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Parades

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General Security Situation in Northern Ireland

1. The past week has seen a period of serious violence across Northern Ireland. The initial phase of violence emanated from the loyalist community, protesting at the RUC decision to prevent the Portadown Orangemen from parading down the Garvaghy Road. The violence took the form of rioting and the blockading of many towns across Northern Ireland. In response to the deteriorating security situation, two further British Army battalions were deployed in Northern Ireland, bringing the total army presence at 18,500 to its highest level since 1982 (500 members of the Parachute Regiment have been withdrawn). Following the decision on 11 July to allow the march along Garvaghy Road the loyalist violence abated and was replaced with violence concentrated in Nationalist areas.
2. Widespread concerns have been expressed with regard to the RUC handling of incidents in Nationalist areas which was in stark contrast to the reticence shown loyalists. Over 6,000 plastic baton rounds were fired over the week, 90% of these during Nationalist protests. There was one fatality in Derry (Dermot McShane), one person on a life support after an incident in Armagh involving a police vehicle and a sizeable number of serious injuries, many caused by plastic bullets. There was also a fatality (Michael McGoldrick shot dead on 8 July) as a result of an apparently unsanctioned UVF attack, largely thought to be the work of the mid-Ulster UVF.

Loyalist Violence

3. An article in the *Sunday Times* of 7 July claimed that the security forces were aware of a loyalist plan to orchestrate disturbances throughout Northern Ireland during the marching season. Disturbances began on 7 July following the blocking of the Drumcree march. Roads were blocked in loyalist areas and arson attacks were carried out. Vehicles were hijacked and burned out to serve as barricades. Intimidation forced Catholic families to leave their homes in parts of North Belfast. Numerous petrol bomb attacks were launched at the RUC. While Plastic Baton Rounds were used to disperse rioters during loyalist disturbances, the 662 rounds fired made up only 10% of the number fired

over the week. Reports received pointed to RUC officers standing by as loyalists attacked nationalist areas. The RUC claimed to have been overstretched by the protests. Stretches of the Dublin-Belfast and Belfast-Derry rail lines were closed off due to barricades, as were stretches of motorways throughout the North. Belfast International Airport and Larne port were also temporarily blockaded. The disturbances abated once the Garvaghy Road march was allowed through on 11 July.

Army Deployment

4. It was announced on 9 July that two further British Army battalions were to be deployed in Northern Ireland. The battalions comprised 1,000 troops from the 1st Battalion, Princess of Wales Regiment and the 1st Battalion, Parachute Regiment. The deployment brought the British Army presence in Northern Ireland to 18,500, its highest level since 1982. (It was announced on 16 July that the 1st Battalion Parachute Regiment of 500 members is to be withdrawn). The battalions were deployed to support the RUC during the disturbances. A number of troops from the Parachute Regiment were reportedly deployed at Drumcree but appeared to be carrying out training manoeuvres rather than actual patrolling.
5. At the outbreak of violence in Nationalist areas soldiers were deployed in support of the RUC in Derry and West Belfast. With the RUC they were engaged in using plastic bullets to disperse protesters. In some areas it was the first time the army had returned to the streets since early 1995.

Plastic Bullets

6. According to RUC figures, 6,002 Plastic Baton Rounds (PBRs) were fired between 6 and 14 July, mostly by the RUC itself. (However, reports were received of RUC officers collecting spent baton rounds and the final figure will, therefore, be somewhat higher.) Reports have been received of a large number of injuries sustained as a result of plastic bullets. These injuries point to contraventions of the rules of engagement with regard to PBRs that they should not be fired from closer than 20 metres and that they should be

aimed at the lower body. More PBRs were fired in this one week than in any year since 1981. On the introduction of new Baton guns in 1994 the British side stated that the increased accuracy of the guns would be expected to lead to a reduction in accidental injuries.

7. The fact that, of the 6,002 plastic baton rounds reportedly fired in the week to 14 July, just 662 were fired during loyalist rioting and 5,340 were fired during Nationalist rioting is seen as an indication of the RUC's propensity to use differing levels of force with either community. The British side have not yet given definitive figures for plastic bullets fired for the entire period.

