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PSI, PSS, Sec. O'Leary

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*Cannell, A-1
Security Centre*

10 July 1996

No of pages including this one: 2

To: HQ
For: C. O Floinn

Mr. S. Hare, Mr. P. Hearead, Mr. R. Herley, D. H. H.

From: Belfast
From: Joint Secretary

BOX

Subj: Current situation

M. O'Brien

Ref your message of today's date.

1. We have sought an overall assessment of the present situation from the other side. The latest situation reports are being forwarded separately. As of noon today, a generally quiet situation was reported (following last night's sporadic violence across the North). However, widespread disruption to traffic and damage to roads and property continues.
2. A general comment made by the British side, based on information available to them, is that the UDA are determined to hold back from involvement in the current disturbances while the UVF are distracted by internal squabbles (particularly in mid-Ulster) and, accordingly, also unlikely to seek involvement. This accords generally with an assessment of Loyalist paramilitary intentions which we received during our round of bilateral discussions at Castle Buildings this morning.
3. We have raised the disturbing reports of forced moves by households in Ligoniel and the Torrens Drive area. As of this morning, five additional cases of homelessness are reported in the latter area; all are being looked after by the Department of Health and Social Services.
4. We have also raised the repeated rumours about a cutting of the power supply and of telephone lines. According to the British side, there is no basis at present for these suggestions. 1?
5. The two additional battalions to be deployed here are the First Battalion of the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment and 1 Para. (The latter is the current spearhead battalion of the British Army, i.e., the stand-by battalion available for immediate

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deployment anywhere in the world). Both will be deployed by the end of the weekend. Final decisions on the nature of the deployment remain to be taken. The possible addition of a third battalion is also under consideration. We will be seeking further details over the next few days.

6. The British side have nothing to add at present to what they told us about the McGoldrick case on Monday. They describe as accurate Suzanne Breen's speculation in today's Irish Times about a deliberate policy of reticence on the part of the RUC. Y
7. Finally, the Orange Order parade which was scheduled to march to Maryfield this evening has been abruptly cancelled by its organisers. No reason has been given.

7/12/3

(1)

STAND-OFF AT PORTADOWN - THE SECURITY SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND
AT 1200 HRS 10 JULY:

Background

After the sporadic violence in some parts last night, the general situation in Northern Ireland this morning is quiet.

Roads

2. Many roads which were blocked are now clear, although there continue to be obstructions on some roads in Belfast, Coleraine, Markethill, Tandragee, Dungannon, Castlederg, Drumquin, bridges into Scarva, Castlewellan and Omagh.

Disturbances

3. Few reports of disturbances. Presbyterian Church at Oldpark set alight.

Drumcree

4. Quiet in Portadown generally. Stand-off continues. Reports of a digger arriving at the stand-off. No indication of the machine being used.

Statistics

5. This is an updated record of incidents since the start of the Drumcree stand-off. They are an indication of the security situation and are subject to change:

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Arrests: 87
Attacks on security forces: 452
Injuries - RUC: 49, Civilians: 37
Plastic baton rounds fired: 339
Reports of intimidation - RUC: 47, Civilians: 99
Reports of damage to property - RUC: 51, Civilians: 302
Hijacking: 65
Parades: 141
Road blocks: 246

(2)

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CURRENT SITUATION - 10 JULY - A.M.**Roads**

Continuing significant disruption to traffic by blocking of roads/bridges, particularly in the evening and early morning, though being free during the day.

Increased destruction of property and use of cars, trees, bonfires, tyres etc to help block roads. Roads Service have been heavily involved during the night in clearing debris, with RUC/Army and also some involvement of Council staff.

Damage increasing daily, mainly in urban areas; extensive scorch damage to roads (eg, East Belfast) and damage to signals.

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712/6

Direct Services staff of DOE are operating under RUC protection. This is becoming a concern to staff who feel vulnerable. Only one isolated case of intimidation of staff.

Traffic Disruption

- Ballymena - some blocks in estates;
- Belfast area - changing hourly; most radial routes open;
- Craigavon - all roads closed into Armagh, Tandragee, Markethill;
- Downpatrick/Lisburn - Lisburn to Moira road closed; local roads closed in Downpatrick, Lisburn, Newtownards;
- Coleraine/Londonderry area - main roads clear; some local roads closed;
- Omagh/Enniskillen - Enniskillen bridges closed, roads closed between Dungannon and Moy; within Castlederg and Newtownstewart; and some within Omagh town.

Public Transport

Bus services operating normally as routes are cleared.

Difficulties still around Portadown, in and around Bangor, Newtownards, Armagh, Lisburn.

Rail services suspended between Belfast and Dublin.

Fire Service

800 calls in the last 48 hours, 706 of which were related to disturbances, especially burning debris on roads.

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7/12/7

6 appliances damaged but will be back in action today.

6 minor injuries to firemen.

Energy

No change from last report. Electricity supplies still being maintained.

Water/Sewerage

Little change from yesterday; marginally better in some areas.

Withdrawal of sludge contractor in Southern and Eastern Division with possible pollution threat in River Lagan next week (depending on weather conditions); may also affect Moygashel and Carrickfergus.

Housing

5 further homeless cases, all dealt with by Social Services, from the Torrens area of Belfast, and several other isolated cases of intimidation.

Some fire damage to housing in local areas; Housing Executive office in New Mossley damaged.

Industry

Little change to report. Shirt factory burnt in North Belfast. Vita Cortex, Dunmurry, petrol bombed. A range of smaller firms reported to be experiencing intimidation and travelling difficulties.

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Agriculture

Newtownards Abbatoir closed. There will be no kill today or tomorrow.

Markethill Mart unable to function due to blockade of village.

Health and Personal Social Services

Staff in a number of areas (Craigavon, North Down & Ards and Foyle Trust areas) experiencing difficulties getting to work. Staff experiencing problems in visiting clients in North Down area. Efforts by the Trust to deal with these problems led to the Director of Social Services obtaining documents from Rev Martin Smyth identifying staff as emergency personnel.

Staff withdrawn from Social Services building in Foyle are (Women's Aid) following threats.

Elective surgery cancelled at Craigavon. Two further PBR casualties treated.

Potential flashpoint at Bawnmore Estate, Newtownabbey. Contingency arrangements in place for rest centre sites.

The North and West Belfast HSS Trust is working with NIHE who have identified accommodation for evacuated persons.

The Ambulance Service is coping well although with some difficulties due to roadblocks. Additional crews tasked to provide cover.

BOC concerned about delivery to major hospitals. Supplies in hospitals are being checked.

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Compensation

The Agency has appointed loss adjusters to assess all reported damage. The Agency will provide information on estimated cost of damage as soon as available.

(Signed DAB)

D A BROWN

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