

Ref. A089/438

NOTE FOR RECORD

cc Mr Powell (No 10)
 Mr Wall (FCO)
 Mr Mawer (Home Office)
 Mr Maxwell (NIO)
 Mr Weston (Cabinet Office)

Prime Minister
A shameful
statement by the
Taoiseach, but
predictable.

Call by Irish Ambassador

CAP
13/2.

--- Mr O'Rourke, the Irish Ambassador, called on Sir Robin Butler at 5.15 today to hand over the attached copy of a statement by the Taoiseach about the murder of Mr Finucane.

2. Mr O'Rourke said that he had been asked to make a number of additional points. The Irish Government had expressed its concern on a number of occasions over Mr Hogg's remarks in the House of Commons on 17 January criticising certain solicitors in Northern Ireland. His Government's concern had been increased by information that the police in Castlereagh were encouraging Protestant paramilitaries to attack Republican lawyers. In this context, the names of Messrs Finucane, McGrory and Kelly had been mentioned. The murder of Mr Finucane had shown that these concerns were justified. The Irish Government welcomed the statement by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland that no pains would be spared in bringing the perpetrators of this crime to justice. It would welcome further assurances about what measures were being taken to protect other Republican lawyers. In a telephone conversation with the Taoiseach that morning, Mr McGrory had said that he had had no contact about this with the security authorities: this the Taoiseach had regretted. The Irish Government would also welcome a statement by the British Government to the effect that an attack on any lawyer

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represented an attack on the legal system as a whole. It would be most unfortunate if any other impression were to be conveyed.

3. Sir Robin Butler said that there was a very clear distinction to be made between saying, as Mr Hogg had said, that some solicitors in Northern Ireland were unduly sympathetic towards the IRA; and criticizing lawyers acting responsibly in pursuit of their professional duties. If there were any evidence at all for the rumours that the police had encouraged attacks on Republican lawyers, that would be utterly deplorable. But Mr Hogg's remarks could not possibly be interpreted as giving licence to such activities and he regretted that the statement which the Taoiseach had issued came close to implying that Mr Hogg was in some way responsible for the tragic murder of Mr Finucane.

Truvar Woolley

T A WOOLLEY

13 February 1989

STATEMENT BY THE TAOISEACH

I am horrified by the murder of Mr Patrick Finucane and the injury to his wife in Belfast last evening. I offer my sincere condolences to his family.

No effort should be spared to bring the perpetrators of this dreadful crime to justice.

This murder is a particularly disturbing development and represents a major attack on the system of justice in Northern Ireland. It is vital to justice and to the rule of law in a democratic society that every accused person should have a fair trial and full legal advice and representation. Lawyers have a duty to act for accused persons and to ensure that they are properly represented in court.

In Northern Ireland, the lawyers have given their professional services conscientiously, impartially and courageously to anyone in the community who has been accused of a crime. They have done so irrespective of political belief and in the wider interests of justice and the rule of law. It is essential that their role as officers of the court be respected, facilitated and upheld by the British Government and that their security be assured.

X | The need for the greatest care to be given to any statements which might have tragic consequences in Northern Ireland has once again been underlined and I expect that this aspect will be urgently and fully considered.

I have conveyed my views on these matters to the British authorities.

Canadian High Commission



Haut Commissariat du Canada

3 (a)

CE 10

Macdonald House
1 Grosvenor Square
London W1X 0AB

February 13, 1989

SECRET

Mr. C. D. Powell
Private Secretary to the Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA

Dear Mr. Powell,

I should be grateful if you would transmit
to Prime Minister Thatcher the attached letter from
Prime Minister Mulroney.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "L. A. Delvoie".

L. A. Delvoie
Deputy High Commissioner