

An Chartlann Náisiúnta
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10.00 a.m

Frank Blair introduced Terry Fitzpatrick.

Breandan stated that we are looking to ensure that everyone is clear on procedure. Breandan read out a prepared document (Attached) Frank Blair said he personally had no problem in terms of the April Agreement but he cannot deliver. He said that he could get people to acknowledge on the basis that everyone in Ireland is progressing along that road. He went on to say that he hoped that any agreement reached would underpin the points in the Document 1. Breandain replied that Frank Blair was coming from the wrong angle that the April 10th agreement and the NI Ireland Act is the law of the land . Breandan further stated that unless all parties affirm willingness to uphold the law of the land there is no point in continuing.

Frank Blair stated that he did not believe there were any preconditions.

Breandan further requested that Frank Blair make requests to the Orange Order for us. He stressed to Frank Blair that this was of great importance. He pointed out that the Grand Lodge had passed a resolution saying that Marches, Routes taken, and venues gone to are not negotiable. Breandan asked Frank Blair to ask the people in the other part of this building if they bound by the Grand Lodge Resolution. If so, then they could talk about anything under the sun but not negotiate a march. Before any proposal is put to us these points must be clarified in writing by the Orange Order. Frank Blair took Document 1 with him.

10.10 a.m Terry Fitzpatrick came in to clarify point C. She wanted to know did we want signed minutes of the Orange Order meetings with Frank Blair. The GRRC clarified that what was required was the minutes of the meetings between Frank Blair to be agreed and signed by both Frank Blair and GRRC.

Signed: Frank Blair

Signed: GRRC

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Session 2

Minutes 2 –

Time: 10.42 a.m

Breandan presented the minutes of the session to Frank Blair to sign which he did.

Terry Fitzpatrick read out a statement which she said was a response from the Orange Order :

' We agreed to structured and professional talks. The Prime Minister appointed Frank Blair to chair the Talks. This document is not part of the agreed structure. The draft was to be delivered to us at 10 a.m. We are happy to progress discussions on the draft to be tabled by Frank Blair.'

Joanne Tennyson called for time out to discuss the response. Frank asked people to come and advise on when the GRRC is ready to further discussion.

Peter agreed.

Ending Time: 10.45

Signed: Frank Blair

Signed GRRC

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Minutes 3

Date; June 4, 1999

Time : 11.12 a.m

Minutes handed in, amended, agreed and signed.

Breandan stated to Frank Blair that the Orange Order Response was still creating difficulty. He pointed out that in previous discussions Frank Blair had said that nobody is to be allowed to impose preconditions on negotiations. He sought an assurance from Frank Blair that he was conducting the negotiations on the basis of a belief by him (Frank Blair) that there were no preconditions and further that in relation to marches all issues surrounding marching are open to negotiation. He said that if the GRRC are given that assurance by Frank Blair they will be happy to accept it. Frank Blair gave the required assurance by stating that this was his belief.

Breandan requested the identity of the Orange Delegation pointing out that there was a precedent for so doing as in 1996 in the Talks at the Ulster Carpet Mills chaired by Archbishop Eames and Cardinal Daly the names of the delegation were supplied.

Breandan further requested that before any proposal drafts or discussion vehicle came to the GRRC there must be signed agreed minutes of this session.

Signed by :
Frank Blair

GRRC

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Minutes 4

Date: June 4

Time began: 11.50
Time Ended: 11.53

The minutes of meeting 3 were read, signed and agreed.

Signed : 

Frank Blair :

GRRC : Pauline Campbell

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Minutes 5

Date: June 4

Time began: 4.55 p.m
Time Ended: 5.30 p.m

The minutes of meeting 4 were read, signed and agreed. Frank Blair was presented with the written questions for clarification.

Points dealt with 1 x 1

Question 1. Where would the Cultural Centre be located? Frank Blair said that it would be strategically placed so that the Orange Order would have to turn right at the Church. GRRC requested that a map of the area be brought and that this should include the DOE zoning proposals. Frank Blair said the new proposals are not on the map that he had. Breandan talked about the proposal for new build and designated area for new build at the Moy Road, Drumcree Road and from Rev. Pickering's house over to Ballyoran Park and pointed that we need to assess the long term impact in 5 years time thereby transferring the problems inflicted on Garvaghy Road now to another community later. Breandan added that we only have to look at the Moy Road to Dungannon to follow the logic of the argument. Frank Blair nodded in apparent agreement.

