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To: HQ **From: Belfast**
For: Second Secretary O hUiginn **From: Joint Secretary**

Subj: Garvaghy Road residents' meeting with Secretary of State (20 Jan)

1. We have obtained the following read-out from Brid Rodgers on yesterday's meeting between a group representing the Garvaghy Road residents' association and the Secretary of State, which John Hume and Brid also attended.

2. John Hume and Brid met the group briefly beforehand and then accompanied them to the meeting, which took place at 3pm in Stormont Castle. The group consisted of Breandan MacCionnaith; a Sister Laura (deputising for Fr Eamonn Stack, who was in Paris); Pauline Campbell (one of three new members of the association); and Rosemary Nelson, a Lurgan solicitor. They indicated to Hume beforehand that they intended to put a series of questions to the Secretary of State relating to last year's parade and they provided him with a copy. Hume emphasised the need to look forward and not to become embroiled in a rehearsal of last year's events.

3. The meeting with the Secretary of State went well, according to Brid. MacCionnaith was relatively low-key (though he did not resist altogether the temptation to go back over last year's parade). However, the interventions from Sister Laura (a Mercy nun from Boyle, Co Roscommon, who is engaged in parish work in Portadown) were less helpful. She delivered a number of broadsides in highly emotional and colourful terms which were redolent of Sinn Féin language and themes and which undermined, accordingly, the efforts Hume had been making to distance the residents from their perceived Sinn Féin association. Afterwards, there was a private altercation on this point between Hume and Sister Laura.

4. Hume impressed on the Secretary of State the need to ensure dialogue among all the interested parties with a view to preventing a recurrence of last year's crisis. He would himself seek a meeting with Robert Saulters to have the latter use his influence

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with the local Orange Order.

5. MacCionnaith said that the residents had been approached last September by "the Orange" through a mediator. He was not specific about the level but Brid understands it to have been County or higher. He did not identify the mediator but Brid understands that it was not the NI Mediation Network.

6. The Secretary of State, who was accompanied by John Steele and Chris McCabe, accepted fully the need for dialogue and said that he would use whatever influence he had with the Orange Order to persuade them to enter into dialogue. He also noted, without further comment, that the North Review's recommendations would be available shortly. He repeated the line about the RUC's operational independence last summer.

7. The group left their list of questions with the NIO officials and requested written answers.

8. Hume wanted the meeting to be given minimum publicity, as he did not want MacCionnaith's local standing in Portadown to be enhanced by pictures of his arrival at Stormont in the company of the SDLP leader.

9. Brid Rodgers was slightly concerned at an indication given by Fr Stack in a media interview this morning about a "partial re-routing" which his group would be proposing. She understands this to be a reference to a proposal that next summer's parade would return along a circuitous route which would take the marchers out into open countryside for a considerable distance. She fears that such a proposal, which is entirely unrealistic, would discredit the group and expose them to charges that they have no serious interest in reaching an accommodation on this issue.

10. Brid mentioned that Canon Earley has now retired and that the new PP is Fr Sean Larkin (a brother of Colm Larkin of the European Commission office in Dublin). She has the impression that Fr Larkin will play a more active role than his predecessor in seeking an accommodation for next summer.

11. In conclusion, we encouraged the SDLP to continue their efforts on behalf of the Garvaghy residents, not least with a view to countering claims about Sinn Féin's

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sympathies on the latter's part. We also mentioned the contacts which we would be having with the British Government and others to keep up the pressure for an accommodation well in advance of next summer.

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