

E. R.

RESTRICTED

3167

1. Mr Bloomfield

2. See 1/1

Secretary of State (B&L) - M

- cc PS/Mr Scott (B&L) - M
- PS/PUS (B&L) - M
- PS/Mr Bloomfield ✓/p
- Mr Stephens
- Mr Innes
- Mr Ferneyhough
- Mr Elliott
- Mr Gilliland
- Mr Wood - Info Svces - M
- Mr R E Templeton



PORTADOWN 1985 and 1986

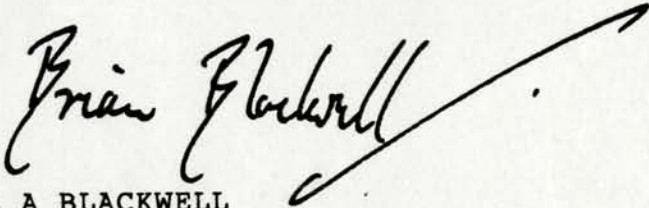
1. There is some confusion over the position of the RUC on Orange Lodge marches in Portadown on 12 and 13 July last year compared with their position this year. The facts are set out below.
2. I attach for comparison the RUC press statements of 6 July 1985 and 4 July 1986. You will see that the routes for the Church Parades were the same for both years and that the police position on not permitting parades through Obins Street and Woodhouse Street on the other two traditional July marching days remained consistent.
3. The difference between 1985 and 1986 is that in 1985 the Orange and Black Lodges only submitted their traditional routes through Obins Street which were denied to them and the period then degenerated into sustained rioting at the police barriers at the entrance to Woodhouse Street. In 1986 the Orange Lodges submitted a second route in Garvaghy Road for 12 July which the RUC then allowed one way subject to strict conditions. The Royal Black Preceptory submitted only their traditional route for 14 July which was denied to them. They then made symbolic attempts at both ends to march the route and dispersed when they were turned away.

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4 On Easter Monday this year the Apprentice Boys sought to march through Woodhouse Street and Obins Street in what was a straightforward non-traditional march designed purely for provocation and confrontation. The Chief Constable therefore sought a ban which was granted and the whole Roman Catholic area was sealed off, but too late to prevent an illegal early morning march along the Garvaghy Road organised by Dr Paisley.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian Blackwell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

B A BLACKWELL

Law and Order Division

17 July 1986

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Telephone
BELFAST 650222



BROOKLYN
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NORTHERN IRELAND BT5 6LE

EMBARGO
PRESS STATEMENT : NOT FOR PUBLICATION OR BROADCAST BEFORE 2.00 AM ON
FRIDAY 4 JULY 1986

JULY PARADES: PORTADOWN

1. The RUC has decided that the following arrangements will apply to the loyalist parades in Portadown on July 6, 12 and 14:

Sunday 6 July: Provided that strict conditions are fully adhered to, the church parade to Drumcree Church will be permitted to proceed via Woodhouse Street and Obins Street, returning via Garvaghy Road.

Saturday 12 July and Monday 14 July: The Orange parade on the 12th and the RBP parade on the 14th will not be permitted through Woodhouse Street and Obins Street.

In permitting the Sunday parade to take place along the traditional route (subject to conditions), the RUC is basing its decision on the requirement that it will be a dignified, peaceful church parade and on the tradition of respect accorded to church parades by the Roman Catholic community.

The conditions attached to the RUC's decision, copies of which have been served on the organisers, relate to conduct, bands and persons permitted to participate and proper stewarding.

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It must be emphasised that in the event of these conditions not being fully complied with on the day, the parade will be re-routed.

2. The police have received notification from two nationalist bands of their intention to parade in Portadown on Sunday morning, 6 July, along part of the same route as that of the church parade. This proposed bands parade is an entirely new event without tradition, clearly intended to cause further difficulties. The police have decided that it cannot take place as notified. It is hoped that the organisers will reconsider their notification so as to avoid confrontation; otherwise the RUC will impose such conditions as are necessary to maintain the peace.

3. The RUC is aware that the arrangements set out in this announcement could not satisfy the conflicting points of view in Portadown. It simply is not possible to reach a generally agreed solution within the community. The police believe that, given all the circumstances, and after the most careful consultation and deliberation, the action they intend to take over this period is fair to all and in the best interests of the people of Portadown and Northern Ireland as a whole.

