

E.R.

CONFIDENTIAL

① Mr Bell
② POL *WJ* 322

1. PUS
2. PS/Secretary of State

- c.c. PS/PUS
~~PS/Mr. Bell~~ "
Mr. Blelloch
Mr. Gilliland
Mr. Buxton
Mr. Doyne-Ditmas
Mr. Boys Smith

DRAFT II
STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

There is a crisis of confidence in Northern Ireland. It is being fostered by extremists on both sides of the sectarian divide. I have appealed in recent days to the people of Northern Ireland to be resolute in the face of provocation. I must now make quite clear where the Government of the United Kingdom stands.

2. The Government has been elected by the people of the whole of the United Kingdom to govern the whole of the United Kingdom according to the laws of the land. It will do so. It has long been the only objective of the IRA to make not only this Province of the United Kingdom but ultimately the whole of Ireland ungovernable within the democratic tradition. The IRA have not succeeded and will not succeed.

3. Extremists on the other side of the sectarian divide now utter precisely the same threat to the rule of law and to the democratic Parliamentary system of Government. The Government's response is exactly the same. The rule of law must prevail. Unless it prevails there can be no future for us or our children. We must win the battle against terrorism. But that is not all. We must not in the end lose the war for the preservation of the British way of life.

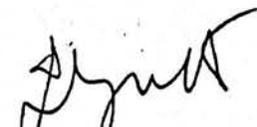
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4. There is a clear dividing line between peaceful dissent and violence and anarchy. Government respects the right of citizens to disagree with it and will use the full force of its authority against those who do not respect the rights of others. Private armies have no place in society, nor does the law recognise the distinction between one private army and another.

5. Let everyone in the Province think carefully and decide where he stands. The Government understands the anxieties of the beleaguered Protestant farmers of Fermanagh, and of the victims of travelling gun-men in Catholic areas of Belfast. The Government shares their anger. The Government seeks no confrontation either with the majority or with the minority community. But it will respond to any challenge to its authority. It will not tire of its responsibilities.

6. I have said many times since taking office that the economy of Northern Ireland is in grave difficulties. It cannot long survive self-inflicted wounds. Jobs and investments put at risk now may well never be restored.



D.J. WYATT

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17 November 1981

(MR/16z)