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*To be sent
to W. J.
8/5*

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FROM PRESS OFFICE STORMONT CASTLE

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND,
THE RT HON HUMPHREY ATKINS MP, ON TUESDAY 8 MAY 1979

I AM LOOKING FORWARD IMMENSELY TO MY NEW WORK AS
SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND.

AS YOU KNOW I HAVE A LOT TO LEARN ABOUT THE PROVINCE.
I INTEND TO TAKE TIME TO STUDY THE MANY ISSUES
AFFECTING THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF LIFE
AS WELL AS THE POLITICAL AND SECURITY DIMENSIONS
WHICH AFFECT US ALL.

OF ONE THING YOU CAN BE SURE: I SHALL NOT RELAX THE
EFFORTS WHICH ARE BEING MADE TO BRING TO JUSTICE THE
VIOLENT MEN WHO ARE CREATING HAVOC AND PERSONAL MISERY
THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE. FAR TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE
SUFFERED INCLUDING MY CLOSE PERSONAL FRIEND AND
DISTINGUISHED COLLEAGUE AIREY NEAVE WHO WAS MURDERED
ONLY A FEW WEEKS AGO. I WILL GIVE MY FULL BACKING
TO THE ROYAL ULSTER CONSTABULARY AND THE ARMY IN THEIR
EFFORTS TO BRING ALL CRIMINALS BEFORE THE COURTS. THIS
NEEDS THE SUPPORT OF THE WHOLE COMMUNITY AND I ASK
EVERYONE TO GIVE THAT SUPPORT.

I REALISE THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF POLITICAL
ASPIRATIONS WHICH ARE SINCERELY HELD AND DEMOCRATICALLY
AND PEACEFULLY EXPRESSED. I SHALL NEED THE HELP AND
SUPPORT OF ALL SECTIONS OF THE COMMUNITY IN RECONCILING
THE DIFFERENT VIEWPOINTS FOR THE COMMON GOOD.
I SHALL KEEP AS CLOSELY IN TOUCH AS I CAN WITH THESE
DIFFERING VIEWS AND WITH ALL THOSE MATTERS WHICH CAUSE
CONCERN. FOR MY PART I WILL KEEP THE PEOPLE OF THE
PROVINCE IN TOUCH WITH MY THINKING AS IT DEVELOPS.

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8 MAY 1979

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