Casualties

8. The death of Dermot McShane in Derry, after being crushed under a hoarding by an Army Saxon armoured vehicle, is being investigated by a senior RUC officer. As regards injuries sustained as a result of RUC activity, one youth was seriously injured by a plastic bullet in Derry on 11 July. He is thought likely to have sustained brain damage as a result of his injuries. Up to 100 others were treated in hospital in Derry for injuries sustained from plastic bullets. A number of others were treated in hospitals in Sligo and Letterkenny and others were treated at impromptu First Aid points at the scene of the riots.
9. Reports were received of RUC attacks on patients receiving treatment for injuries in Altnagelvin hospital, Derry on 11 July. The reports, and a number of other allegations regarding the RUC handling of events in Derry, have been raised with the British authorities through the Secretariat. In particular, we have expressed serious concern to the British authorities with regard to reports of unprovoked RUC attacks on civilians outside clubs in Derry in which more than 25 people were reportedly hit by plastic bullets. In another incident, a man was seriously injured when he was struck by an RUC Land Rover in Armagh City. The RUC are investigating the incident. Several individual cases have been raised with the British authorities through the Secretariat. Riots also

occurred in Nationalist areas of Belfast and in Nationalist towns throughout Northern Ireland. Violence levels generally abated by 14 July. While the attacks were primarily targeted at the RUC, there were also a number of attacks on Protestant homes and businesses.

Shootings in North Belfast

10. Three RUC officers received shotgun wounds in attacks in North Belfast. It has been speculated that these were carried out by the INLA.

Bombing at Killyhevlin Hotel

11. A bomb containing approximately 1,200 lbs of home-made explosives was detonated outside the Killyhevlin Hotel in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh on 14 July. While the British side described the bomb as having "all the hallmarks" of the IRA, it is speculated that the bomb was planted by elements within Republican Sinn Féin. A warning was received prior to the explosion and there were no serious injuries. The *Irish Times* of 18 July reports that the vehicle used in the bombing was located by the RUC after a tip-off from the Gardaí but, having failed to impound it, the vehicle was subsequently driven off.

Accompaniment

12. We continue to receive reports of British army patrols in West and North Belfast which have at best a token RUC presence. This continued presence is seen locally as provocative. We have also received reports of a heavy helicopter presence over North Belfast. On a more general note, we would be anxious to ensure that the security presence be kept to the minimum consistent with public safety and that the British Army presence be withdrawn as soon as possible from contact with the public.

Drumcree

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. The celebration which greeted the lodge in Portadown, 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 and generated by deep anger at the triumphalist behaviour last year, the failure of the Orange Order or David Trimble to respond to requests for meetings and the failure of the RUC to accept its commitment of the previous year.

4. 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 hijacking a car and possession of a firearm. From on the ground contacts, this allegation appears untrue; local feeling is genuinely opposed to Orange parades in the area. Furthermore, the community tended to rally behind him as unionist refusal to meet with him was reiterated.

Mid-Ulster UVF

5. It is widely believed that Billy Wright ("King Rat") was responsible either directly or indirectly for the killing of Michael McGoldrick. It is also believed that his mid-Ulster group of the UVF have been responsible for upwards of forty murders in the South Armagh areas during the past number of years. There have been extensive media reports that the loyalists leadership in Belfast have attempted to rein in this figure who is widely regarded as opposing the loyalist cease-fire.
6. The reports that David Trimble met with Wright during the course of this year's standoff at Drumcree has fuelled speculation that the UVF were intent on ensuring that no compromise was agreed by the Orange Order. In the interview he gave on the BBC's *Panorama*, the RUC Chief Constable said that there had been paramilitary influence on both sides during the stand-off and that this had led to a situation where when a deal was almost delivered "it was prevented from becoming a deliverable deal". Wright, also interviewed on the programme, said that Trimble was not in negotiation with him but that he was aware of the price that was being asked of the loyalist community for the Drumcree parade to be allowed go ahead. David Trimble said that he had conveyed to Wright his anxiety that the paramilitaries not break their cease-fire and that they (Orangemen) did not want any violence. Trimble further said that he was dealing with people (Wright) who were on a cease-fire and that the IRA cease-fire had ended. This has not ended criticisms of Trimble for failing to met McCionnaith of the Garvaghy residents's group prior to the ending of the IRA cease-fire despite repeated requests.

