

FROM TOM CLARKE
Security Policy and Operations Division
8 July 1998



See copy distribution

MR LEACH

per [unclear]

PRIME MINISTER: MEETING WITH ORANGE ORDER

Your note of 7 July commissioned briefing and lines to take for the Prime Minister's meeting with Orange Order leaders on Thursday 9 July. The following may therefore be helpful:

Events to date

In the aftermath of the Orange Order's Parade at Drumcree being halted, Northern Ireland has suffered violence over the past 3 nights. Though widespread and very intense at times, the violence has been mainly isolated into pockets in South and North Belfast, South Antrim, Ballymena and North Down. During the day, disruption is mainly confined to blocking roads and demonstrations. It is not, at this stage, on the scale of violence witnessed during the Drumcree stand-off in 1996, and the number of incidents are decreasing with each passing night.

The RUC have borne the brunt of the violence. While there is an element of wanton destruction, rioters have used blast and petrol bombs against police and there have been a number of shooting attacks on officers. A number of police officers' homes have also been targeted, particularly in Carrickfergus. Thankfully, no deaths or serious injuries have been reported, though a police officer suffered a fractured skull, in Co Londonderry on Sunday night.

The Orange Order have on Monday and Tuesday nights, organised a large number of small parades in the East of the Province. These tend to skirt close to Nationalist areas, or important installations, such as the International airport and must be policed. They serve a

twin objective. On the positive side they tend to act as a more peaceful focus for those wishing to demonstrate, but they are also clearly aimed at tying up and stretching resources and tiring police officers.

In Portadown itself, a tented village has sprung up around Drumcree Parish Church. The mood during the day has been generally good natured, but at nights the numbers are swelled by Orangemen from across Northern Ireland, with up to 5,000 reported on site at any one time. On Tuesday, during the day, large numbers of Loyalists appeared at all entrances to the Garvaghy Road in a clear attempt to intimidate the local population. No violent incidents were reported.

The Parades Commission's determination on Monday to allow a parade of Orangemen on 13th July along the lower part of the Ormeau Road may have had some impact on the level of violence, though both Orangemen and Nationalists have been quick to separate this and the Drumcree parade. Residents on the Ormeau Road are seeking to test the Parades Commission's decision in the High Court today by means of judicial review.

With the weekend approaching followed rapidly by the main part of the marching season on 12 and 13 July, the security forces remain on full alert. Eight hundred additional troops arrive today and tomorrow to assist with public order duties. At Annex A are the current statistics for the period up to 0600 am on 8 July 1998.

Lines to take

- The Government remains determined to uphold the decision of the Parades Commission in relation to Garvaghy Road. The same will apply in the Ormeau Road next Monday. These are lawful binding decisions. There is an opportunity to test that decision by judicial review. Once that avenue is exhausted everyone must abide by the outcome.
- We cannot pick and choose which laws to obey and which to break. The law must be respected in all its parts, otherwise the alternative is a form of anarchy.

- While I realise the Orange Order has called for peaceful protests, which are acceptable, the violence we have witnessed this week in Northern Ireland is directly connected to the Order's decision not to accept the Parades Commission's determination. The Orange Order cannot completely distance itself from this violence and it must now take responsibility to end it.

Signed

TOM CLARKE

SHA EXT 27017

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From 0600 4 JULY 1998 to 0600 8 JULY 1998

Attacks on security forces	437 (includes 12 shootings & 25bombings)
Hijackings	136
Petrol bombing <u>incidents</u>	412
Petrol bombs recovered	in excess of 1,000
Criminal damage to homes	73
Criminal damage to other buildings	93
Criminal damage to vehicles	279
RUC officers injured	4
RUC officers forced to move home following intimidation	4
PBRs fired	205