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Secure Fax no. _____

17 July 1996

Mr O'Brien for Mr E

URGENT

To: Department of the Taoiseach
For: Gerry Cribbin

From: Anglo Irish
From: Eamonn McKee

Subj. Note on NI Residents Groups Representatives

1. I understand that an agreed delegation of four will comprise the following;

John Gormley - Lower Ormeau Concerned Community
Brendán McCionnaith - Garvaghy Residents Coalition
David Mellet - Derry Residents
Teresa Murphy - resident of North Belfast burned out of her home (Ardoyne)

2. The Garvaghy Residents Coalition was formed as a composite of the various resident groups in the Garvaghy area which comprises the nationalist estates of Churchill Park and Ballyoran. Its leading lights include Brendán McCionnaith and the Jesuit father Eamon Stack. Stack, based in the Jesuit house in Churchill park, and a member of the Drumcree Faith and Justice Group, has played a leading part in articulating the residents' concerns, though without appearing to take a lead. He has, I believe, been deeply upset by the turn of events. McCionnaith has also served time for paramilitary offenses but is not apparently a member of Sinn Féin. After the melée at Garvaghy, he travelled to the Lower Ormeau and Derry in support of the protests there. The group has written a number of times in the past year to the local Orange lodge requesting a meeting to discuss the issue. This have not met with any response.
3. The Lower Ormeau Concerned Community (LOCC) was founded in March 1992 shortly after the murder of five people at the Sean Graham Bookmakers and the Orange parade which passed the site chanting and gesturing approval of the murders. Local opinion was outraged and at a public meeting, a steering committee was formed. The leaders of the committee are Gerry Rice and John Gormley. The former is the main spokesperson in regard to the media and the latter is the thoughtful and clever mind which, I suspect, informs much of the strategy. Rice has served time for paramilitary involvement but is not a card carrying member of Sinn Féin (though his thinking would in all likelihood be similar to republican doctrine).

Background to Drumcree

4. The confrontation at Drumcree this year was prefigured and influenced by the 'siege of Drumcree in 1995. The local Portadown Orange Lodge (Loyal Orange Lodge No. 1) traditionally holds a pre-Twelfth parade to the Drumcree Church. The outward leg is not contentious but it returns by a different route through nationalist estates along the Garvaghy Road. In 1995, the local Orange Lodge, having refused to engage in dialogue with the local residents during the year, refused to comply with an RUC rerouting of the parade away from the Garvaghy (the alternative was not specified by the RUC) and a standoff ensued. As it developed, Orange supporters converged on Drumcree. A blockade of Larne by loyalists caused considerable disruption to travellers and the

movement of freight. Other rallies in support were also organised in loyalist towns. The standoff ended with an apparent agreement brokered by the RUC in which the local lodge would silently march down the road and residents would line the route with a silent protest. It was also conveyed (by Mediation Network) to the residents that no more marches would be permitted down the Garvaghy Road by the RUC.

5. The celebration which greeted the lodge in Portadown in 1995, particularly by David Trimble and Ian Paisley, the assurances by them that no compromise was brokered and the subsequent striking of a commemorative medal by the self styled 'Spirit of Drumcree' group (a hardline Orange faction) incensed the local residents. The feeling among them against any compromise this year was very marked at a public meeting some two weeks before this year's march. Equally, the repeated failure of the Portadown Lodge to reply to letters from the residents' group indicated an unwillingness to compromise.
6. It has been alleged by both Orange and unionist leaders that the local opposition to the parade is orchestrated and driven solely by Sinn Féin/IRA activists, notably the Garvaghy spokesman Brendan MacCionnaith who served a prison sentence for IRA activities. From on the ground contacts, this allegation appears untrue; local feeling is genuinely opposed to Orange parades in the area and the committee was left in no doubt at a recent public meeting that it should not compromise along the lines of that agreed and, according to the residents, reneged on last year.
7. Nationalist opposition in Portadown to Orange parades in their area sparked confrontations in the mid-1980s when residents in Obins Street (the 'Tunnel') staged protests. The Orange parades were rerouted in 1986 along the adjoining Charles Street. The SDLP's Bríd Rodgers played a key role in this dispute.