Question 2. Breandan addressed the fact that there is an assumption that the only contentious part of the March is the return journeyand pointed out that in Charles Street and Craigwell Avenue there has been blast bombs, RUC man killed, families intimidated and abuse of the Catholic Church at the top of Garvaghy Road. Breandan went on to say that it would be very wrong for anyone to assume that the nightly protests would not have an impact on people's attitude towards outward route and that there should not be an assumption that the only contentious part is the return.

Question 3. Breandan pointed out that there is no reference to the 11 months of intimidation in the Frank Blair Document. 19 families have been forced out of their homes, Catholic businesses burnt in the town centre in broad daylight, 170+ demonstrations marches and rallies by the Orange Order and numerous attacks on Catholic Citizens. There is no reference in the

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document to the Good Friday Agreement and to the part that states that everyone has the right to live free from sectarian harassment.

Breandan read question 4 and the answer was no. He then read question 5 and amplified that just over a fortnight ago the governing body of the Church of Ireland questioned the reasoning as to why the Parade goes to Drumcree not what they do on their return. This was also questioned by the Presbyterian Church. To describe it as a church parade underestimates and ignores what it is about and how it has been disowned by the Churches' authority.

Frank Blair asked who did the GRRC want clarification from. Breandan pointed out that he was the author of the document and initially it should come from Frank Blair.

Frank Blair suggested that question 1 be dealt with when the necessary maps are available. He said that no specific land had been purchased.

In relation to question 2 Frank Blair said that he is not making an assumption that there is no problem on the outward journey. He said that he would expect GRRC to raise problems or concerns or suggest alternative outward routes. He would also expect GRRC to let him know of problems and that he did not assume that there were problems or difficulties.

Frank Blair accepted that there had been no mention of the problems of the 11 months or of the Good Friday Agreement. He said he expected GRRC to introduce the problems. He stressed that the GRRC could address any issue. As far as the GRRC point 4 of the clarification questions the text is not agreed by the Orange Order so the second part of Question 4 falls. However, if there is agreement we would have to assure that implementation would be implementation of the full agreement. He stressed that the Orange Order have not agreed to any aspects of the draft and expected that they would discuss other aspects of the agreement.

On Question 5 Frank Blair Acknowledged the points made and said that it would be for the GRRC to challenge if this was a church Parade or a march.

Breandan then said that he remained concerned about the fact that the Good Friday Agreement had not been dealt with. Frank Blair accepted that. Breandan went on to say that this lack was a major shortfall, that two

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Governments, and most political parties saw the Good Friday Agreement as the basis for progress in Ireland North and South. Breandan asked if anyone advised Frank Blair and if so who? He further stated that the document from start to finish did not discuss; whether there should be a march, anything about discrimination, anything about inequality or injustice in Portadown. A document endorsed by over 70% of the people in the North and 90% of the South should have been a guideline and questioned the reason for its absence. He questioned if the reason could be that Portadown LOL 1 and all 32 lodges voted to reject the Good Friday Agreement.

Frank Blair said he did not have any advisers, and stated that "we are the architects of the initial draft" He said that the document was not all inclusive, could be added to or bits deleted and he invited all parties to amend or edit the document. He further stated that the document did not please anyone.

Orla Maloney asked if he understood the importance of the Good Friday Agreement. Frank Blair replied that the final document would include the Good Friday Agreement and that he would not expect the GRRC to be signatories to any document that did not refer to it. He stated that the document was a basis for discussion.

Breandan stated that the GRRC is still analyzing the second part of the document and questioned its authorship. Frank Blair acknowledged that the second part of the document involving the Portadown Initiative was not his. It had been given to him by Tony McCusker of the NIO. He confirmed that he had changed proposal to draft and filled in the blank to a sum of money. He also said that it had a greater involvement of the NIO because they have a vested interest in it working.

Breandan pointed out that the problem is that the author is the NIO. He referred to page 6 bullet point and stressed that the document failed to mention any responsibility for any violence by the state : e.g Collusion between loyalists and security forces, Policing and Robert Hamill killing.

