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Concerned Citizens' Groups Alliance (Ireland)

Bogside Residents' Group

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Press Release

Saturday August 10th 1996 11.00
p.m.

The Bogside Residents' Group unreservedly condemns the Apprentice Boys' Association for the violent scenes at Bellaghy and Dunloy this evening. We also condemn the violent, inconsistent and partisan tactics employed by the RUC.

Donncha Mac Niallais, spokesperson for the BRG, said that following the generous position adopted by the people of Derry towards the Apprentice Boys' parade which was held in the city today, the decision by Apprentice Boys to force their way through Bellaghy and to invade and terrorise the people of Dunloy was both disgusting and cowardly.

Mr. Mac Niallais said:

"The violence directed against the people of Bellaghy and Dunloy vindicates the negotiating position of the BRG. Contentious parades and marches should not take place against the wishes of local residents."

"Responsibility for the violence at Bellaghy and Dunloy lies with the Apprentice Boys' Association, the RUC, and, ultimately, the British government. Nationalists are entitled to equality, respect, parity of esteem and protection under the law. Today, the Apprentice Boys, the RUC, and the British government gave them none of these."

Ends.

pa Parades ag
(Dunloy)

Dunloy Residents' & Parents' Association

Press Release Sunday August 11th 1996 9.45 p.m.

The Dunloy Residents' & Parents' Association has expressed serious concern over inaccurate media reports of events in Dunloy yesterday.

The Residents Association held a dignified, peaceful protest yesterday morning in the village of Dunloy and the RUC subsequently advised the Apprentice Boys not to carry on with their proposed route through the main street of the village.

Three senior police officers contacted the Association at 12 noon to ask for a meeting at Cloughmills RUC station to try and reach agreement over the proposed evening parade through Dunloy. Five of the Dunloy committee attended. They were accompanied by a Belgian journalist, a representative of Amnesty International and a number of English trade union representatives who acted as observers. An agreement was reached whereby only the local Apprentice Boys and their band would go back to the Orange Hall and disperse from there in the evening.

It became apparent later in the afternoon that a number of other buses from Belfast and other areas was en route to Dunloy to lay siege to the village. The local Apprentice Boys never attempted to march to the Orange Hall but turned up on the A26 causing the siege to develop and then they and their band left the area, leaving drunken Apprentice Boy mobs trying to attack the village of Dunloy.

The main Ballymena/Ballymoney road was barricaded by the Apprentice Boys and the RUC informed us at that stage that we had a 'Drumcree situation' in Dunloy. Twenty-eight buses, carrying at least one thousand Apprentice Boys and supporters were present around the village at this stage.

The RUC were outnumbered and the officer in charge seemed reluctant to confront the surrounding mob. After the Residents' Association reminded this officer of his duty to afford protection to the village, the RUC did eventually engage with the Apprentice Boys but had great difficulty in holding the mob back for number of hours. The men, women and children of Dunloy village were petrified. When the Committee asked about the safety of the people in the village and the village itself the RUC said that they could not give any guarantee to us, thereby heightening our fears even further.

The Dunloy Residents & Parents Association wish to record that the grave and sinister situation which occurred in Dunloy was not a local issue and was certainly organised and orchestrated before the Apprentice Boys left Derry city.

We urge the Apprentice Boys of Derry Association, the RUC, and independent observers to fully investigate how these intoxicated gangs were allowed to make their way to Dunloy and carry out such intimidation and thuggery in our area.

This nightmare experience in Dunloy has certainly not added to any confidence or 'understanding' of the Apprentice Boys' portrayal of their organisation as a harmless, historical association. Rather, they were seen by the nationalist people, and indeed the world, to be triumphalist, bigoted louts who wished to destroy the village and most certainly cause serious injury to the residents. Ends.