Background to the Lower Ormeau

8. The small nationalist enclave of the Lower Ormeau live on the city side of the Ormeau Bridge which forms a divide from the loyalist side. They have objected to Orange parades by the Ballynafeigh Lodge along their section of the road. Opposition intensified as a result of sectarian taunting outside the Sean Graham Bookie shop. Last year an agreement was reached between the LOCC and the Lodge to the Twelfth parade but the events at Drumcree soured the mood and the agreement foundered. The parade was forced through and though a peaceful protest ensued, no clashes with the RUC occurred.
9. This year, the RUC enforced a total curfew of the area from the evening of 11 July and blockaded access roads to ensure that supporters from West and North Belfast could not assemble at the Ormeau.

A chronology of the recent events at Drumcree is attached as are the two most recent statements issued by the Garvaghy and Lower Ormeau groups.

Incidents in Northern Ireland - 7 - 14 July 1996

7 July

1. An article in the Sunday Times of 7 July stated that the RUC were aware of plans by the Orange Order to orchestrate airport and port blockades and widespread marches through sensitive areas of Northern Ireland in order to stretch police resources during the marching season.
2. On 6 July the RUC Chief Constable announced his decision to reroute the Orange Lodge parade away from the Garvaghy Road. At this stage RUC Deputy Chief Constable Flanagan had already informed the Garvaghy residents of the RUC's fear with regard to loyalist paramilitary action (particularly the mid-Ulster UVF) in the event that the march was blocked.
3. When the Parade was halted on its return from Drumcree church a stand-off ensued between the marchers and the assembled RUC. Barbed wire cordoned off the access route into the Garvaghy Road. Overnight up to 4,000 Orangemen assembled on the road and some minor disturbances resulted. This figure dwindled the following day.
4. Overnight, roads were blocked throughout Northern Ireland by Orange parades and protesting loyalists. Violence flared in a number of towns including Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Portadown with a large number of hijacking and arson incidents. Petrol bomb attacks were also reported in the loyalist Fountain area of Derry.

8 July

4. The body of a Catholic taxi driver, Michael McGoldrick, was discovered in Aghagillan, Co. Armagh on the morning of 8 July. While there has been no claim of responsibility it is believed the murder was carried out by the mid-Ulster brigade of the UVF.
5. Up to 80 roads were blocked off throughout Northern Ireland with a number of towns entirely sealed off by loyalist protesters. Larne port and Belfast International Airport were also blockaded. A number of Catholic families were forced to leave their homes as a result of loyalist intimidation in areas of North Belfast which continued into the following day. There were also incidents of rioting in a large number of loyalist areas of Coleraine, Ballymena and Derry, among others. Two shotgun rounds were discharged in Ballymena. A number of arson attacks were also carried out. Parts of the Dublin-Belfast railway line were closed off due to barricading. There were a number of sectarian clashes in North Belfast.
6. Large numbers of Orangemen continued to mass on Drumcree bringing the numbers up to 5,000. Violence again flared overnight with the RUC firing Plastic Baton Rounds to repel demonstrators. Concrete roadblocks and barbed wire meshing were installed by troops to effectively create a buffer-zone between the RUC and the Orangemen.

8
9 July

7. Up to 2,500 Orangemen remained at Drumcree by morning, the figure growing to 10,000 during the day. Orangemen again attempted to break through police lines and a number of Plastic Baton Rounds were fired.
8. There was an escalation of violence overnight with incidents widespread throughout loyalist areas of Belfast and across the North. Burning vehicles were used as barricades to seal off roads. Plastic bullets were fired by the RUC at protesters. There were several arson attacks on Catholic homes and schools in Belfast. There were numerous incidents of petrol bomb attacks. Plastic bullets were fired in response. Parts of the Dublin-Belfast rail line were again closed as were sections of the M1 and M3 motorways.

