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M Kelleher

*re Orange Parades
4/5*

9 July 1995

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To: HQ

From: Belfast

For: D. Kelleher

From: F. Boughton

Garvaghy Road Parade - Update 9/7/95

1. As was expected, there was serious trouble between Orange organisers and the police lasting many hours at the Garvaghy Road today. The following is a summary of events based on radio/TV news bulletins throughout the day.
2. The controversial Orange Order parade with about 800 participants in Portadown started with its service in Drumcree Church near the town. The RUC then formally requested the organisers to follow a different return route away from the Garvaghy Road. The ACC Fred Hall decided in the interests of public safety that the parade should not follow its chosen route, but should go via the Dungannon Road to the town. The parade organisers did attempt, however, to march towards the Garvaghy Road, but their access was blocked by a huge cordon of police land rovers.
3. About 500 nationalists held a sit down protest on the Garvaghy Road on the other side of the police cordon. Their counter march in protest had earlier been stopped by the RUC. They had planned a march into the town centre to hand in a letter of protest at the local Orange Hall in Carton Street.
4. The Orangemen confronted the police roadblock in protest against the decision. There was much jostling and jeering

but no actual violence at this point. There seemed to be a feeling of anger on the part of Orange onlookers, some saying that they were lying down and surrendering their parades. The police presence was a heavy one with about 100 land rovers deployed together with dog units.

5. An unusual aspect of the affair was that the police at one stage seemed to indicate that they would allow the assembled news media talk to the Orange organisers, but at the last minute decided against such a course for reasons related to the safety of the newsmen.
6. Another interesting development was that David Trimble, the local MP and participant, together with senior Orange officials tried to negotiate with the police on behalf of the marchers, but the police refused to change their minds on re-routing.
7. The stand off between the police and the marchers continued into the late afternoon and early evening. At 6.30 pm there was still a strong contingent of marchers stopped at the police cordon determined to take their traditional parade route. The nationalist protesters, equally determined to stop them, were still in position the other side of the police line half a mile away. Some of the Orange marchers who had drifted away in the early afternoon returned later to keep up the pressure on the RUC. It is not clear how long the stand off will continue, but the marchers are resolved to stick it out for hours, days or weeks according to Harold Gracie, the Grand Master of the Orange Lodge in Portadown.
8. As at 8.00 pm, the situation had deteriorated. The police had come under stone throwing attack by Orange Order marchers and 2 were injured. A man and woman were also hit. About 100 police in riot gear are at the site faced by 200/300 angry Orangemen.

9.

As at 9.00 pm the deadlock continued. Additional Orange marchers have joined the protesters who at this time numbered several thousand in number. Up to 1000 policemen were on duty. The local Grand Master has called for Orangemen throughout the Province to join them.