Frank Blair said that he could not comment on this at all. Breandan questioned how he accepted the NIO document, and asked did the NIO give them a document on the Civic Forum which the GRRC had presented at the Proximity talks last year. Frank Blair said that he would take that up with the NIO. Breandan pointed out that it was Frank Blair's responsibility.

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Joe Duffy raised point 4 of the Clarification document and said that the matter will be dealt with by the Nationalist Community, not us.

Joanne Tennyson asked if the Orange Order accepted that the 1998 parade was completed.

Padraigin Drinan asked Frank Blair to ask the NIO if they are aware of section 24, 75 and schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act.

Orla asked if he was aware that there is another outward route and spelled out this route Loughgall Road and Corcullentragh Road.

Breandan said that the GRRC had a position paper. He requested that Frank Blair's transmit to the Orange Order without alteration and immediately which Frank Blair assured GRRC that this would be done.

Breandan said that the GRRC is willing to take questions and Frank Blair stated that he would prefer to take the document to the Orange Order to see what they say and do. Breandan asked if there were further questions. Frank Blair said that he would engage with the NIO. Breandan asked that Frank Blair deal directly with the relevant Government Minister, not the NIO as some officials of the NIO had their own agenda which was not in line with government policy.

Caitriona Ruane clarified that there were two documents on the table - the document put by Frank Blair and the GRRC position paper.

Ends

Signed :

Frank Blair

GRRC :

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Minutes 6–

Date : June 5, 1999

Time began: 11.18 a.m
Time ended : 11.38 a.m

Discussion about amendments to be made to previous minutes to be dealt with by GRRC.

Breandan opened the meeting by saying that he was not going to mess about. The murder at 12.50 a.m cast a very long shadow over the process, a murder that was designed to intimidate the people in this room and the Nationalist people in Portadown. One bomb attack resulted in murder, one against 2 elderly Catholic pensioners. This clearly demonstrates the level of intimidation and threats to the Nationalist Community in Portadown has had to live under for the past 11 months. He said this calls into question the failure to even take into account in the original draft document yesterday the intimidation of the last 11 months. He said he was mindful of statements of fact by David Jones threatening to take the law into his own hands and stating that we are on the slippery slope to Civil War. He also said that three weeks ago Paul Berry, Assembly Member who is closely associated to Drumcree, also made a similar threatening statement. These statements have been put into action costing loss of life. The attitude of the community this morning was one of anger and shock at the death of this woman, anger, shock and disbelief that the GRRC was returning to these talks. He said that this morning people in the community said ' Tell Frank Blair and the Orange Order to F off, and come back home again'. He pointed out that Tony Blair in his letter of invitation said if need be we could get in touch with Government ministers to clarify anything arising.

Breandan then formally requested Adam Ingram to be present today to discuss a letter with the GRRC received from Frank Lane in England. The letter from the RUC was then read and handed in. Breandan said that if the RUC are feeding such misinformation to the general public in Britain that the same misinformation might be being fed to No. 10 Downing Street. In light of the murder this morning the GRRC had reviewed the position paper and had a formal proposal amended since yesterday. This proposal is being tabled to both the British and the Irish Governments and the Orange Order.

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Also this morning the GRRC had made a formal request to the Irish Government that an official representative be present here today.

The GRRC handed in their proposal paper.

Frank Blair, referring to yesterday's minutes produced a map and acknowledged that he knew the vicinity but not the exact location of the proposed Cultural Centre. The GRRC pointed out specific areas of present and future developments and current housing areas and stressed that a cultural centre in any of these areas was not acceptable to the Nationalist people of Portadown.

Frank Blair said that he had spoken to the Orange Order, that they are currently preparing a proposal in response to yesterday's draft. He would inform them that he had the GRRC proposal and that both would be given at the same time.

Caitriona Ruane pointed out that the GRRC paper position had been given yesterday. The GRRC wished it to be put on record that they were informing Frank Blair that they had formally requested that an Irish Government representative be present here today and that the British Prime Minister be officially informed of that position.

Caitriona asked if the GRRC position paper went to the Orange Order yesterday. Frank Blair assured the GRRC delegation that it went directly and immediately. Breandan pointed out that the GRRC are now submitting a firm proposal not just to the Orange Order, but also to the Irish and the British Governments.

GRRC wanted to insist on the presence of Adam Ingram, that there are serious questions on policing in Portadown, especially in the light of last night's murder. Frank Blair asked the GRRC to confirm only two matters of clarification remained outstanding from yesterday.

