

**BRIEFING ON SECURITY ISSUES FOR THE PM'S MEETING WITH JOHN HUME - 17 JULY 1996**

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced during Northern Ireland Question Time in the House of Commons on 11 July

**Background to Drumcree**

The Prime Minister will be familiar with the sequence of events at Drumcree following the Chief Constable's decision to prohibit the Orange Order march from following part of its intended route along the Garvaghy Road on 6 July. During the accompanying stand-off attempts were made at local levels to achieve a compromise, against a background of widespread rioting in Loyalist areas of Northern Ireland, but these failed. The leaders of the four main churches also failed to come up with an agreed solution.

The Chief Constable decided on 11 July that the authorisation of a limited parade had become the outcome best designed to protect life. He took this decision in the light of intelligence that large numbers of Orangemen might assemble on 12 July, with the capability to breach police lines, which could cause mayhem and significant deaths and injuries on and around the Garvaghy Road. Residents blocked the Garvaghy Road in protest and had to be forcibly removed by the RUC.

This was the signal for intense and concerted violence to break out in Nationalist areas with the RUC and Army coming under attack from hundreds of petrol bombs, missiles and even gunfire.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 12 -



From: Alex Allan

Date: 15 July 1996

Proposed review of marches

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland announced during Northern Ireland Question Time in the House of Commons on 11 July that he was minded to have a review which would examine how in the future, controversial parades could be managed better. Subsequently on 14 July in a statement to the House, the Secretary of State said he intended to establish a review to examine the current arrangements for handling parades and marches in Northern Ireland, to which any interested party could give evidence. Officials are now working on preparing terms of reference and identifying possible candidates to sit on a review panel. The intention would be to publish these details before the House rises on 25 July.

Next difficult parades

The next contentious parades are scheduled for 10 August 1996, when the Apprentice Boys of Derry parade on Londonderry City Walls (to commemorate the end of the siege). Part of this route overlooks nationalist areas and violence occurred following last year's parade. In addition the local Apprentice Boys Club march the length of the Ormeau Road, Belfast prior to proceeding to Londonderry. The RUC have not at this stage made any decision in relation to this march.

Defensive lines in relation to some of the issues at Drumcree are attached at Annex A.

CONFIDENTIAL

- 13 -