

FROM

(MON) 12. 23' 96 10:56/ST. 10:40/NO. 3580102389 P 2/5

CC: JEH/ST

23.12.96

JH.

BBC RADIO ULSTER 'GOOD MORNING ULSTER'

INTERVIEW WITH SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

INTERVIEWER

No group has said it carried out the attack on Eddie Copeland do you regard it as having been carried out by Loyalist paramilitaries?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

Well I think it's important not to anticipate these things. Let there be no doubt about it that whoever did it did a disgraceful and disgusting act and one which has to be unequivocally condemned.

INTERVIEWER

Does your intelligence believe that it was carried out by a Loyalist gang?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

Well I never discuss intelligence matters as you know but whoever it is has to be condemned. There is no way by which violence can play a part in the affairs of our democracy.

INTERVIEWER

If it has been carried out by Loyalists would you regard that as the end of their ceasefire?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

I don't want to anticipate that. We've got a procedure in the talks process which enables the continuance of a party to be raised in the talks and it is then for the Governments to decide whether or not they have flagrantly breached the Mitchell principles of democracy and of non violence. What I would say is that it would be a classic act of folly, apart from wickedness, if they went back to violence because they have brought upon their political parties great influence and kudos through their continued ceasefire and that would be thrown away.

INTERVIEWER

Are you saying that the position at the moment, the position of the Government is that there is no question mark raised, as yet, over the continuing participation of those Loyalists represented .....

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

I don't want to anticipate what the outcome of this will be. We don't know, it looks as though there is a Loyalist influence there, but I'm not going to anticipate it and there are no doubts sooner or



FROM

(MON) 12. 23' 96 10:57/ST. 10:40/NO. 3580102389 P 3/5

later somebody will claim, I would say confess to, but they will claim responsibility for this, I'm going to wait and see.

INTERVIEWER

And what happens if they do?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

Well let us wait and see who they are and what position they hold.

INTERVIEWER

In those circumstances Sir Patrick would it be a matter for another party to raise the question about the Loyalists continuing in the talks or would the Government not take an immediate view?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

Well I'm not going to anticipate these things, there is a rule of procedure, I've described what it is. Naturally there is no place for people in these talks who are not loyally and generally and genuinely committed to the Mitchell principles. All the parties taking part in these talks and both Governments have publicly said that they are wholly committed to the Mitchell principles. If people behave in a way which is incompatible to that then they have to go.

INTERVIEWER

Some might wonder if, in those circumstances of it being Loyalist paramilitaries who were responsible, the Loyalist parties continue in the talks then how could you continue to exclude Sinn Fein?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

Yes of course there has to be even dealing.

INTERVIEWER

Well how would you continue or how could you continue?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

I've already mentioned that there is a procedure for people to be removed and that is activated if there is a complaint that a party has behaved in a way which is incompatible. Flagrantly breached the Mitchell principles. Now you can't, of course, allow one party to stay having flagrantly breached the Mitchell principles and exclude another and I don't suppose anybody would wish that to take place.

INTERVIEWER

Do you now fear developments which could lead to a return to



FROM

(MON) 12. 23' 96 10:57/ST. 10:40/NO. 3580102389 P 4/5

previous levels of violence.

**SIR PATRICK MAYHEW**

Well what I want to say is this, I'm now approaching the fifth Christmas which I spent here in Northern Ireland, we have had ups and downs, we have seen moments of hope, we have seen moments that have approached despair. I think it's very important to keep cool heads in these circumstances but to be absolutely uncompromising in our condemnation of the kind of thing that happened on Friday and the kind of thing that happened on Sunday. Friday was, if possible, a good deal worse it was insufferable, I don't make any case for violence of any kind at all and I condemn what happened on Sunday and I condemn what happened on Friday. But when you see, I'd looked at the Sunday Life editorial yesterday, they said that it is in stark and terrifying way in which the IRA's intentions are, we want war not peace, war at Christmas, war in the New Year, war against civilians, war against the security forces and war in the presence of sick children. Let them if they wish to deny that, let them condemn what happened in the Children's hospital on Friday.

**INTERVIEWER**

And do you now regard the onus as being on the IRA for bringing an end to violence?

**SIR PATRICK MAYHEW**

Of course I do, of course I do.

**INTERVIEWER**

And do you not believe at the same time that what has happened, both on Friday and yesterday, has the most serious implications even now for the talks process at Stormont?

**SIR PATRICK MAYHEW**

Well I think one has to bear in mind that this process has been going on since 10 June, it's survived a period of great unrest and danger during the summer and it has now adjourned for the Christmas recess with mainly everybody, or virtually everybody, looking forward to coming back on 13 January with the plenary on 27th because they believe that there is useful work still to be done. In that I'm quite certain they have the support of most decent people here in Northern Ireland which is the vast majority of people. So I think we want to hold that equally. We have to recognise that there is great danger of a return to violence and it is part of my job to reassure people that the security forces will pursue remorselessly those who conduct acts of terrorism, from whatever quarter, whether it is from the Loyalist side, whether it is from Republican and at the same time to tell people that we do want to do all that we can to encourage politicians to talks to each other because the political process is the only way by which you can get .....



FROM

(MON) 12. 23' 96 10:57/ST. 10:40/NO. 3580102389 P 5/5

INTERVIEWER

No turning your back on any party at the moment?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

I want to encourage those who are taking part in these talks so to conduct themselves that they continue to be eligible.

INTERVIEWER

And what of those who are not taking part in them at the moment?

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW

To those I have made clear and so has the Prime Minister, we're talking here about Sinn Fein, they have a share of the vote. We have made clear that there is a place for them, a tenth share, at this negotiating table, there is a place for them provided that they do what everybody else has done, show that they are committed to peaceful means and to the democratic process and that means there has to be, not only a unequivocal ceasefire, but there has to be a significant period of time in which they show by the way they conduct themselves that they mean what they're saying when they express themselves.