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Meeting of the Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference
London, 18 July 1996

Item 2(a): Implications of Recent Parades and Future Outlook

Speaking Points

The Implications of Recent Parades

- I have set out already the implications of recent parades;
- The parades issue has proved only too clearly its capacity to inflame and destabilise the situation;
- Mr. Trimble's activities, and your decisions in Portadown and the Ormeau Road, have polarised this issue as never before;
- We can no longer pretend that this is just a matter of traditional celebration or folklore, or simply an operational police matter;
- It must receive political attention, commensurate with its capacity to do political damage.
- Do you intend to pursue any investigation into what appears to have been a massive conspiracy by the Orange Order to break the law at Drumcree and across Northern Ireland?
- Are any prosecutions of Orangemen likely as a result of these events?

Lack of Consultation

- I am very concerned at the failure to provide our side with adequate information through the Anglo-Irish Secretariat;
- The sudden reversal of the previous decision on the Garvaghy Road without any advance notice to our side is unacceptable;
- This failure to even inform us in advance had serious political consequences in our jurisdiction, all the more so since we had taken great pains to respond to your request at the last Conference meeting to refrain from public comment on specific parades and taken a deliberately low profile in the early days of last week;

- In the aftermath of the Garvaghy Road we were told through the Secretariat that the decision on the Lower Ormeau Road would be conveyed to us in advance;
- It was not and we learnt from the media that this parade too was being forced through;
- The flow of information on the very serious disturbances which followed the parade decisions was also disappointing;
- While I appreciate that the past weekend was a holiday one in Northern Ireland, I feel that special measures should have been taken to ensure full and continuous contact between the two sides via the Secretariat.

Future Outlook and Derry

- The Taoiseach met yesterday with representatives of residents' associations from the Garvaghy and Lower Ormeau Roads and Derry;
- These groups feel very aggrieved not only at the forced parades but also at the attempt to portray them as unrepresentative and infiltrated by paramilitaries;
- The compromise last year showed that the Garvaghy Road residents were very reasonable people, until their goodwill was abused;
- You announced earlier this week that you are proceeding with a general review that will make recommendations about the better management of parades in the future;
- I understand that what you have in mind will not in any case affect this year's marching season;
- Any review, or proposal for an independent body on parades to which it might lead, must have as its core objective a balancing of the right to march with the right of local communities to object to unwelcome marches;
- The membership of the proposed review should reflect this and I trust that we will be consulted fully in this regard as has already been indicated through the Secretariat;
- Confidence in the potential for agreed solutions to contentious parades will only be built if reasonable decisions are upheld in the future, even in the face of attempts to change them by sheer force of numbers;

- It is essential that ways be found of better managing the potential for disorder inherent each year in a number of Orange parades just as such issues would also be addressed in other public order situations in any democracy;
- Strict conditions on routes and participation in parades should be rigorously enforced;
- Where there are reasonable doubts about the likely behaviour of those participating in a parade or hangers on, a large bond should be required from the organisers;
- Parade organisers should be required, as a condition for applying for police permission for a route, to demonstrate in advance that they are in dialogue with local communities who may object to a proposed route;
- There is now very great concern about the prospects for the remainder of the marching season, particularly in relation to the Apprentice Boys parade in Derry on 10 August and the proposed march on the Lower Ormeau Road earlier that day;
- The impact of last week's events has been dramatic in Derry and there is a determination, even among moderate nationalist opinion, that the Apprentice Boys must enter into negotiations regarding the route;
- There is a very real possibility of a major confrontation over the Apprentice Boys plans to march on the West Side and the Walls
- Negotiations must begin now and reasonable decisions on routes must be upheld;
- You will be aware that there is already international interest in the parades planned for 10 August with the presence of observer delegations very likely;
- I would urge that the two Governments maintain the closest contact via the Secretariat in the weeks ahead;
- I would also urge you to press the Unionist, Orange Order and Apprentice Boys leadership to enter into a dialogue with local communities for the remainder of this marching season and particularly in the Lower Ormeau and Derry;
- The haughty dismissal of residents views which we saw - and which was rewarded - in Portadown must be set aside by the Order;

- It is also essential that the NIO and RUC recognise fully the representative nature of the residents' groups and engage with them and nationalist opinion generally in advance of contentious parades
- I hope this is happening already in relation to Derry and that something in the nature of a special taskforce is involved on the issue;
- We cannot afford another week like the one just past.

