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FROM PRESS OFFICE STORMONT CASTLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, MR ROY MASON MP, MET A DEPUTATION OF WORKERS REPRESENTING STAFF AT BALLYLUMFORD POWER STATION THIS EVENING. THE DEPUTATION IMPRESSED UPON MR MASON THEIR GENUINE CONCERN AND DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRESENT SECURITY SITUATION.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE SAID HE FULLY SHARED THEIR CONCERN AND WAS DETERMINED TO ROOT OUT TERRORISM IN THE PROVINCE. HIS AIM WAS TO GET RID OF THE TERRORISTS AND CRIMINALS WHO WERE PREYING UPON THE COMMUNITY.

THAT IS WHAT THE PEOPLE OF NORTHERN IRELAND AS CITIZENS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM WERE ENTITLED TO EXPECT.

HE GAVE CATERGORICAL ASSURANCES THAT SECURITY MEASURES HAD BEEN STEPPED UP AND WOULD CONTINUE TO BE STEPPED UP FURTHER IN THE FUTURE.

THESE WOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

THE RUC WOULD BE BUILT UP TO A STRENGTH OF 6,500.

THE RUC WOULD BE PROVIDED WITH MORE MODERN WEAPONS, EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES.

THE UDR FULL-TIME STRENGTH WOULD BE INCREASED TO 1,800 AND FURTHER INCREASES ARE NOW BEING CONSIDERED.

THE LAWS DEALING WITH TERRORIST OFFENCES ARE BEING REVIEWED. THE PRACTICE OF CALLING OUT THE UDR TO DEAL WITH PARTICULAR PROBLEMS OF TERRORISM WOULD BE CONTINUED.

INCREASED EMPHASIS HAS BEEN PLACED ON COVERT TECHNIQUES WHICH HAVE PROVED SPECIALLY EFFECTIVE IN COMBATING TERRORISM AND THESE WILL CONTINUE TO BE DEVELOPED. THE NUMBER OF SECURITY FORCES INVOLVED IN SAS TYPE OPERATIONS HAS BEEN DOUBLED AND THIS TREND WILL CONTINUE. TEN RUC DIVISIONAL MOBILE SUPPORT UNITS WILL BE ESTABLISHED IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

6 pm approx
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5 MAY 1977

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