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Summary of events at Portadown, 10 and 11 July 1995

PA Army
Parade 1995

DL

Shortly after the Orange assault on the RUC last night, Fr. Stack informed me that his assessment was that the RUC were being stretched but had reformed their lines and had substantial reserves. A large group of Loyalists had also gathered at the bottom end of the Garvaghy Road.

Around 3 a.m., Fr. Stack was in touch in a state of great apprehension: the dialogue with the RUC and the Orangemen (through mediators) had come to nothing because of Nationalist objections to the presence of Paisley and Trimble at that dialogue; there was a fear that the RUC had cut a deal to force the Orangemen down the road at any minute; large numbers of Nationalists were taking to the streets. These fears were based on media reports. I impressed on Fr. Stack and one of his colleagues the need for the greatest restraint by the local community and queried the wisdom of allowing the dialogue and direct information exchange with the RUC to lapse.

Mark Durkan was in touch on several occasions between 3.30 and 6 a.m. to share views and to report on his contacts with the RUC in the matter. At 8 a.m., I spoke to a member of the Residents Group who reported that dialogue with the RUC and Orangemen was again under way and that a compromise was expected mid-morning.

Late last night I was in touch with Francie Molloy of Sinn Fein and urged restraint by Republicans. Molloy said that Sinn Fein had stayed back, would let the RUC do their job but indicated growing apprehension on the ground at the Orange build up of numbers.

On a separate issue, the Lower Ormeau Residents and the local Orange Lodge had hoped to come to an agreement on parades last night, brokered by the Quakers (copy attached). I spoke to the Quakers at midnight who reported that the atmosphere had soured in the light of Portadown but that they were going to resurrect the draft today.

Declan Kelleher
11 July, 1995

COPY TO:
PST
PSS
MR F MURRAY
MR P TEAHON
MR S DONLON
MR T DALTON

While avoiding any public involvement, we have been active in urging the Garvaghy Rd group to find a compromise which saved all hands - including for the Orange order. DL.