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Stormont Castle, Belfast
15 November 1978

In the Commons today, Mr Airey Neave (Abingdon) asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he would make a statement on the bomb attacks yesterday by the PIRA on Belfast and 6 other towns, causing serious damage and casualties.

Replying, Minister of State the Rt Hon Don Concannon MP, said:-

In a series of bomb attacks against commercial premises in Northern Ireland yesterday, a total of 6 car bombs and 9 other devices exploded; eight devices were defused. Car bombs exploded in Omagh, Dungannon, Cookstown, Enniskillen and Newry. In Londonderry and Castlederg incendiary devices caused considerable damage. In Strabane a car bomb was successfully defused by the security forces, while in Belfast a blast incendiary caused some damage. No one was seriously hurt.

I understand that PIRA have admitted their guilt for these criminal attacks. As their support dwindles, they demonstrate their concern to disrupt the life of the Province. More significantly, they have betrayed their anxiety at the growing evidence of the people's wish and determination to be able to live an ordinary life. Yesterday's bombings have been condemned from all sides in Northern Ireland.

Mr rt hon Friend and I have never disguised the fact that the terrorists still have the capacity to mount attacks of this kind. Our security policy is flexible and the security forces will maintain their ~~pressure~~ on the terrorists.

The people of Northern Ireland have reacted with courage and steadfastness. There have been calls to the security forces not to be stampeded into re-erecting security barriers in town centres. Our policy is soundly based, and the terrorists cannot succeed against the will of the people of Northern Ireland.