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7 January 1980

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, THE RT HON HUMPHREY ATKINS, MP, LAST NIGHT (SUNDAY) ISSUED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AFTER THE INCIDENT NEAR CASTLEWELLAN IN WHICH MEMBERS OF THE UDR WERE KILLED:-

These deaths are a tragic landmark in the troubles of the last 10 years. If they are a monument to anything it is to the total failure of the Provisional IRA to construct anything other than tragedy and misery for the people of Northern Ireland.

At a time when the focus of attention in the Province is on building for the future it is only too typical that the overriding thought in the terrorist mind is of destruction.

Today's outrage will serve only to strengthen further the resolve of all of us in Northern Ireland to bring to an end this mindless and futile campaign of violence.

NOTE:- This statement was 'phoned to city offices last night.