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Stormont Castle, Belfast
8 February 1978

THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WAS ISSUED TODAY BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, THE RT HON ROY MASON, MP:-

The murder of an elderly woman at the weekend; the cold-blooded killing of a postman yesterday; and the murder of a little girl and her father today are further appalling proofs of the Provisional IRA's willingness to destroy innocent life without mercy.

Today's crime was committed by people who have in the past attempted to terrorise and intimidate the population of South Londonderry. They will not get away with it.

I have had consultations with the GOC and the Chief Constable of the RUC and they are taking immediate and concentrated action to track down the killers. Greatly intensified police and army activity is now taking place and two companies of the Ulster Defence Regiment have been called out for full-time duty in the South Londonderry area.

Those who have knowledge of the people involved in these terrible crimes must, in the light of events, give all possible assistance to the forces of law and order.

For my part, I am resolute in my determination to take all possible steps to ensure that these cowardly killers are brought to justice.