Orange Intentions

7. The *Sunday Times* reported on 7 July that the security forces were in possession of a plan of Orange activities which were designed to stretch the resources of the RUC across Northern Ireland to the point where they could not protect the Garvaghy Road against the weight of assembled Orangemen. The plan involved road blocks and the blockading of ports and airports. The course of the week very much followed this reported plan.
8. On the night of 10 July a mechanical digger was brought in to Drumcree by Orangemen and media reports indicated that it was taken away and metal sheeting, by way of armour, was added. The Chief Constable referred to a slurry tanker or bulldozer brought in at Drumcree, with the potential for JCBs to follow. The question arises as to whether the RUC is pursuing an investigation of these incidents.
9. Nationalist criticism has arisen because of the free movement of large numbers of people moved in and out of the Drumcree area over the period of the stand-off, including known UVF members. This is in stark contrast to the large-scale sealing of the Lower Ormeau Road.
10. Speculation has also arisen from a number of sources that the RUC were operating to a deadline of 10.30 am on Thursday morning. It is speculated that the unionist/Orange leadership at Drumcree informed the RUC that unless they resolved the situation to their satisfaction, the plan of escalation could not be thrown into reverse after that time.
11. It is widely believed within the nationalist community that the decision to force the parade down the Garvaghy was taken sometime on Wednesday, before members of the paratroop regiment were brought in and that they were called in to repress nationalist opposition.

Mediation

12. The absence of any contact between the Garvaghy Coalition and the local Orange Lodge during the year meant that concerted attempts at mediation occurred only as the crisis had developed. Brendan McAllister of Mediation Network carried little credibility with the Garvaghy residents for his failure to publicly declare that the RUC had committed in 1995 to stopping all further parades. His subsequent declaration to this effect has met with an official RUC reply.
13. The NIO were in direct contact with the Garvaghy residents who report that the NIO were insisting that any deal had to involve "Orange feet on the Garvaghy".
14. The leaders of the four Churches were also involved but failed to bring the two sides together. Brendan McCionnaith has claimed that the meeting with the Church leaders on Thursday morning was a ruse to keep the Garvaghy committee off the streets. Cardinal Daly has indicated privately that he feels duped as the decision to force the parade down the Garvaghy was clearly taken before that meeting was arranged.

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Lower Ormeau

1. The small nationalist enclave of the Lower Ormeau is 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 Orange Lodge along their section of the road. Opposition intensified as a result of sectarian taunting outside the Sean Graham Bookie shop on the Lower Ormeau in 1992. Last year an agreement was reached between the LOCC and the Lodge to the Twelfth parade, brokered by the RUC 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.
2. 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. No announcement was made as to whether the Orange parade would be allowed but the heavy, indeed intimidating RUC presence, clearly indicated that the parade would proceed as it did.
3. Despite repeated assurances by the NIO through the Secretariat that we would be notified in advance of the RUC decision, this notice was never given and media reports provided the first indication that the parade was moving along the Lower Ormeau. Neither were we provided with any indication of the decision to force the Orange Parade down the Garvaghy Road. We have indicated that this failure is completely unacceptable and inimical to the provisions of the Anglo-Irish Agreement.
4. Clashes also occurred last year on 12 August at the Lower Ormeau as the RUC forcibly removed protesters (upwards of 30 civilians and 12 police injured, with plastic bullets fired) who were attempting to prevent the Belfast Walker club marching down the road to board buses for Derry. Further confrontations were avoided when the Club used a different return route.

5. Opposition to any such parade will likely reoccur this year, though the LOCC has insisted that it will continue to make only peaceful protests. They are particularly irritated by the Apprentice Boy parades on the Lower Ormeau as the assembly and march serve only to organise the boarding and departure of buses for Derry i.e. they have no purpose intrinsic to the area.

6. It is also possible that members of the Oireachtas and other individuals will be requested to be present on 10 August as it is widely believed that the presence of the Oireachtas delegation on 11-12 July helped moderate RUC behaviour.

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Derry

Elements of the Parade

1. The parades issue appears to be heading for another major confrontation in Derry at the annual Apprentice Boys Parade which this year falls on 10 August (i.e. the Saturday nearest 12 August). The parent Apprentice Boys clubs traditionally assemble in Derry and parade on the walls in the morning. Last year was the first time since 1969 that they were allowed to march the entire route. The clubs beyond Derry traditionally assemble and parade at various locations throughout Northern Ireland (including the Ormeau Road) before travelling to join the Apprentice Boys in Derry where they march from the Waterside, across the Craigavon Bridge and around the Diamond. They are normally accompanied by bands, some of which travel from Scotland for the occasion and the number involved has reached some 20,000 in the past. Consumption of alcohol is a conspicuous contributing factor to the heightened atmosphere. The Apprentice Boys will likely seek to emulate the success of the Orange Order at Drumcree and insist on a march along the walls including those parts of it which overlook the Bogside and on the march around the Diamond.