Anglo-Irish Intergovernmental Conference

18 July 1996

2 Confidence Issues

2 (a): Implications of Recent Parades

Background Note

General

1. There are currently a number of perceptions, with consequent implications, which are informing nationalist opinion as a result of last week's events. These perceptions can be summarised as follows;

- the RUC has revealed itself as a partisan, unionist force that cannot be expected to stand up to the wishes of the unionist/Orange leadership. It did not and will not vigorously and impartially impose the law on fellow unionists.
- the RUC is an anti-catholic force which enthusiastically and violently tackled peaceful nationalist protesters as revealed, particularly in the extensive use of plastic bullets against nationalists.
- the RUC must be fundamentally reformed if it is ever to be acceptable to the nationalist community.
- the basis for decommissioning has been undermined and it should be dropped as a factor in talks.
- the Unionist leadership's commitment to meaningful talks must be seriously questioned.
- the Orange Order is a sectarian organisation that was prepared to bring Northern Ireland to the brink of anarchy to reassert its dominance.

- the British authorities, in allowing the unionist/Orange leadership to dictate the running of Northern Ireland through a successful show of force, showed little or no regard for the rights and sensitivities of the nationalist community.
2. The primary implications of these perceptions are that there has been a significant 'greening' of nationalist opinion across a broad spectrum, uncertainty within the SDLP as to how to proceed without losing nationalist support, a complete collapse in confidence in the RUC and the British authorities, profound doubts about the efficacy of the current talks and about the willingness of mainstream unionism to accommodate the nationalist community politically.
 3. The nationalist community remains deeply shocked by the events of last week and there are no indications yet that the force of the lessons drawn from last week has dissipated. There appears to be a likelihood that nationalist communities will mobilise to oppose loyalist parades in areas where they have hitherto passed off peacefully. Feelings in Newry, for example, are running high and a public meeting there on Monday evening attracted some 10,000 people (though little media attention) from a wide cross section of the nationalist community. The prospects for a peaceful Apprentice Boys parade on 10 August are bleak given the extensive rioting which occurred there (see below).

Drumcree

Events Prior to 1996

4. 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.
5. 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.

6. 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.
7. 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

8. 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.

9. 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 meet McCionnaith of the Garvaghy residents's group prior to the ending of the IRA cease-fire despite repeated requests.

Orange Intentions

10. 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.
11. 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 at to whether the

RUC is pursuing an investigation of these incidents.

12. 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.
13. 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.
14. 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

15. 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.
16. 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".
17. 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.

The Sequence of Events at Drumcree and Related Areas

Saturday 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.

Sunday 7 July

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. The Portadown Orange Lodge, with a large number of watching supporters, confronts the RUC on the Drumcree Road and returns to the church. 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.

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.

Monday 8 July

The body of a Catholic taxi driver, Michael McGoldrick, was discovered in Aghalee, 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. 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.

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.

Tuesday 9 July

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. 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.

Wednesday 10 July

In a further attempt by Orangemen to breach police lines, two plastic bullets were fired. It was announced that two British Army battalions comprising 1,000 troops were to be deployed in Northern Ireland. 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.

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. 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. While sporadic violent incidents occurred in many areas, Drumcree remains calm after an address by Ian Paisley which prompts a dwindling of numbers overnight.

Thursday 11 July

The RUC moved after 11.00 am to force a peaceful protest by the Garvaghy Road residents off the road. 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 preceded by a band and single drum beat. Violence continued in the area following the march with the RUC responding with plastic bullets to the petrol bombs thrown by nationalist protesters. In the hours following the march loyalist barricades throughout Northern Ireland were removed.

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.

Violence continued overnight, now focussed in Nationalist areas. Three RUC men were shot and injured in North Belfast. The attacks are reported 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.

Friday 12 July

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.

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 reportedly 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. 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.

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.

Saturday 13 July

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.

Sunday 14 July

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. 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.

Lower Ormeau

18. 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 Ballynaveigh 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.
19. 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.
20. 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.

Labour Party Report

21. Deputies Declan Bree and Joe Costello and Senator Sean Maloney published on 16 July a report on their observations on the situation in Drumcree, the Lower Ormeau and Derry. Their recommendations are as follows;

- that the RUC be substantially reformed and that an independent enquiry be established into the RUC performance last week.
- that an independent Tribunal or Commission be established to draw up proposals on parade routes.
- that independent international observers be assembled to be present at future controversial parades.
- that prosecutions by the RUC of those who incited loyalist disruption be instituted, including against David Trimble, Martyn Smyth and Ian Paisley.