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Philip - This was issued on Friday evening
Mike W.

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20 DECEMBER 1996

STATEMENT FROM THE NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE

The Rt. Hon. Sir John Wheeler MP, Minister of State in the Northern Ireland Office, last night condemned as an appalling outrage the shooting inside the doors of the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children involving Mr. Dodds and his bodyguards.

Sir John said, " It is incredible that just days from Christmas, evil men were prepared to enter an institution dedicated to the healing of sick children with murderous intent. The action will revolt every decent person.

" I'm glad only a minor injury was sustained by one police officer and that Mr. Dodds and his child were uninjured. I appeal to anyone with information about this cowardly act to help the RUC bring those responsible to justice.

" It is vital that no one is drawn into retaliation in any shape or form. Tracking down these criminals is the job of the police and no effort will be spared in pursuing them."