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NORTHERN IRELAND Information Service

8 July 1997

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE

The following statement was issued today by the Secretary of State, the Rt. Hon. Dr Mo Mowlam MP:

"The document was an initial consideration by officials containing assessments and opinions of how the proximity talks should be approached.

"Neither I nor the Minister of State endorsed this document at the time or later. I insisted that the full range of options should be kept under review.

"In the event I explored a wide range of options at the proximity talks, with no preconceived agenda and treating both sides completely even-handedly.

"I worked until the last possible moment along with others to achieve a peaceful accommodation. As the document said, the Chief Constable had genuinely not taken the decision, and he did not do so until the night before the march. All feasible options were genuinely under consideration until the very last moment."

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