10 July

9. In a further attempt by Orangemen to breach police lines, two plastic bullets were fired.
10. It was announced that two British Army battalions comprising 1,000 troops were to be deployed in Northern Ireland.
11. The leaders of the four main Churches undertook to attempt mediation and negotiation at the request of David Trimble. They held a meeting with Trimble and separate meetings with the Orangemen and the Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition.
12. A mechanical digger was brought to Drumcree by Orangemen. The army responded by bringing in a bulldozer. The RUC had donned full riot gear and an increasing number of army and RUC vehicles were also brought in. A further attempt to breach police lines took place and two plastic bullets were fired.
13. Sporadic violence continued. Shots were fired in the loyalist Beersbridge Road area of East Belfast. The Dublin-Belfast railway line was closed from Dundalk due to a security alert at Portadown. The Belfast-Derry line was also closed.

11 July

14. The RUC moved in at around midday to force the protesting Garvaghy Road residents back into their homes. A large number of plastic bullets were fired and residents were baton charged. The parade comprising up to 1,300 marchers then proceeded down the Garvaghy Road. Violence continued in the area following the march with the RUC responding with plastic bullets to the petrol bombs thrown by nationalist protesters.
15. In the hours following the march loyalist barricades throughout Northern Ireland were removed.
16. At around 6 pm up to 150 RUC and British Army vehicles moved into the Lower Ormeau area of Belfast and all side roads were sealed off in advance of the planned 12 July Ballinafeigh Lodge march. Residents were confined to their homes overnight and until late in the evening of 12 July.

17. Violence continued overnight, now focussed in Nationalist areas. Three RUC men were shot and injured in North Belfast. The attacks are believed to have been carried out by the INLA. A youth was seriously injured when hit by a plastic bullet during disturbances in Derry. Incidents of rioting were reported in many areas including Dungannon, Portadown, Castlederg, Strabane and Lurgan, among others. In Derry up to 800 plastic bullets were fired in Derry. Reports were received of an RUC attack on outpatients in the Casualty department of Altnagelvin hospital. Further reports pointed to unprovoked discharging of plastic bullets at individuals leaving pubs and nightclubs in the city. A man was seriously injured when struck by an RUC Land Rover in Armagh City. a man was seriously injured when his vehicle was petrol bombed in West Belfast.

12 July

18. The Ballinafeigh L.O.L. parade passed peacefully down the Lower Ormeau Road. An attempted protest by residents was prevented by the RUC. The parade passed back over the Ormeau Bridge at 7 pm that evening.
19. 35 year old Dermot McShane was killed when he was struck and crushed by an RUC Saxon vehicle in the Little James' Street area of Derry. More than 1,000 plastic bullets were fired and 1,000 petrol bombs thrown overnight in the city. At least 22 people were hospitalised. Petrol bomb attacks on the loyalist Fountain area forced several families to leave their homes.
20. Sporadic violence continued overnight in Northern Ireland. Buses were burnt out and a Church Hall and Post Office set alight in Dungiven. Up to 200 petrol bombs were thrown and the RUC responded with plastic bullets. The RUC were attacked by protesters in Strabane where 12 buildings were damaged by rioters. Up to 100 petrol bombs were thrown. Serious rioting continued in North and West Belfast.
21. Newry town was sealed off during the local Twelfth parade which was voluntarily rerouted. More than 30 plastic bullets were fired by the RUC at nationalists protesting against the parade. Several Post Office vans were set alight in the town and other vehicles attacked.

13 July

22. Violence continued but at a lower level than previous evenings. New Barnsley RUC station in Belfast was attacked by automatic gunfire and fire was returned by the RUC. Attacks on loyalist homes in the Ardoyne and Clonard forced some residents to leave their homes, notably in the Twadell Avenue area. Petrol bomb attacks were also carried out on Mountpottinger RUC station in Belfast. Three RUC officers were injured during sectarian clashes in Newtownbutler. The RUC station in Coalisland was petrol bombed. Sporadic rioting continued in Derry. Up to 200 rioters were involved in disturbances in Dungiven in which a school was set alight.

