concerned there is the completest degree of co-operation especially between the RUC and the Garda and from time to time that co-operation has been fully

acknowledged by successive British Prime Ministers, I can go back as far as Mr. Heath right through Mr. Wilson, through Mr. Callaghan and more recently Mrs. Thatcher. That has been completely acknowledged so there's no conflict, there's nothing whatever that can cause any lack of effectiveness from the co-operation point of view. The border itself is only a factor. Certainly the violence emanating from the border itself is very very limited. It's estimated that up to three percent of the total number of incidents, the vast majority of the violence is perpetrated deep into the Northern territory itself and mainly around Belfast.

G.B.:

Yet the British through their politicians, through their newspapers have consistently said that the South and the government here in particular are somewhat ambivalent about security on the Southern side.

J.L.:

Again I think that's misrepresentation and I think it's something that has been conveyed mainly by northern politicians to the British news media in the House of Commons. But I think that our presence on the border is more intense than that of the British Army and now the RUC. We've committed relatively far more resources into completing the border than the British have. As well as that, I can say that our presence is on the border at all places even though we can't police every hundred yards of it but it's quite on the border, all the patrols act on the border at several areas in particular anyway. North of the border from which the British Army draw back a considerable number of miles, five to ten miles and that's a hiatus there in the effectiveness of the Northern side's patrol of the border.

G.C.:

That was the Irish Prime Minister, Mr. Jack Lynch talking a few moments ago on our contemporary the RTE programme, This Week and the interviewer was Gerald Barry.