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PSS
A/Sec O hUiginn
Mr Donglue

SECURE FAX IMMEDIATE

TO: HQ FROM: Belfast - 20 January, 1992 PAGES: 1

FOR: P. Hennessy/A/Sec O hUiginn FROM: B. Nason

SUBJECT: Mr Brooke's statement to the Commons this afternoon

At the end of his statement this afternoon on the Teebane killings, Mr. Brooke informed the Commons that he had placed his resignation at the Prime Minister's disposal. He added that he had also advised the Prime Minister that if he were not to accept the resignation on the spot that he should defer any decision upon it until after he had concluded his "coincidental visit" to Northern Ireland today.

In the earlier part of his statement Mr. Brooke said the Government would ensure that the security forces had the necessary resources, material and legal, to carry out their mandate and said that extra troops were already on patrol in Northern Ireland in addition to those who which had already arrived in support of a specific operation to enhance the operation of PVCPs (Operation Loren).

Replying to the Secretary of State, Kevin McNamara said the IRA would never bomb or shoot their way to the conference table and asked for confirmation that the Government would provide the security forces with all necessary resources in terms of finance and personnel. He then added that in his view "what happened on Friday night, happened and .... never was nor should be regarded as a resigning matter". Brooke gave the requested confirmation in response.

Willie Ross and Clifford Forsythe then spoke, the latter suggesting that Mr. Brooke would have been better employed in comforting the bereaved than in a "song and dance" act and attending a rugby match in Dublin. Peter Robinson and John Hume followed, Hume expressing the hope that if the talks process were to be continued, the PM would ensure that Brooke would be there to continue it.

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Draft Statement

The Government have learned with regret of the resignation of the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Mr. Peter Brooke, M. P. During his period in office Mr. Brooke has shown a strong commitment to the search for progress with regard to the problem of Northern Ireland. To this task he brought considerable personal qualities, not least of which were his sense of optimism and a willingness to persevere in the face of difficulty. In his role as Co-Chairman of the Anglo-Irish Conference he made an important contribution to the promotion of cooperation between the two Governments in the interest of all the people of Northern Ireland, and of the island as a whole.

The Government believes that recent events have only served to underline the vital necessity of dialogue and the utter futility of violence in finding a way forward for Northern Ireland. Through the Anglo-Irish Conference the Government will work closely with Mr. Brooke's successor to ensure that cooperation between the two Governments is maintained and developed.

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1. Mr. Hennessy —
herewith Copy of Mackinnon's statement
on the Cookstown bomb, received today from
the Secretariat.
2. M. McCarthy, —
M. C. Farrell —
and PA.

JN. 29.1.92



NORTHERN IRELAND
Information Service

Sec 5.3.1.6

20 January 1992

STATEMENT BY THE RT HON PETER BROOKE MP, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS 20 JANUARY 1992

The Rt Hon Peter Brooke MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, today gave a statement to the House of Commons about the security situation in Northern Ireland. He said:

"I have to report to the House with deep sadness that shortly after 5 o'clock on Friday afternoon seven construction workers on their way home from work were killed, and seven were injured, five very seriously, when their minibus was blown apart in a massive explosion at Teebane Cross, on the main Omagh to Cookstown road in County Tyrone. The police investigation is continuing, but it is believed that two plastic barrels containing some 300lbs of home-made explosive were placed beside the roadside hedge and detonated by command wire from a vantage point overlooking the scene. The Provisional IRA have admitted that they carried out this mass murder. In addition, in the first three weeks of the year, five other people - all civilians - have also been murdered by terrorists.

"I know the House will join me in extending deepest sympathy

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to the families, friends and colleagues of all those killed or injured, and in utter condemnation of these attacks, which demonstrate the profound depravity and moral bankruptcy of terrorism. All those killed or injured were working men going peaceably about their lawful occasions. Yet the terrorists did not hesitate to murder or maim them.

"In face of such unmitigated evil, the reaction of the community and the Government is one of grief and of righteous anger; but I and my colleagues are absolutely determined that it must also be one of resolute and vigorous action. No society which believes in democratic values can allow the ballot box to be overridden by the bomb and the bullet. Violence has not brought, and will not bring, the terrorists any advantage. The democratic path is the one we shall tread,and we shall go where it leads, not where terrorists seek to direct.

"The first task for Government is to ensure that the security forces have the resources - legal and material - which they need. It is for the security force commanders to ensure that all the resources available to them are used with the maximum effectiveness. Both the level of available resources, and their deployment, are constantly adjusted as necessary to counter the foreseeable threat. When we judge additional resources are needed, they are made available. My Hon Friend the Minister of State, announced on Saturday that extra troops would soon arrive. They are already on patrol. In addition, extra troops are also now in the Province in support of a specific opertaion to enhance the security and improve the effectiveness of vehicle checkpoints in Fermanagh.

"Mr Speaker, we know the terrorists can kill, but they cannot win. No democratic government or society can allow such people to prevail. Nor will we. The security forces

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will continue to prevent or deter, as they are now doing, by far the largest part of planned terrorist activity. They will also do everything practically possible to protect the public. With the assistance that is increasingly forthcoming from ordinary members of both sides of the community, they will resolutely and successfully pursue not just those who carry out terrorist attacks, but also those who plan them. They will do so within the law; and they will continue to bring the criminals before the courts. That is the only way for a civilised democratic government to deal with terrorism."

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