4. In the past six months the RUC has policed 997 loyalist and 163 nationalist parades and demonstrations. Contrary to the predictions from some quarters, none of the

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traditional parades have had to be re-routed or banned and the RUC is appreciative of the co-operation and responsibility generally shown by the organisers and participants. This is how it should be. The RUC welcomes the growing signs of responsibility throughout the community generally on this sensitive issue of parades and notes that where violence has occurred it has been confined to a small hooligan element and has been condemned by all responsible people.

The RUC sincerely appeals to community leaders and all law-abiding people on all sides in Portadown and elsewhere, to use their influence to ensure that the period ahead will be peaceful. That and that alone, is the objective of the RUC, as it must be of all the people of Northern Ireland.

4 July 1986

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PRESS RELEASE



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- 8 JUL 1982

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PORTADOWN PARADES : STATEMENT FROM RUC HEADQUARTERS

The RUC's consideration of the Portadown Orange parades issue should be viewed in a wider context and in the light of all information known to the Police. In addition to the murderous and continuing threat from the Provisional IRA, the PIRA through Sinn Fein are intent on trying to exploit the Portadown situation for propaganda purposes in order to further their cause generally and in America in particular, so as to generate an increase in funds and support. It is known that key Noraid supporters have already arrived in Ireland. It is also known that the UVF have been giving considerable attention to the Portadown situation with the intention of involving themselves and challenging the Police. These two sinister organisations, if given the opportunity, would attempt to create mayhem in the Portadown area. The Police will be directing special attention to the danger from the Provisional IRA, Noraid and the UVF. It is essential that all decent law-abiding people should be fully aware of the dangers and do their utmost to co-operate with the Police and use their influence for calm and restraint. The RUC's advice is : do nothing which will assist the sinister elements which are at work at the present time.

In the light of this situation and after hearing the views and representations of many people and organisations, the RUC has decided that the following arrangements will apply to the forthcoming Orange parades in Portadown:

1. The parade on Sunday 7 July will be permitted through the Obins Street area. The route will be: ~~Assembly Carlton Street, Market Street~~, Woodhouse Street, Obins Street, ~~Woodhouse Street~~, ~~Woodhouse Street, Obins Street, Market Street and return to Carlton Street~~

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2. The parades on the 12th and 13th of July will not be permitted through Woodhouse Street and Obins Street.
3. Notices to this effect are being served on the organisers and the law will be enforced accordingly.

The RUC acknowledges that the Portadown District Orange Lodge fully intends that the parade on Sunday 7 July will be a peaceful, dignified church parade. They also acknowledge that the Roman Catholic community has traditionally accorded respect to local church parades on Sundays and that such parades are of a peaceful nature.

The RUC realises that the arrangements could not hope to satisfy fully the conflicting wishes and feelings of various sections of the community. However the RUC believes that the arrangements set out are those most likely to serve the best interests of peace - and the best interests of the community as a whole, in Portadown and elsewhere.

It is appreciated that among the Roman Catholic community in Portadown there was disappointment and resentment earlier this year that a St. Patrick's Day parade was prevented by loyalist opposition from taking place along the route intended. The disappointment was stronger on account of the expectation that it would be able to take place. The Police wish to place on record their regret that the parade was curtailed. It is also appreciated that arising from the current controversy and all the surrounding publicity there was an expectation, at least among some Roman Catholics, that no Orange parades would have been permitted through Obins Street. For the reasons already stated, the RUC strongly believes that the arrangements announced to-day are fair to all and genuinely in the best interests of all.

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The controversy this year suggests to the RUC that better, more constructive arrangements could be devised for consultation in respect of parades and parade routes. From soundings already taken, the Police believe that responsible individuals and organisations will welcome improved consultative arrangements as a means of achieving the highest possible degree of understanding, co-operation and agreement. This will be pursued.

The RUC also wishes to make it known that it is monitoring the conduct and behaviour of bands and parades of all shades in the community, since irresponsible behaviour by some represents a problem. This information will be used as the basis for future discussion. Again the Police have reason to believe that responsible organisations will welcome improved standards of appearance and behaviour and this objective too will be pursued.

It is recognised that parades represent a feature of the social and cultural life of both communities in Northern Ireland and that they involve a major policing commitment on a total of more than 2,200 occasions throughout the year. The RUC is presently considering initiating an independent, academic study of the subject of parades - their history, their effects on community relations, the role and perception of the Police and other matters. It is hoped that such a study will lead to greater understanding and will benefit all concerned, including the RUC. The RUC sincerely looks to the community for co-operation and hopes for a progressive future in which structures can be devised which will bring about an atmosphere in which parades are no longer the subject of alienation, fears and hostilities.

6 July 1985.