Domestic arrangements were discussed.

Signed :

Frank Blair

GRRC

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(A)

Read 2.45 pm Sat 5.6.99

5

GARVAGHY ROAD RESIDENTS COALITION

Proposal to British and Irish Governments and the Orange Order

The expressed view of the community is that, following 11 months of orchestrated intimidation and violence (which includes six, murders, the latest committed during these talks and including that of our legal representative, Rosemary Nelson) since July last, the refusal of the Orange Order to accept last year's rerouting decision, the failure of the Orange Order and government to uphold the 1995 Agreement, there is no understanding nor acceptance amongst the Nationalist Community in Portadown of the Orange Order demand to march through or by any present or proposed nationalist area of Portadown.

Not only is the Nationalist community questioning the Orange Order's motives in seeking to march Garvaghy Road: the Church of Ireland General Synod and other leading Protestant clergy also are questioning this demand.

While we are prepared to examine all possibilities, so too must the Orange Order. This means the examination of all possible alternative routes in relation to this particular march *in its entirety*. Such a process must involve direct contact and dialogue.

In order to enhance such a process, we request that the Orange Order should announce its acceptance of the Parades Commission ruling in respect of 1998, along with an immediate and total ending of all associated demonstrations. We also request that the Orange Order announces its acknowledgement of, and a genuine reciprocation for, the gesture of goodwill and trust made by our community in 1995.

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In our view the Orange Order have every right to a cultural heritage centre but not in a contentious or possible future contentious area.

The Garvaghy Road Residents Coalition are calling on the British and Irish Governments and the European Union to ensure that the Nationalist areas of Portadown get the funding to which they are entitled under the Good Friday Agreement. Agreement on marches should not be used as a precondition to this funding.

The current structures have discriminated against these areas. The GRRC is further calling for the establishment of an initiative with statutory authority to correct disadvantage and to direct funding and investment into areas of greatest need so that the social, economic, cultural and infrastructural deficiencies in Portadown can be rectified. Examples of the types of initiatives which might be appropriate include the DOE's Development Office in Derry, the Upper Springfield Development Trust and Making Belfast Work.

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(B)

Presented to F Blair on 7 meeting with GRRC 5pm Saturday 5 June.

GARVAGHY ROAD RESIDENTS COALITION

The GRRC position has been outlined in our position paper which we submitted on Friday 4 June at 4.55 pm and on Saturday 5 June at 11.18am.

We are prepared to consider the paper tabled by F Blair on Friday 4 June on a without prejudice basis.

In doing so the GRRC is keeping within the parameters clearly set out in our position paper of June 4 and our proposal document of June 5. In those two documents paragraph 1 clearly outlines the mood within the Nationalist community in Portadown at the present time. Paragraph 1 also highlights the proper context against which any proposal for any form of an Orange march must be considered. The GRRC is mindful that we must at all times be responsive to the views expressed by our community through open, public meetings and community consultations.

Paragraph 2 of the GRRC Proposal deals with the questioning of the Orange Order's motivation in relation to Drumcree as seen by the mainstream Protestant Churches.

Paragraph 3 clearly shows that we as stated are prepared to examine all possibilities. All we request is that all other parties involved in this process do likewise. It is our belief that in order to engage fully in a proper process direct contact and dialogue is a prerequisite before the completion of any possible agreement.

Paragraph 4 suggests steps which the Orange Order could take in order to create a climate of trust within our community as opposed to the current climate of murder, fear, anxiety, mistrust and intimidation. This climate has been created by the actions and statements of the Orange Order and its supporters over 11 months. It is our belief that the onus for defusing that climate rests with those responsible for creating it.

Paragraph 5 accepts the right of the Orange Order to have a Cultural Heritage Centre. It does ask that such a Centre would not be located near any possible contentious area.

Paragraph 6 and 7 deal with the need for Governments to correct redress imbalances and to correct disadvantage and address areas of greatest need.

Text in square brackets and bold print identify areas of dispute., italics identify additions requested by the GRRC.

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(C)

Presented to 1st March 99
GARC 5pm
Saturday 5 June

Draft to be used as a discussion vehicle

[Drumcree Church] Parade:

ñ A Parade in **[1999]** as follows:

Outward route:
On leaving Carleton Street progress along Church Street, Market Street and High Street to the junction with Castle Street. Turn back along High Street, Market Street, West Street and enter Charles St**[Proceed along Charles Street to the Dungannon/Moy Road roundabout. Continue along Dungannon Road to Rector's Corner]** Proceed along Drumcree Road to Drumcree Parish Church.

