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Statement by Senator Edmund S. Muskie on Irish Unification

Edmund S. Muskie

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January 19, 1972

MUSKIE URGES IRISH UNIFICATION

Senator Edmund S. Muskie (D-Me.) issued the following statement today:

Only a political settlement can end the violence in Ireland, and I believe there is a growing view in Britain that the only viable political settlement will involve Irish unification. Such a settlement would have to safeguard the political and religious rights of the Protestant and Catholic population and provide for resettlement in Great Britain for those who may wish to leave Ireland.

Such a settlement, negotiated in an orderly way that accounts for the interests of all parties, is the best and most immediate answer to the threat of continued bloodshed and chaos in Ulster.

As a first step in that direction, I would urge the British Government to insist on an end to the internment program and to press for political and economic reforms in Northern Ireland pending a political settlement. Such steps would facilitate a peaceful transition to conditions that would permit the early withdrawal of British troops and their replacement by a local law enforcement system satisfactory to all parties.