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SECURE FAX: 715

DATE: 9 July 1996

PAGES: 1

TO: HQ

FROM: BELFAST

FOR: E. McKEE

FROM: B. NOLAN

Please cc D/Justice

**STAND-OFF AT PORTADOWN - THE SECURITY SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND
AT MIDDAY 9 JULY:****Portadown**

All quiet, around 2000 to 2500 people remain in stand-off position. However, a large parade is expected in Portadown at 1500 hrs. No further details available at present.

Roads Blocked

A number of roads across the Province remain blocked, however, the DOE, Army and RUC have been able to re-open a number, including the MI and A1.

Snap illegal roadblocks are taking place across the Province and are lasting for a short period, protesters then move on to block other roads.

All roads to airports and seaports are open.

Bombs

Hoax device on the railway line at Tandragee/Pontzpass - cleared by ATO.

Current Position

While road blocks are still in evidence the general situation is fairly quiet.

SECURE FAX: 714

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FROM: C O'SHEA

Please cc D/Justice

SITUATION REPORT AT 0630 HOURS ON TUESDAY 9 JULY**THE SECURITY SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND****Summary**

Period marked by sporadic violence; more blocking of roads, throwing of petrol bombs, hi-jackings, sectarian clashes and general disorder. Several Orange Order parades took place and Aldergrove airport is blockaded.

Parades

Orange Order parades take place in:

Strabane, Castlederg, Fintona, Beragh, Sixmilecross, Armagh, Bellaghy, South Belfast (incl Ormeau Road), North Belfast, East Belfast. Minor confrontations with security forces in Belfast: South Belfast parade re-routed from Lower Ormeau Road and Cromac Street. Sectarian clashes in North Queen Street and Docks area during and following North Belfast parade. Confrontations between RUC and Nationalist protestors in Bellaghy, Co Londonderry.

Sectarian Clashes

Severe sectarian clashes occurred in Oldpark/Torrens Avenue area of Belfast. Four Catholic families forced to move from Torrens Avenue. Others voluntarily decide to stay with relatives etc. Protestant homes in area attacked in retaliation. Other clashes in various parts of North Belfast, including Ardoyne reported.

Disturbances

Province-wide rioting by Protestants including;

Ballymena, Ahoghill, Annalong (where two shots fired by RUC to warn off crowd), Londonderry, Coleraine, Belfast, Portadown.

Roads Blocked

Dozens of roads blocked throughout Northern Ireland. Various methods used including protestors physically blocking roads, burning vehicles, home-made barricades, trees felled etc. Very few areas not affected.

Aldergrove

Protestors (up to 1,000 strong) blocked approach roads to Belfast International Airport. Largest gathering at Killead roundabout, close to RUC vehicle checkpoint. Cars not allowed to approach or leave airport. Around 0330 RUC mounted operation to clear roads. This was successfully achieved by 0430 when Army moved in to clear barricades. Airport was re-opened to traffic short time afterwards.

Fires

Petrol stations at Clandeboye, Bangor badly damaged by fire. Catholic Secondary school in North Belfast damaged by fire.

Bombs

ATO tasked to three suspect devices, two in Lisburn, including one outside AOH hall and one in North Belfast. All confirmed as hoaxes.

Location?


Drumcree

Numbers of protestors swelled to 5,000 during the night. Continuing confrontation at RUC lines but no violence. Orange Order marshalls reported to be well in control of crowd.

Army

Six plastic baton rounds fired at Loughgall, during change-over of companies.

Statistics at 0630 hours.

22 arrests
103 plastic baton rounds
22 RUC officers injured
30 petrol bombs thrown in Belfast
20 vehicle hi-jackings in Belfast
6 shots fired

current position

All quiet. Most roads re-opened, though cross border rail traffic disrupted. No apparent electricity supply problems. Drumcree remains calm though numbers constant at 5,000.