14 July

23. A bomb containing 1,200 lbs of home-made explosives was detonated outside the

Killyhevlin hotel in Enniskillen. The hotel was evacuated following a telephone warning fifteen minutes before the blast. Seventeen people were treated in hospital for minor injuries and shock. In a statement the IRA denied involvement in the attack.

24. Rioting continued in the Ardoyne and New Barnsley areas of Belfast. Protestant businesses were attacked in several towns including Castlewellan, Newcastle and Newry. Incidents occurred in other areas but on a lesser scale than previous nights.

Security Section
15 July 1996



The Garvagh Road Residents' Coalition is appealing to the Nationalist community to behave in a disciplined and dignified manner despite the immense provocation of the past week. Nothing at all should be allowed to distract from the fact that it is the British Government and the RUC who are in the dock before the eyes of the world because of their shameful treatment of this and other nationalist communities last week.

We endorse the call from the leaders of the main nationalist parties for a complete halt to the destructive violence in our communities. While only a small minority is involved in this, it detracts from the real issue, and helps to allow the British Government to pretend they are 'peace makers'.

The real message of nationalist frustration and betrayal is being expressed through the many peaceful marches and rallies currently taking place, and which are being attended by people in their thousands.

We totally condemn any attempts to intimidate Protestant families from nationalist areas, and we appeal to them to remain in the homes in which they have lived for years. Such intimidation is as unjust and obscene as the treatment meted out to this and other communities since Thursday 11 July.

SECTARIANISM WAS THE CAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED LAST WEEK. IT WAS WRONG THEN AND REJECTED BY ANYONE WITH A SENSE OF JUSTICE.

IT MUST ALSO BE REJECTED NOW.

ON NEXT SUNDAY 21 JULY THE GROUP WILL BE HOLDING A MARCH FROM OBINS STREET TO GARVAGHY ROAD STARTING AT 2.30.

This march will take place completely within the nationalist end of the town, so as not to cause any offence to other traditions. This march will be an opportunity for people to show their anger at the RUC for forcing the Change march through the area without the consent of the people on Thursday 11 July.

**Lower Ormeau Concerned Community
c/o 156 Ormeau Road Tel/Fax: 231752**

Press Release - 15th July 1996

Lower Ormeau residents have no faith in British Government "Review Body"

In the past week the British Government showed at both a policy and an operational level that it was unwilling and unable to protect the rights of nationalist communities. The Government's shameful capitulation to those in the Orange Order who orchestrated and carried out acts of violence and intimidation means that we have absolutely no confidence in the ill-defined plans announced today by Sir Patrick Mayhew to set up a "Review Body" on parades. It is extremely naive of the Government to review its so-called parades policy when we have a police force which is incapable of implementing any policy in the face of Orange opposition. It would have been much more appropriate to have announced an independent public enquiry into the total breakdown of law and order last week and the failure of the RUC to act with even a semblance of impartiality.

It is important to restate at this time our position that residents have a basic and inalienable right to withhold their consent to offensive and sectarian parades. No review body or commission can bypass that fundamental need for consent and any attempt by the British Government to use a commission or review body to force unwanted parades on the residents of the Lower Ormeau Road will be opposed by us. The only role which our community sees for a parades' commission is a role in assessing whether or not consent exists, and in the case of the Lower Ormeau Road we have clearly demonstrated in the past that there is no consent for Orange parades. We have called a rally for 7.00pm on Thursday 18th at the Ormeau Bridge so that people can express their disgust at the events of last Thursday and Friday on the Garvaghy Road and the Ormeau Road.

We also wish to refute yet again the British Government and RUC lie that the parades problem arises from a failure of march organisers and residents to meet to resolve their differences, with the implication that both parties are equally to blame. Both the British Government and the RUC are well aware that we have repeatedly tried to meet the Orange Order over the last year and that it is the Orange Order alone which has prevented dialogue on the issue of parades. We again repeat our willingness to meet the Orange Order and indeed our belief that it is only by dialogue that we can break down the barriers between us.

-End-