Events in 1995

2. Last year, residents of the Bogside occupied part of the walls (at Butcher's Gate) on Friday evening in an attempt to prevent the march along the walls overlooking the Bogside and some 200 stayed there overnight. They were forcibly removed by the RUC (some thrown from the walls) and the march was allowed to proceed. This was the first time since 1969 that the parade was allowed to march all around the walls. It is also believed that the failure to announce a decision on the route by the RUC added to the build-up of tension.
3. Further clashes with the RUC ensued at the Diamond that afternoon and nationalists

rioted for several hours afterward. (As a result of this incident, an Apprentice Boy was charged and convicted of provocative behaviour (loud drumming) near the nationalist protesters in the Diamond.)

Events in Derry, 11-13 July

4. Following the RUC decision in Drumcree, violence erupted in Derry on the night of 11 July. Independent reports (e.g. from the CAJ) indicate that the RUC acted in an increasingly provocative manner and fired plastic bullets without provocation and in a manner likely to endanger life (i.e. with body and head shots). Approximately 40 civilians were treated in Altnagelvin hospital (and many others were treated at impromptu First Aid points set up at the scene), a number of whom suffered serious injuries as a result of plastic bullets. We have also received (and raised with the British authorities) reports that RUC officers baton charged patients awaiting treatment in Altnagelvin hospital, that RUC officers attacked peaceful crowds on Shipquay Street leaving a nightclub and fast-food takeaway and that a groups of RUC officers fired from the walls of Derry and cheered at hits. Up to 1,000 plastic bullets were fired on Thursday night alone. Some 500 petrol bombs were thrown. Reports also consistently point to Sinn Féin representatives' involvement in trying to calm the situation and being rebuffed.
5. On the night of 12 July, 35 year old Dermot McShane was killed when he was crushed by an RUC Saxon armoured vehicle. Over 1,000 plastic bullets were again fired overnight and 1,000 petrol bombs thrown. At least 22 people were hospitalised and many others were treated by doctors near the scene of the riots. Many others reportedly went home without treatment. Sporadic rioting continued on the night of 13 July.

Prospects for Derry, 1996

6. Feelings within the Bogside are running very high in the aftermath of Drumcree as was evident in the serious rioting which ensued. Reports of provocative activities by the RUC, the death of Michael McShane and the number of serious head injuries suffered by

locals as a result of the use of plastic bullets have further exacerbated the situation.

7. The RUC statement that a senior officer has been appointed to investigate the death carries little weight with the nationalist residents of Derry, the CAJ reports, because of the collapse of confidence in the RUC. This lack of confidence has been fuelled by rumours that the RUC has begun to seize hospital records of those injured and that arrests may follow. The CAJ believes that an independent (i.e. international) investigation of the death will be required to assuage these suspicions. On the wider front, local opinion also believes that an independent investigation in all RUC activity in the city last week is required to clear the air. Given the great pride in the city, locals are determined to avoid further damage and this will help fuel their search for an acceptable solution to the 10 August events.
8. There may be an attempt to occupy the walls and prevent the parent clubs from marching on the walls in the morning, at least that portion which overlooks the Bogside. There are reports that the mood within sections of the nationalist community is such that attempts are contemplated to block the access across the Craigavon bridge and prevent the visiting Apprentice Boys entering the west side of the city. The sentiment has been expressed, according to contacts, that "if they can do it in Drumcree, we can do it in Derry" i.e. use force of numbers to block the Apprentice Boys. A nationalist occupation of the Diamond is also a possibility.
9. There are indications that a group of MEPs may travel to Derry to observe events and members of the Oireachtas may also be present. The resident groups have asked for this type of outside presence in the belief that it restrains RUC actions or provides subsequent verification that RUC behaviour was unacceptable.
10. A delegation of residents groups, including two representatives from the Bogside residents, met the Taoiseach on 17 July in the course of which the Taoiseach noted the importance of the walls of Derry to unionist culture and the danger inherent in attempting to totally deny the Apprentice Boys access on 10 August and particular the accusations

that that would generate from unionist leaders. The Derry representatives stressed that their objection was to the parade along the Bogside section of the walls and not the parade in principle.

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Other Potential Flashpoints

1. Given the heightened feelings at the moment, there may also be other clashes on 10 August. Clashes occurred last year in Dunloy and Rasharkin between local residents and loyalist marchers. The village of Rosslea may also object to a local Black Preceptory march there and feelings are running high in a number of other areas such as Newry and Lurgan after the disturbances this year.
2. Last year, an Internment commemoration march in West Belfast was attacked by loyalists and clashes with the RUC ensued (the march is scheduled for Sunday, 11 August). Black Preceptory marches in Dunloy (31 August) and the Lower Ormeau (25 and 31 August) also have the potential for confrontation.

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