



## **An Chartlann Náisiúnta** **National Archives**

<b>Reference Code:</b>	2021/45/147
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IMMEDIATE

TO: HQ  
FOR: David Donoghue  
DATE: 9 August, 1991  
FROM: Belfast  
FROM: Bryan O'Brien

Mr. Marcus Dodds came into my office at about 1.45 p.m. and briefed me on what had happened last night in Belfast and on his side's current evaluation of the Apprentice Boys in Derry tomorrow and the Hunger Strike Commemoration in Belfast on Sunday. Mr. Dodds said that he had discussed these matters during the morning with Mr. Austin Wilson and Ms. Christine Collins and that they in turn had had discussions with Mr. Cushley and Mr. Ledlie.

In relation to last night in Stewartstown Mr. Dodds said that things had been "pretty lively". Fifteen PBRs had been fired by the RUC and thirty by the Army in the Stewartstown area and thirty elsewhere by the Army. Confrontations had been between security forces and Nationalist/Republicans. Trouble had been expected but not to the level that had actually occurred. Mr. Dodds said that the level of the trouble may be due to an incident that occurred in East Belfast last Saturday - a busload of Ballybean young Loyalists was stopped by a group of Nationalist youths and there had been a pitched battle. The temperature was therefore "warmish" and this may account for the tension and conflict last night being more severe than expected.

Mr. Dodds said that there had been no serious injuries but that two people had been admitted to hospital and subsequently released.

Looking ahead to the weekend Mr. Dodds said that he wanted to give information as to how they saw things in relation to (i) the Hunger Strike Commemoration on Sunday and (ii) the Apprentice Boys on Saturday.

In relation to Belfast he said that the West Belfast Commemoration had taken place in previous years and that the Commemoration in itself was not seen as a problem. He wished to mention two additional elements however.

The first element is a march from Ormeau Road via the Markets area, past the back of City Hall, via Grosvenor Road to the Falls Road and there joining up with the main demonstration. This element of the Commemoration had occurred last year also and the RUC are minded, at this moment, to let it go ahead.

The second, and a new, element that Mr. Dodds mentioned was that a group from the East Belfast Short Strand Area (i.e. the area of the bus incident last Saturday) wanted to go from there crossing the Albert Bridge and meeting with the Ormeau Road group and going on to the Falls Road. Mr. Dodds pointed out that the Catholic minority in the Short Strand is a very small tight enclave interfaced with the Protestant majority.

There is a judicial appeal pending (writ of mandamus) to get the RUC to take a decision today on whether the various segments of the Commemoration are to be allowed. In confidence Mr. Dodds said that the RUC are unlikely to agree to the Short Strand segment of the march. The RUC plan is to sit it out and not take a decision until Sunday morning, that is if it is possible to sit it out given the court hearing (the court decision could be either today or tomorrow).

In relation to the Apprentice Boys in Derry tomorrow Mr. Dodds said that this morning's murder of a known Loyalist activist will not have been helpful - his death will up the ante. The dead man was not long out of McGilligan where he had been imprisoned for UVF related offences. He was known to be involved in Protestant paramilitary related activities. Mr. Dodds said that the RUC fear in Derry is that there could be aggro involving both sides and between both sides as a result of the murder.

Mr. Dodds said that the overall feeling is that this weekend could be difficult and that things are being orchestrated by the IRA. However, he said, the RUC are confident that once this weekend is over things will be quieter again.

Mr. Dodds concluded by saying that that was the picture as he had it then and if there was anything else either this afternoon or over the weekend he would get in touch with me.