

FAU Barbara McCabe

NORTHERN IRELAND WOMEN'S COALITION

Press Statement
No Embargo
20th August 1998

RESPONSE TO INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

We are pleased that the Irish government has seen fit to take decisive action in response to the appalling tragedy of the Omagh bomb, and that this response does not appear to leave us with knee-jerk legislation that will be left on the statute books for many years.

The NI Women's Coalition has not yet studied the proposals in detail, but welcomes their broad thrust. Many of them, far from being, as described by the Taoiseach, draconian appear to be imaginative, considered responses to a real threat. We are pleased that internment is not one of the measures proposed. It has been demonstrated not to work, and to have the effect of violating, not protecting human rights.

We also must consider these proposals in light of the Good Friday Agreement, which provides for new human rights instruments in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The proposals must not be such as to negate the effects of these instruments before they even get off the ground - thereby throwing the Agreement off course. We will therefore be studying them in this light.

Additionally we must remember that these are measures specifically designed to thwart the actions of a few individuals. We must not therefore demonise particular towns or locations in our commentary of these events.

Ends Further Information Kate Fearon 07771 886 448

Barbara, fuller response in Kevin
Kate