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5 MARCH 1997

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YE 6/3

TO HQ

FROM WASHINGTON

FOR SECRETARY O HUIGINN

FROM P HENNESSY

Attached please find White House statement on recess of Talks.

[2 pages total]

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 5, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

RECESS OF BELFAST TALKS

As the Belfast talks on the future of Northern Ireland recess today for the British and local election campaigns, I want to emphasize the strong support of the United States for these historic negotiations. They offer an unparalleled opportunity for the Northern Ireland political parties and the British and Irish Governments to achieve a just and lasting settlement to the conflict that has haunted the people of Northern Ireland for too long. Violence can have no place in this democratic process. For the talks to be inclusive, as they are intended to be, the IRA must declare and implement an unequivocal cease-fire.

Under the skilled chairmanship of Senator George Mitchell and his colleagues, the talks have made useful progress. When the talks reconvene in June, it is important that they move quickly into substantive negotiations. I hope the participants will return to Stormont on June 3 determined to work creatively to make real progress. If they do, they will have my full support for the negotiations and their eventual outcome.

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