Return route:
On leaving the Church, **[along Drumcree Road to Garvaghy Road. Progress along Garvaghy Road]** to Town Centre and return to Carleton Street Hall.

ñ During the year June 1999/June 2000 establish a **[field]** commemorating Orange Culture.

ñ A parade in **[2000]** *subject to a cessation of all nightly portest and all other forms of sectarian harassment* as follows:

Outward route:
To follow that of **[1999]**
[see section in square brackets under [1999] outward route above]

Return route:
On leaving the Church progress along Drumcree Road to Rector's Corner. Proceed to the **[Commemorative Field to inaugurate and celebrate the estalishment of the cultural heritage Centre]** Following the ceremony **[progress along Dungannon Road to the Dungannon/Moy Roundabout. Along Charles St.]** to Loughgall Rd. Roundabout. From the Loughgall Road roundabout turn left along West Street to the Town Centre, along Market Steet and High Street to the junction with Castle Street. Turn back along High Street, Market Street and Church Street and return to Carleton Street Hall.

ñ A parade in **[2000]** *and all subsequent years* following the outward and return route established in **[2000]**
[see sections in square brackets under outward and return routes for the year 2000]

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PORTADOWN DISTRICT LOL No.1

Response to draft proposal tabled by Mr Frank Blair
On Friday 4th June 1999

5th June 1999

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DRUMCREE CHURCH PARADE

In 1999 there will be the 1998 return parade as follows:-

RETURN ROUTE : Depart Drumcree Parish Church – Drumcree Road – Garvaghy Road – Parkmount – Victoria Terrace – Castle Street – Bridge Street – High Street – Market Street – Church Street – Carleton Street.

4th July 1999 Church Parade:-

OUTWARD ROUTE: Depart Carleton Street – Church Street – Market Street – High Street – Market Street – West Street – Northway – Corcrain Road – Charles Street – Brankins Hill – Dungannon Road – Rectors Turn – Drumcree Road to Drumcree Parish Church.

RETURN ROUTE : Depart Drumcree Parish Church – Drumcree Road – Garvaghy Road – Parkmount – Victoria Terrace – Castle Street – Bridge Street – High Street – Market Street – Church Street – Carleton Street.

In July 2000 and annually thereafter the Drumcree Church Parade shall take place on the Sunday preceding the twelfth day of July, save when the twelfth day of July falls on a Monday, when the Parade shall revert to the first Sunday in July:-

OUTWARD ROUTE: Depart Carleton Street – Church Street – Market Street – High Street – Market Street – West Street – Northway – Corcrain Road – Charles Street – Brankins Hill – Dungannon Road – Rectors Turn – Drumcree Road to Drumcree Parish Church.

RETURN ROUTE : Depart Drumcree Parish Church – Drumcree Road – Garvaghy Road – Parkmount – Victoria Terrace – Castle Street – Bridge Street – High Street – Market Street – Church Street – Carleton Street.

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PORTADOWN INITIATIVE

Subject to the Drumcree Church Parade being satisfactorily resolved, Portadown District LOL No 1 welcomes any initiative, which addresses all community issues affecting the Portadown area. Portadown District LOL No.1 will play its part in any discussions about such an initiative, but requires that all other interested parties be given the opportunity to contribute from the outset.

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QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION ON THE FIRST SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT

1. Where could an Orange Cultural/Heritage Centre be? What impact would it have on the local community?

2. There is an assumption in the document that there is no problem with the outward journey. Is there not a realisation that there is a very strong objection to this outward journey given the last 11 months?

3. Why is any reference to the 11 months of nightly intimidation left out of the document? Why is there no reference in the document to the Good Friday Agreement and the Right to Freedom from Sectarian Harassment and Discrimination?

4. Has the text of the document been agreed by the Orange Order? If so we would need confirmation of one last march to be a permanently legally binding agreement signed by the Portadown LOL No. 1 and underwritten by the British and Irish Governments before bringing it back to the Nationalist Community of Portadown for discussion.

5. When and how did this Orange March become a Drumcree Church Parade?

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