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## THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary  
 Washington, D.C.

For Immediate Release

9/16/97

## STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

Northern Ireland Peace Talks

The Administration sharply condemns today's car bombing in Marketnill, Northern Ireland. This was a cruel effort by extremists opposed to a peaceful settlement, aimed at disrupting the all party talks that started yesterday in Belfast. We urge the ~~USP~~ and all other the parties not to allow the enemies of peace to divert them from the important task of finding a lasting and just solution for the people of Northern Ireland. Our sympathy goes to the residents who suffered the devastation and shock of the blast. We hope that those responsible will be brought swiftly to justice.

Yesterday marked a historic moment in the Northern Ireland peace process. Senator George Mitchell presided over the first plenary session open to all parties. We note Sinn Fein's signing up to the Mitchell Principles which represent an absolute commitment to non-violence in the process. We firmly believe that an inclusive process of dialogue and negotiation offers the only way to resolve the issues which divide the communities and traditions of Northern Ireland.

The United States continues to be prepared to support the British and Irish governments, and all the parties prepared to enter into this process. ~~In particular, we welcome the Ulster Unionist Party decision Saturday to give its negotiators a mandate for the talks process.~~

These Principles explicitly  
 require not only to  
 renounce violence, but also to oppose  
 the use of force by others. We therefore  
 hope that you will do, with the  
 British and Irish Governments, and with  
 all the other political parties in  
 Northern Ireland.